

GENERAL READING.
THE CRY FOR MORE SOULS.

BY J. F. HURST, D.D.

The man who looks out without prejudice upon the great world must be convinced of the alarming disproportion between the saved and the unsaved. We take no somber views of the present or future and yet it is well now and then that we take note of how the friends of the Master stand in their numerical force. We are near the end of another year and another stage in the labors of many reapers in the white harvest-field. There have been important revivals in some sections of the country, and perhaps the church has kept its ground in steady growth. But when we see the multiplicity of efforts put forth for the salvation of the wandering and the lost, there does not seem to be that persistent vigor and rapidity of increase in aggressive movements which should mark the Church in this advanced day of light and capacity.

Let us see if we cannot discover some of the causes of the tardy aggressiveness of the Church on the outworks of the adversary of souls. One of these causes, and without question a very important one, is an undue appreciation of the building up of the believer, and a commensurate depreciation of the necessity for saving souls. We believe that every converted soul needs the most thorough culture. Instruction as to the duties at home and in public Christian work, and light thrown on the temptations in society and false doctrine, are a positive necessity. These cannot be neglected, for every newly converted soul requires the utmost care for maturity and moral power. But look at the unsaved millions also. They are all about us. They belong to our homes, and are united to us by the most tender ties. They sit with us and listen to the gospel on the Sabbath. They sympathize with all that is good and evangelical. But the great fact remains—they are not saved. They know the truth, but do not embrace it. They expect to become Christians. We must look about us and enquire if we are doing our full duty for their immediate salvation? There is seldom a sermon preached in this broad land which does not fall upon the ears of some unregenerate soul. Why should we not expect conversions constantly? There is not any fault with the number of our services—the trouble lies with our efforts for present conversions. We go back to the first days of the Church for example, and here we find that the one supreme aspiration of preachers and private members was for the salvation of souls. After the great ingathering at Pentecost there was no quiet sitting down to care simply for the newly saved. The next effort was for more conversions, and the next for more, and the next for more. The early Church was built up by numerous ingatherings. One of the chief agencies towards building up the young believer was to win more trophies from the ranks of Satan. And now one of the best forces to develop the Christian is to let him see new converts, singing the new song and rejoicing in the new life. No church can be edified or built up without conversions.

The present interest attaching to scientific subjects in their relation to the ministry is calculated to make us overlook the importance of heroic efforts for the conversion of souls in our public services. It takes ten minutes on some Sunday mornings, to annihilate Huxley; ten more to knock Farrar's "Eternal Hope" to pieces; ten more to do away with Ingersoll, and about five to wind up on the "Second Coming." What is going to become of the poor burdened soul, who has drifted into the service with his bereavement and broken future and penitent feelings? What light does he get? How much help does he gain in his search for the Star of Bethlehem? We would not utter a depreciative syllable as to the necessity of every discourse being fresh, and recognizing the fact that we live in the nineteenth century, and resisting the outlying heresies, but no sermon is worthy the name which does not contain some help from the unregenerate soul, and some element of power to stir and awaken and hasten to the saving fountain.

We need not wait for great occasions and long planned measures in order to make our appeals to souls. That course of twenty sermons to young men had better be stopped for awhile, so that the individuals so long addressed may have the opportunity to ask: "What must we do to be saved?" We should let nothing interfere with our reaping every Sunday, and every day in the week. This is the one thing that characterized Wesley's acute and statesmanlike plans. No man was wiser than he in building up societies but he thought most of the material with which to build up. He liked the house, but he appreciated the necessity of bricks and mortar. No plan can be laid down for the control of every congregation, for there is infinite variety in circumstances and conditions. But there is no congregation or little Sun-

day School in all Christendom which should not and cannot be the field for grand conquests in soul-saving. Away with all fear of breaking into the established order and icy ruts. The souls in danger are the great prize. So in all our sermons and social services let us have some strong word to say on conversion, and the NOW as the fit time for salvation. We dare not allow timidity to come in and push off our warning appeal to a more convenient season. We now and then find a fossil who shakes his head at revivals. Poor soul! All the religion he has, and his father before him, is likely due to some great sweeping revival, when the very house trembled with the divine presence. We need come down to the humblest and lowliest, in our visitation and conversion and public appeals, and bring them in by the very tempest of our faith. Let us endeavor as we stand on the border land between the old and new year, to be more consecrated ourselves, and so have more of the grace which will reach the impenitent, and "compel them to come in."

THE WORLD'S GREAT BANK.

