

THE LATE MR. P. P. BLISS.

The telegraphic announcement that Mr. and Mrs. P. P. Bliss were on board the fatal train which plunged into the gulf with that broken bridge at Ashtabula, O., and perished with the rest, sent a pang of sorrow through the country. All who perished in that most appalling disaster left friends to mourn their loss and cherish their memory; but in the case of Mr. Bliss, whose hymns and tunes had made him a favourite in thousands of churches and with millions of Sunday-school scholars, his mourners, on both sides the Atlantic, are innumerable. * * *

Mr. Bliss was only thirty-eight years old. He was born in Rome, Penn. His parents were very poor, and his early advantages were extremely limited. It was to his admirable wife that he appears to have been most indebted for his earlier beginnings of culture; and to the last she was to a singular degree his greatest helper. After her, one of his first instructors in music was Mr. Root. Coming to Chicago some ten years ago, he was employed in the music establishment of Root & Cady. The great fire of 1872 dissolved that connection, and he has been wont to say that the Fire was the making of him, setting him at liberty to devote himself to the special kind of work to which he felt himself called of God. His first church connection was the Methodist, but coming to Chicago he united with the First Congregational Church, Dr. Goodwin's, and was for a number of years both its chorister and Sunday-school superintendent.

One of the sweetest of the hymns and tunes composed by him, is the one entitled "When Jesus Comes." Among those most in use, and which have been most evidently blessed in the using are the "Hallelujah, 'tis done!" "Calling now for thee," "Whosoever will," "That will be Heaven for me," "Hold the Fort," "Once for all," "We're going Home to-morrow," the one so dear to little ones, "Jesus loves even me," "More to Follow," "Where hast thou gleaned to-day," "The light of the world is Jesus," "Let the lower lights

be Burning," "Pull for the Shore," and "My Prayer."

Last Sunday, in some schools, and we presume in many, the hymns used were exclusively those which Mr. Bliss has left us. The one beginning, "Free from the law, oh, happy condition," Mr. Moody thinks will live always.

Of late, as is well known, he has been the constant associate in evangelistic work of Major D. W. Whittle. No one can possibly feel his loss more deeply than our friend Major Whittle. They had seemed as necessary to each other as Moody and Sankey. At the time when he met his death he was on his way to Chicago to join Major Whittle in carrying forward the work in this city begun by Messrs. Moody and Sankey. The first report was that Mr. and Mrs. Bliss with their two little children were all caught up in an undivided group, to their heavenly home. It was since ascertained, however, that the children had been left with their grandmother in Rome, Pa. At the noon prayer-meeting, New Year's Day, Mr. Moody announced that \$10,000 had already been subscribed toward a fund for the education of the orphaned children, now adopted by the churches.—*Advance*.

The strength of our English Congregationalism is the living interest of our church members in our work. We have never talked of bringing the laity into our council; we have never talked of getting the strength of the laity into our work; the laity is the church, and the work of the church is to be done by them, and the councils of the church are to be guided by them, and the sacrifices of the church are to be made by them, else, be they living how they may, they are not living according to the Congregational idea—they are not living in the Congregational spirit.—*Hannay*.

POSTSCRIPT.—The great pressure upon our news columns this month has compelled us to add four pages to this number, which we trust our readers will duly appreciate.—[*Ed. C. I.*]