

Truth's Contributors.

AROUND LONDON ON SUNDAY.

[From "Truth's" Special Correspondent.]

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Sunday can scarcely be said to be so well observed in London as in Toronto—that is outwardly. Cabs and buses lumber through the streets in every direction; trains shoot across the street overhead or rumble underfoot carrying their hundreds and thousands away from the smoky city to the green lanes of suburban towns. (Who can blame those who go solely to get out of this great riot of humanity and hold a short service of their own with the congregation of trees and flowers that stand ever ready to "clap their little hands in glee," as Longfellow would say, and never utter a harsh sentiment about us or sermon?) Fruit and candy stores stand open here and there; oyster-mongers display their cart loads of oranges close to the sidewalk and tempt the appetite of the thirsty stroller by showing a few oranges partially skinned and with a slice off the top exposing a depth of lusciousness beneath, while—another feature of English life—dense crowds stand in front of every public house as morning draws on, waiting for the bars to open, and these crowds number old women, young girls and little children who are sent with jugs for the family's beer, if they do not come on their own account. We hear, by the way, of a deep depression over all Great Britain, but we forget that money enough is drunk in beer, whiskey and gin in a single day to provide employment for all the poor of the Kingdom for a week.

The first Sunday I spent in London I took the opportunity of hearing Spurgeon, the celebrated Baptist preacher. He had been ill for a long time and had just reappeared in his pulpit. He did not look like a stranger at least—as if he were suffering, for he has a corpulent figure and a round and pleasant English face. The tabernacle was crowded as usual. All seats not occupied ten minutes before the time of starting service may be appropriated by strangers. I got a good seat in the body of the tabernacle, and with a sea of faces all round me was relapsing into reflections on the loneliness of being in a strange church, feeling that one is in somebody else's pew and surrounded by a multitude with not one familiar face, when—lo! up in the gallery near the preacher's chair I beheld Mr. — of Toronto, while a few seats in front of me sat Mr. — and Miss — of Niagara Falls. I immediately felt at home. Mr. Spurgeon on opening the service referred to his illness, and hoped that if his voice was not so strong, or his sermons as clear as it ought to be, they would know the reason why. His sermon was founded on the incident of the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, or rather the conversation which takes place between Christ and his disciples when they return from the town with food. "In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The disciples had been charged with grossness, for their incapacity to see any other than a physiological meaning to our Saviour's words, but the preacher thought these words were quite natural. No man could live without eating, and he thought man should devote a full share of their exertions to providing their tables with healthy food; but what he wished to show was the enthusiasm of Christ in the work he came to do. This Samaritan woman, whose past life had been none too good and who had come out for water at an hour when few people were

about, was the first convert made by Christ. Step by step, in the conversation about the water of this life he had led the woman up to a degree of realization of the source of spiritual life, and as he looked into her soul and saw the first evidence of her willingness to receive the new "gift of God," a new enthusiasm filled his own soul and made him forget for the time his own bodily wants. Mr. Spurgeon's hearers might think it was a great thing to be able to preach before a vast congregation and have his sermons repeated in papers read by millions, but he assured them he felt a greater satisfaction and deemed it a greater honor to have some person come quietly and testify that he had been saved through his preaching. He never felt a deeper joy than when he read one day in some paper of a West Indian who had been converted by reading a translation of one of his sermons. There was more honor in doing the obscure work of Christ than in making a public noise. This first sermon of the greatest preacher on earth was preached to but one person, and that a woman of doubtful character, when many a preacher of these days would not think it worth while to waste a word upon. And yet Christ's highest skill of illustration and his greatest tact were thrown into this conversation, and the reception of it filled his whole heart with joy and anticipation of the future of his gospel as he pointed to the crowd of Samaritans then coming up and said: "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." The whole sermon was an encouragement to those who are willing to do the solid and unostentatious work of Christianity in this world.

There was no collection; but strangers, as they came to the parish, were handed a little envelope into which, if they wished, they could put something for the new college.

Spurgeon's is the eloquence of plain words; he uses no flowery oratory, but, like Moody, says what he means in words that any ordinary man may understand. This, with his earnestness, is the secret of his power.

Yesterday a friend took me to hear Dr. Joseph Parker at the Congregational church known as the City Temple, in High Holborn. Dr. Parker has a fame in the Congregational Church of England corresponding to that of Dr. Will in Canada, except that Dr. Parker's gifts are not of the prophetic order. His talent is rather in the dramatic line. He is about 60 years of age, in physique, and especially in voice, he calls Henry Irving to mind at once. If he had not been a preacher he would have been a splendid tragedian. The church was well filled, as I supposed it always is. The interior is very handsome; having a gallery supported by columns with Corinthian capitals, and just enough of gilt and light coloring about them, and the other decorations, to relieve it of the sombreness of most London churches. It has the everlasting stained glass on all the windows. In one close by us, our Saviour in a bright colored garb is represented talking to the Samaritan woman at the well, the woman also dressed in bright red, with the apostles so close about them that they must have heard all that was said—in fact they seem to be participating in the conversation. Again, in the midst of a sort of Catharine wheel window, behind the pulpit, the Saviour of the world in a garment of the brightest red, and—

But, to the preacher. It appeared that this was one of a series of sermons the doctor was preaching on the book of Job. The general design was not quite clear, but one point in this part was that the speech of

Zophar, the Naamathite, in which he accused Job of indulging in too much eloquence, was justified by the facts—that Job insisted too much on his own virtues, and held up to a stronger light than needed, his sufferings. It was like a banker who was fond of telling how he could do the financing of the world. In hearing such a man we could not forget that it was a banker who was talking; Eliphaz, the Temanite, was presumed to be one who saw visions and had a turn for spiritualism; Bildad, the Shuhite, was versed in the literature and philosophy of the day, and Zophar, in his speeches, represented the contemporaneous thought of the time. These men could not help thinking, as was natural to them—that Job, for his sufferings, had committed some secret crime which he could not confess to the world. Job, on the other hand, appeared to have misunderstood the teaching of his trials.