A SKETCH OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

The Bank of England was organized in 1694. For a time the business was done in one room. Now 700 men are employed. No bills are issued for less than £5. Bills never go from the Bank a second time. Smaller notes are out about fifty-five days. Notes for £1,000 are out on an average of 10 days. Every customer can have hard or soft money as he prefers. Sovereigns that come into the bank are all weighed before going into circulation again. We saw them moving down the trough, every one that is deficient in weight passing out at the side. These deficient coins are melted up for re-coinage. All silver coins that are worn smooth are recoined in like manner. Every coin going out of the bank has its full weight and value. The sovereigns are put up in bags of 10,000 each; 100,000 are weighed in a day. Notes that are paid at the bank are torn at one corner, preserved five years, and then destroyed.

Gold and silver are in use for all business transactions. The writer used only three bank bills during the four months he had been in England. We think we must have small bills, money less than \$25? There are bills on Irish banks for £1, but I never saw any of them.

Different rooms are for different purposes. One is for the weighing of gold sovereigns, another for the examination of silver coins, and others for Government business, selling Government stocks, paying public interest, discounting to London merchants, paying mercantile notes, funding. All printing of blank books, drafts and checks is done in the bank. Bank bills probably cost less than a mill each. The paper is not like our bank bills, no better than the paper used for bank checks. The advanced ideas of our greenback friends leave England far in the rear. The idea that a government can make money by stamping a piece of paper has no countenance in the Bank of England. Our English friends consider a £5 note as good as five sovereigns in gold, because the note will bring the gold whenever presented. How carefully they guard the purity of coinage! Every sovereign, every shilling, that goes out of the bank is genuine and full of value. If one, by wearing, is "weighed in the balance and found wanting," it is recoined.

HYMNOLOGY.

The last General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church appointed a committee to prepare a hymn book. The committee set to work almost immediately after the rising in June, each member preparing lists to be submitted at a full meeting. The full meeting for the revision and completion of lists was held at Montreal, last week, commencing on the morning of the 31st December and closing on the evening of the 2nd January. The committee, we hear, sat through the whole of New Year's Day, till 10 p.m. Their labors resulted in the selection of about 300 hymns, which are to be printed immediately on slips, and sent to members of Presbyteries for approval. The Presbyteries will be asked to report to the committee before the 1st of May. Thus the Presbyterian Hymn Book will be quite ready to be submitted to the General Assembly which meets at Ottawa in June. The two members present were Rev. D. Macrae, of St. John, and Rev. Robert Murray of Halifax, were present at the meetings of the committee. The other members present were Rev. Drs. Jenkins, Gregg and James, Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, J. S. Black and W. B. McMurric. We learn that an aggregate of about 2,500 Hymns were examined by the committee since its appointments, and in the 600 they keep the "cream of the cream."

SOME ENGLISH CLASSICS.

Chaucer is the father of English poetry, the "well of English undefiled;" but one goes through "Canterbury Tales" as through the museum of an antiquary. The "Little Nun"

"Sang the service divine Entuned in her nose most sweetly," and "to speak of her conscience," she was as "charitable and as piteous," as you please, but however "well taught withal," her phrase and fashion have passed away.

What more charming than the "Essays of Elia!" Yet how singular the ingrafting of modern peculiarities on the old English style of Jeremy Taylor, Isaac Walton, or the times of good Queen Bess. Lamb himself, with "The troubles strange many and strange, That hung about his life."

His attractive from his peculiarities. His portraits, which make him appear as a hopeless dyspeptic, having just finished a dish of sauer-kraut, and the little twitching, nervous letters underneath, in which he acknowledges himself as "Yours, ratherish unwell," would belie himself as a snarly companion. One, however, finds him genial and generous, and delights to linger amidst the queer involutions of his thought and style. Take his essay on "Old China," which has scarcely to do with crockery at all, but contains a world of philosophy for poor folk calculated to keep them from dashing their happiness to pieces against some one else's brown stone front, and let the quaint thoughts get in their own way through their brain, and test the delight.

His cousin alludes to a time when they had what so often are mated, literary tastes and passions and lean pockets. She thinks "the needful" has not furnished new delights in proportion to its increase; "a purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. It is used to be a triumph. When we had a cheap luxury, we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the for and against and think what we could spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon as an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it."—National Repository for January.

THEORY OF SLEEP.

