

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XI.—No. 35.

TORONTO, MARCH 7, 1895.

\$1.50 per Annum

Let Down Your Nets.

Launch out into the deep,
The awful depths of a world's despair;
Hearts that are breaking and eyes that weep,
Sorrow and ruin and death are there,
And the sea is wide, and the pitiless tide
Bears on its bosom—away,
Beauty and youth in relentless ruth
To its dark abyss for aye—for aye,
But the Master's voice comes over the sea,
"Let down your nets for a draught" for Me!
He stands in our midst on our wreck-strewn strand,
And sweet and royal is His command.
His pleading call is to each—to all;
And whenever the royal call is heard,
There hangs the nets of the royal Word.
Trust to the nets and not to your skill,
Trust to the royal Master's will!
Let down your nets each day, each hour,
For the word of a King is a word of power,
And the King's own voice comes over the sea,
"Let down your nets for a draught" for Me!
London Presbyterian.

The Christian's Responsibility.

EVERY careful student of history has observed the wonderful interlinkings of events all along the ages of the past. No event occurs not connected with some other event; and growing out of this we can see very clearly the working and power of influence. Influence is a power which in many of its operations may be seen; but its most potent and dangerous power mostly operates unseen. It fashions opinion, molds character, gives shape to the career of men and nations. Influences apparently unimportant, and seeming to be entirely without design, have given shape and character to some of the most wonderful events in the world's history.

Every man has his influence, and in it a power—a power either for good or evil. And it is a solemn thought that it works when he is gone, even when he is forgotten—works through the thoughts and deeds of survivors—works with an energy that never sleeps or grows weary. It never dies. It cannot perish. It speaks when he is dead. When his eyes are closed in the last sleep, his hands folded on his still breast, and his cold lips sealed in silence, it may be said of him "He being dead, yet speaketh."

Let none of us say we have no influence. We have. It is as inseparable from our social life as is the air we breathe from our physical life. I care not how lowly our condition, we are more or less associated with every movement around us, with every member of society, whether they be younger or older, weaker or stronger than ourselves. We exert an unconscious influence. We are always casting the shadow of our real life upon some one, and a single word spoken or a look given, may affect the immortal destiny of some with whom we associate.

If the mute lips of Abel are still speaking so loudly and so widely, how will the multitude of words which you and I speak ever reverberate? Many of them too, it may be, wrong words, wicked words. It is a solemn

thought. We utter them, and may think they died at the utterance. But not so; for this universe is a vast atmosphere of waves which will carry them on and on. The poet says

"Never a word is said
But it trembles in the air,
And the truant voice has sped
To vibrate everywhere;
And perhaps far off in eternal years
The echo may ring upon our ears."

It is said that among the Alps at certain seasons the traveler is told to proceed very quietly, for on the steep slopes overhead the snow hangs so evenly balanced that the rebort of a gun, or even the sound of a human voice, may destroy the equilibrium and bring down an immense avalanche that will overwhelm everything in its downward path. And so, about our way, for aught we know, there may be a soul in the very crisis of its moral history, trembling between spiritual life and death, and a touch, a single word from us, may determine its destiny.

A young lady under conviction of sin, and deeply concerned for her salvation, had her solemn impressions all dissipated by the unseemly jesting of a member of the church by her side as she was passing out of the sanctuary. The irreverent spirit that was shown by this thoughtless professor of religion cast a shadow on that young lady, who was already not far from the kingdom, and turned her away from the Cross. How important then that we should always and everywhere walk worth of our high calling as Christians—

"So that our lips and lives express
The holy Gospel we profess."

It is not the Luthers and Wesleys and Washingtons alone that exert wide influences, that give shape to present enterprises, and direction to coming events. Not these alone, we say, but the humble and obscure may have no unimportant share in shaping and controlling everything around us. A late writer says: "As the smallest particle of matter on this globe of ours exerts an influence upon the largest and most distant orb rolling in the universe, so the most obscure individual, unknown to fortune or to fame, must have assisted in swelling the tide of influence which is now pouring its resistless torrents over the intellectual and moral world."

Should you sail out on the ocean and drop a pebble into the water, you would observe little circling wavelets around where it fell. Now philosophers tell us that these little ripples will continue to widen and widen until they reach the land, and that their motion will be felt by each grain of sand along the wave-line on the shore. So with every little deed which we cast into the sea of time. It will make its ripple, the circles of which will continue to widen until they reach the shore of time, when they will leap across the stream of death, and commence their unending life on the great ocean of eternity. Even the wavelet which starts in the seclusion of our own home may wash the shores of the land which is immortal.