So much for the sermons. Before the congregation had chanted one of the familiar church of England chants, joined they in singing the plaintive:—

"Miserable, sighing to be blest,
Home, and longing to be free,
Wearied, waiting for my rest,
Lord be merciful to me."

The effect of an English congregation's singing is that of a melodeon, compared with the thinner pipe organ sound of a Canadian congregation, I fancied.

Just before the collection the doctor reminded us that the contributions would be in aid of the annual Sunday School treat, and they proposed bringing the children down to the seaside and give them a breath of sea air, a romp on the sea shore, or a dip in the surf. It was also proposed to take a few of the poor old men—and the doctor lingered pityingly on the "e" till the people smiled sympathizingly—and it was remarkable when it was mentioned to the few poor old people, how many other old people had turned up during the week and said, "they had heard of it." In consequence the committee had more to provide for than they expected. The appeal was made with perfect art, and I noticed a good number of gold pieces in the collection box, when it came round. I had had a penny in my hand, but when he brought out that pitying old I brought out a sixpence instead. If I had been anything but a newspaper man I would have made it a sovereign.

"FIRST AND LAST OF FIELDS."

BY J. A. L.

The distance from Belgium's beautiful capital to the battlefield of Waterloo is about 10 miles. On the evening of June 15, 1815, when the officers of the allied arm were tripping around the ballroom of the Duchesse of Richmond, and the rank and file were snoozing quietly in their respective billets, few of the peaceful inhabitants of Brussels knew how far it was to Waterloo. But some 60 hours later, when the roar of the great battle swept over Brussels from the southward, each peaceful citizen was doubtless convinced in his own mind that Waterloo was just around the corner. When on the morning of June 16, 1815, the allied soldiers were ordered to set out in the direction of Waterloo they were obliged to walk. At the present day the tourist who wishes to visit Waterloo drives to the Station du Midi and takes a train which 40 minutes later sets him at a queer little cross roads station, Braine l'Alleud. Here he finds the famous battle site. The number

blouses and black caps. They all speak broken English, and they all do their talking at a considerable distance down their throats. And they all have colds. There is nothing musical about the heavy guttural utterances of a Flemish peasant, who rejoices in the possession of a voice in perfect health, but when he is suffering from a cold his cadences strike susceptible nerves quite unpleasantly. The tourist belongs to the guide who reaches him first. Those who ascend to the top floor of the bus do so by means of a ladder, which is then removed. This makes it difficult for the dissatisfied passenger to get off before he reaches the first inn connected with the bus line. The road from Braine l'Alleud to the battlefield is beset by juvenile beggars, who turn somersaults whenever a bus or carriage approaches, and then run after it chanting, "Please, Messieurs, charity; please, Messieurs, charity." The creatures keep this up as long as there remains a single person in the vehicle who has not thrown them something, and then, without stopping to rest, they

SWOOP DOWN BELENTLESSLY ON the next conveyance. The foot traveller who falls into the hands of these youthful brigands must be liberal if he hopes to escape. The little beggar will follow his prey regardless of an apparent determination not to notice him. From the road which leads to the battlefield may be seen a number of pretty little villas, which are evidently the summer homes of the retired gildes and of the parents and guardians of the youthful beggars. Shortly before the bus reaches the end of its journey it suddenly halts in front of a quiet inn, out of which comes a polite waiter, who calls out, "Will not the gentleman have some of the good beer what they like?" Within a few moments after the tourist has made his escape from this inn he alights near the foot of the Lion Mound. This mound, which was erected over the spot where the Prince of Orange was wounded and where still rest the bones of thousands who perished in the fight, is 200 feet high and over 2,000 feet in circumference at the base. A flight of steps lead up to the top of the mound, which is crowned with a block of granite, on which stands a huge figure of the Belgian lion resting one of his fore paws on a cannon ball and looking down proudly into the little valley which lies before him. In this little valley, which does not appear to be more than half a mile in width, was fought the famous battle of Waterloo. Along the ridge on which stands the Lion Mound were posted the allied troops, who, all day long on the famous 18th of June, successfully resisted the gallantry of France and the genius of Napoleon. The ridge to the left of the mound is not as high as it was when the battle was fought, as the car of which the mound is composed was moved from there. Across the valley, exposed to the wind, can be seen the ruins of the village of La Belle Alliance, while to the right of the mound, and just outside the city of Waterloo, stands the heretofore mentioned Napoleon. To lay aside one's thoughts of the battle with the view of other things, one may go along the road. At a little distance from the mound is the station of Waterloo. The number