For the development of consciousness of a highly organized animal, there is no rest in the waking state. Impressions are continually pouring in through one or other sense-avenue, which stimulate and keep up a train of thought. So that if occasional periods of rest are desirable for all organs, it would only seem possible to bring this about, in the case of the brain, by some mechanism which should practically deaden the sensibility of the nerve-centers, upon which stimuli acting through the senses impinge. In this consciousness would be for a time blotted, and the function of thought held in abeyance. This is the object and nature of the state of sleep. Now, the state of sleep is one which is essentially characterized and produced by a more or less complete arrest of the functions of the brain, the organ presiding over the functions of animal life. How, then, is this arrest of function brought about? In 1860, Mr. Durham proved experimentally that in certain animals during the state of sleep the vessels on the surface of the brain were notably smaller, and contained less blood, than when the animals were awake. Dr. Hammond, of New York, also, shortly afterward, by somewhat similar experimental researches, was enabled to corroborate the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Durham. And, now, these observations, together with others of a somewhat similar nature, having gone so far to show that the brain contains notably less blood in its vessels during sleep, the doctrine may be said to be fairly established that a comparative bloodless state of the brain is the principal determining cause of sleep, we are thus left free to enquire, What is the actual cause of that diminution in the blood supply which induces this state?

In Fifth Avenue, New York, is building the most magnificent cathedral on the Continent and which is expected to add the highest architectural honor to the Roman Catholic Church. Even in its present stage it is a marvel of beauty, and bids fair to stand unchallenged as one of the noblest among the churches in the world. But money is needed for its completion, and a fair has been held within its walls (as yet unopened) with whose doings the papers have been filled for weeks. All kinds of merchandise have been offered for sale; swords of great value have been voted for at so much a vote, and awarded to generals who never saw a battle; at the ringing of a bell, countless lotteries have been opened, and earnest solicitors invite the way-farers to tempt fortune; and under its lofty roof has flowed a full tide of worldliness and folly. "But it netted hard on to \$160,000, and who may find fault with a church, in such a case? one of whose corner stones of doctrine is that "the ends justify the means."

FAMILY READING.

WILL THOSE DREAMS COME TRUE.

Thou art dreaming, gentle maiden, Of a calm and happy life. Of the loving friend to shield thee From care, and want, and strife. How radiant looks the future, How fair is every view: Thou art dreaming gentle maiden, But will those dreams come true.

Thou art dreaming, youthful student, Of celebrity and fame, Of the honors that shall cluster Around thy lowly name; Of the rich and varied pleasures Which soon thy path shall strew: Thou art dreaming youthful student, But will those dreams come true.

Thou art dreaming, busy merchant, Of thy ships far out at sea, Of prudent speculations Which bring vast wealth to thee: Of the dignity the comfort Which shall from wealth accrue: Thou art dreaming busy merchant, And will those dreams come true.

Thou art dreaming, happy mother, Of the darling at thy side, And thy baby girl appeareth As a fair and graceful bride; And thy boy has grown to manhood, Esteemed by not a few: Thou art dreaming, happy mother, But will those dreams come true.

Oh, how frequently does sorrow For all such dreams to flight, As our waken moments banish The visions of the night; The scenes which fancy pictures To our enraptured glance, Like the mirage that elude us As toward them we advance.

And e'en if we attain them, And grasp our longed for prize, Alas how very seldom, Our hopes we realize. Then while with ardent footsteps We fancied footsteps pursue, Oft let us ask the question, But will those dreams come true.

W. E.

THE VOICES OF THE PARABLE OF DIVES AND LAZARUS.

1. It declares that our position in the next world depends on our course here.

2. It declares a place of torment, and analogy leads to the conclusion that if one person is in torment he will more or less be a source of torment to his companions.

3. It declares selfishness is the road to this place of torment; it is hard to define what constitutes a perfect fiend. Dives may or may not have been one.

4. It declares that Dives did not forget his privileges; he calls Abraham Father; in reply he is courteously called Son, and told to remember, which seems to convey the mind back to what was abused; there is no forward glance, no Son, Hope; this is ominous; he who so earnestly pleaded for Sodom is silent as to the future of Dives.

5. It declares that a place where alleviation of pain is much desired exists, and where the desired relief could not be granted, even to the extent of a drop of water. If pain is produced the manner is not of much consequence; the pain is the trouble, not whether it is literal fire or something else.

6. It declares that Dives on leaving earth found himself in this place of pain.

It declares that Abraham spoke when spoken to, and in a manner as if he considered Dives's and Lazarus's condition in accordance with the "fitness of things"; no mourning, no rejoicing over the case.

8. It declares that an impassable gulf existed between Abraham and Dives. In stating this Abraham closed the case. He does proffer help. How could he be other than silent on the subject of help in the circumstances?

