

WEARY, LONELY, RESTLESS, HOMELESS.

Wearied hearts! weary hearts! by calm of life oppressed,
Ye are wandering in the shadows, ye are sighing for the rest;
There is darkness in the heavens, and the earth is black below,
And the days ye take to-day may to-morrow turn to woe.
Wearied hearts! God is rest.

Lonely hearts! lonely hearts! 'tis but a hand of grief;
Ye are pining for repose, ye are longing for relief;
What the world hath never given, kneel and ask of God above,
And your grief shall turn to gladness if you lean upon His love.
Lonely hearts! God is love.

Restless hearts! restless hearts! ye are tolling night and day,
And the flowers of life, all withered, leave but thorns along your way;
Ye are waiting, ye are waiting, till your tollings here shall cease,
And your ever-restless throbbing to a sad, sad prayer for peace.
Restless hearts! God is peace.

Broken hearts! broken hearts! ye are desolate and lone;
And low voices from the past o'er your present ruins moan;
In the sweetest of your pleasures there was bitterest alloy,
And a starless night hath followed on the sunset of your joy.
Broken hearts! God is joy.

Homeless hearts! homeless hearts! through the dreary, dreary years,
Ye are lonely, lonely wanderers, and your way is wet with tears;
In bright or blighted places, where'er ye may roam,
Ye look away from earthland and ye murmur, "Where is home?"
Homeless hearts! God is home.

—[Father Ryan.]

BLUE BIRD THOUGHTS.

The first blue bird has come, and has gladdened our frost-stricken ears with its sweet voice, the most cheering sound of all the year. From cold frozen thoughts and downcast look our eyes are again turned upward, and instead of depending upon black stoves and dusty furnaces for warmth, turn with gladness to the genial sun. We are filled with joy at the song of birds and the genial warmth; our eyes are gladdened to see the bosom of the brown earth uncovered, and the faint glimmer of green is soothing and refreshing beyond description. Joy and gladness fill every heart, pain is forgotten for a time, sorrow is soothed and mingled with a tinge of gladness, the sad face of those long sick and emaciated with disease brightens, and their sad eyes turn lovingly to the light, and hope drowns out despair. Those who have shivered with cold through the long months of winter find their scanty garments comfortable, and they look with pity on the pampered victim of great coats and clumsy overshoes, and feel an honest pride that there is so little between them and the warm sun of Spring. But the man of the great coat and muffling overshoe is also cheered with hope, and he endures the probationary state of "wearing them a little longer" like a man, and knows that he too will soon shed his coat and come out a gorgeous butterfly.

The effect of the change from cold winter to darting Spring is wonderful to contemplate, and is a subject of wide scope for the mind. Contemplate the condition of man and beast through a long cold winter. Man and beast as a great whole, remembering that the well-fed, well-housed, well-clothed are the exception and not the rule. Think of the thousands of dumb beasts that have nibbled at a straw stack in open fields while the fierce blasts of winter blew; think of their shrunken, half-starved condition—how weak, how hungry, how forlorn. Think of poor humanity who by thousands have grown sallow and sick in smoky, dark rooms; think of their thin, ill-clothed, ill-fed bodies and their disheartened souls. How many poor mothers with great loving hearts have seen their darling children suffer for light, for air, for warmth, for food—sicken and die for lack of these. How many a brave heart in man has been forced to endure the sight of the suffering wife whom he would gladly die to spare. How many incurable sick in hospital, in poor houses, in jail, in the by-ways and highways, have only kept the spark of life glimmering like the last flickering flame of a lamp whose oil is consumed, without one ray of hope, or joy, and naught but despair and impatience to be gone. They are a mighty host, and to these the first note of the blue bird is like a messenger from heaven, promising, in place of biting cold, genial warmth; in place of dingy darkness, beautiful light; for reeking air, balmy breezes; in place of hunger, fruit and bread; in place of idleness, glorious work. To the starved beast it means green fields and bubbling brooks, sweet peace and content. To man and beast it is a great

Easter time. The rising from death of all nature to their relief and salvation. To the pampered sons and daughters of plenty the voice of the blue bird—the coming of Spring—means poetry and love, delight, happiness, music and joy.

To us in Highland Park the coming of Spring, the song of the blue bird means a full proportion of all that has been described. Many a creature, both man and beast, shivers even in the warm sunlight in horror, in contemplation of the months that have past, many an old man, many an invalid, is filled with gratitude that once more they may be permitted to breathe the balmy air of Spring, and stranger still the hard-faced banker and merchant feels a gentle emotion steal over him like a lovely bird picking or beating its gentle wings against some solid rock. But it is to the young heart of the gentle maidens, with their tender eyes and graceful motions; to the bashful youth, with their true hearts and all-appreciating eyes, that the blue birds give a secret and peculiar quaver to his notes, those for whom they were intended, need no interpreter, and none else can understand. The long winter, thank God, is past. The blue bird proclaims it Spring!—as the beautiful flower puts on its choicest beauty, let humanity greet its coming with its best and purest nature, let peace, joy and love fill all hearts.