9. It declares that pain is the means of recalling facts that it would have been well to have remembered before we had such a reminder. Our duty to our brethren should be looked after here and now. A selfish man living in selfishness, dying in an unrepentant spirit, suffering for selfishness, was not likely to breathe an unselfish prayer.

10. It declares that the power of choice still exists; that the perception of desirable and undesirable has not been destroyed by death. Dives is evidently against his desire in this fearful place. It seems there are but two places from what is said. "You cannot pass to us." The inference is, you must remain where you are.

11. It declares Abraham to be the same Abraham as we read about in Genesis. He uses no harsh terms. In reply to "Father" addressed to him, his reply is "Son."

12. The parable is very loud spoken on one point; that is, "You have your day of probation here; happy will you be if you improve it."

SATURDAY NIGHT.

How many a kiss has been given, how many a curse, how many a caress, how many a kind word—how many a promise has been broken, how many a heart has been wrecked—how many a loved one has been lowered into a narrow chamber, how many a babe has gone from earth to heaven—how many a crib or cradle stands silent now, which last Saturday night held the rarest of all treasures of the heart? A week is life. A week is a history. A week marks events of sorrow or gladness of which people never heard. Go home to the family man of business! Go home, you heart erring wanderer! Go home to cheer that awaits the wronged waif of life's breakers! Go home to those you love, man of toil! and give one night to the joys and comforts fast flying by. Leave your book with complex figures, your dirty workshop your busy store. Rest with those you love, for God only knows what the next Saturday night will bring you. Forget the world of care and the battle of life which have furrowed the week. Draw close around the family hearth. Go home to those you love, and as you bask in the loved presence and meet to return the loved embrace of your heart's pets, strive to be a better man and to bless God for giving his weary children so dear a stepping stone in the river to the eternal as Saturday night.

A NOBLE BOY.

Well! I saw a boy do something the other day that made me feel good for a week. Indeed, it makes my heart fill with tenderness and good feeling even now as I write about it. But let me tell you what it was. As I was walking along a street of a large city, I saw an old man who seemed to be blind walking along without any one to lead him. He went very slow, feeling with his cane.

'He's walking straight to the highest part of the curbstone,' said I to myself. 'And it's very high, too; I wonder if some one won't tell him and start him in the right direction!'

Just then a boy about fourteen years old, who was playing near the corner, left his playmates, ran up to the old man, put his hand through the man's arm, and said, 'Let me lead you across the street.' By this time there were three or four others watching the boy. He not only helped him over one crossing, but led him over another to the lower side of the street. Then he ran back to his play.

Now, this boy thought he had only done the man a kindness, while I knew that he had made three other persons feel happy, and better, and more careful to do little kindnesses to those about them. The three or four persons who had stopped to watch the boy, turned away with a tender smile on their faces, ready to follow the noble example he had set them. I know that I felt more gentle and forgiving toward every one for many days afterward.

Another one that was made happy was the boy himself. For it is impossible for us to do a kind act, or to make any one else happy, without being better or happier ourselves. To be good, and do good, is to be happy.—Ruth Hudson.

In moving a vote of condolence to Her Majesty the Queen, the Premier reported a most pathetic incident, which no doubt will live in the history of this and other countries. After describing the character of the Princess Alice he said: "My lords, there is something wonderfully piteous in the immediate cause of her death. The physician who permitted her to watch over her suffering family, enjoined her under no circumstances whatever to be tempted into an embrace. Her admirable self-restraint carried her through the crisis of the terrible complaint in safety. She remembered and observed the injunction of the physician, but it became her lot to break to her son, quite a youth, of the death of his youngest sister to whom he was devotedly attached, and the boy was so overcome with misery that the agitated mother clasped him in her arms and received the kiss of death. My lords, I hardly know a subject more pathetic, or one which poets and professors of the fine arts, whether in painting, sculpture, or in gems, might find more fitting to commemorate." Earl Granville, who seconded the vote, read the following tender extract from a letter by the Prince of Wales: "So good, so kind, so clever. We had gone through so much together—my father's illness and then my own—and she has succumbed to the pernicious malady which laid low her husband and children, whom she tenderly watched with unceasing care and attention. The Queen, bears up bravely, but her grief is deep, beyond words." England has reason to be grateful for a Court which has furnished such a noble example of true Christian womanhood.

Her memory long will live alone In all our hearts, as mournful light, That broods above the fallen sun And dwells in heaven half the night.