"The other man"—the writer of the above—fortunately absented himself just before the arrival of those ungenial days of last week with their icicles and snow-showers, and will probably not return until some "harbingers of Spring" more reliable than blue birds and editors "tell us that the Spring is near."

SOME OF THE RESULTS OF THE MEETINGS.

Probably no one in Highland Park is unaware of the fact that a series of prayer meetings has been in progress here since the first of January, which have been accompanied with certain good effects. Even to those who are disposed to deny that the providence of God has wrought in our midst a most wonderful work, it must be clearly evident that to us, as a community, there have accrued, during the progress of these meetings, good results which we can ascribe to no known natural cause. We do not propose, however, to search for the cause. Call it the effect of religion, of superstition, of fantasy, of delusion, of what you will, you must nevertheless admit that the effect is here. Let us look at this effect from a purely social standpoint, and consider the temporal, not the spiritual, good resulting from the meetings.

This effect has been twofold, private and general. Certain persons among us have experienced a definite change of purpose, which has influenced them to adopt a new course of living and to model their aims and actions after a purer and higher exemplar than before. To themselves this change has already been of present good. It has given breadth to their views, depth to their thoughts, vigor to their consciences, reliance to their purposes, has made them better citizens, and it is hardly safe to predict how much of future blessing it may bring. It is true that the number of these persons is small in comparison with our whole community. But it is large enough to make an important part of it. And throughout the range of their influence, differing with each individual, the effect of their change of purpose and of life is distinctly felt. Neither can it be denied that the introduction of an element of happiness into a community is of substantial good. And should you ask any of these persons as to the effect in themselves of this spiritual change, as they call it, or this mental change as you may prefer to name it, they will, without exception, tell you that it has brought to them gladness, a certain rest and peace and comfort and contentment, which they find of real advantage.

The general good effect of the meetings has been primarily moral and intellectual, although these primary effects cannot fail of secondary good result in many other more patent if not more practical directions. There has been throughout the community a general elevation of the moral tone of the people. It is a matter readily susceptible of proof that this has ever been the conse-

quence of increased religious interest in any community. It will hardly, we think, be denied that it is such in our case, though perhaps less easily discerned because the moral standard of our community has in the past, as we are proud to say, been higher than that of other cities where the rum shop and the gaming-table set the laws of God and man at defiance. Profanity, impiety, immorality have ever been among us at a discount. But it is safe to assert that they have retrograded several per cent further since the meetings began. It could hardly be otherwise. No system of philosophy, no code of rules presents so high a standard of morality as the Christian religion in its "golden rule" and in its general teachings. And however far short of their standard the professors of this religion may come, it is certainly the fact that the assumption by them of new zeal in their purpose and new devotion to their cause, as in the course of these meetings, has a direct tendency to raise the moral tone of their own lives not only but of the whole community, of which they form a considerable part.

The intellectual effect of the meetings consists mainly in the improvement of taste and in mental refinement, though in some cases these are accompanied with marked increase of vigor and brain power. This effect is difficult to trace or exemplify without illustration. We do not mean to assert that mental power is dependent on or the effect of religion. But we do assert that religion adds to the mind many graces and exerts upon it a beneficent effect. You may take two men in the ordinary walks of life, of exactly similar mental capacity, and let one experience the feelings and assume the purposes usually included by Christians in what they term a "change of heart," and you will find that in one year's time there is a wide difference between these men and that the mental stature of the Christian convert outstrips the other. He has a clearer conception of life and its duties, of the world and its measures, of the future and its possibilities, he has better intellectual taste and discernment, he prefers better books and seeks stronger mental pabulum than the other man. And this effect in him has its influence marked and manifest in his community. Mind is not a light that you can hide under a bushel. When it is made in individuals better or stronger, that effect is speedily discernable in the circle of their acquaintance.

We present these few crude thoughts on a great subject as suggestions, because we do not believe that our citizens, Christians or non-professors, Catholic or Protestant, whatever they may be, begin to estimate the material advantages which these meetings for the last three months have brought to them individually and collectively.

It is true that when we touch upon these advantages, we just commence to tell the story of the good done by these meetings as agencies of Divine Providence, the immensity of good in their spiritual effect on this community. But that does not lie within our purpose now.

A. O. FAY.

A. O. Fay, Esq., now of Xenia, O., was one of the earliest citizens of Highland Park. He was among the first to come, and, reluctantly to all, among the first to leave us. He belonged to that small band which made up our little society in the first years of our history. While he was one of the first to go away, forced so to do by business changes, he will be one of the last to be forgotten or to lose his well earned place in the hearts of those who knew him when here. He, with his good wife, who shares all our esteem with her husband, paid Highland Park a visit during last month, stopping at the house of Mrs. A. K. Allen, whose lamented husband was one of Mr. Fay's warmest friends. Rev. G. L. Wrenn also one of Mr. Fay's old friends gave him a reception, at his residence, on Friday evening, February 26th, where many of the old-time companions gathered and spent a most enjoyable evening, in many respects seeming like the cherished early day. Mr. & Mrs. Fay have not lost their affection for Highland Park, and they will be sure of a hearty welcome whenever they favor us with the pleasure of their presence.