

The Home Bird's Song.

BY THE REV. MAGEE PRATT.

The birds have no song. They are voiceless and mute

As a broken harp, or a stringless lute;
And though their colours are bright and fair,
They miss the best charm a bird can bare
To those who never have heard the lay,
The home bird's carol at close of day.
Or at early morning known them call
The sun from his hiding to light them all;
It's almost useless for me to tell
Of the tuneful voices I love so well.
But had I though I own that varied and grand
Are the many charms of this pleasant land,
The people must miss such a wondrous thing,
They've ne'er heard a sweet sound. The
birds never sing.

How cheering the thought when the sky-
lark rose
From his grassy nest in the meadow close,
And mounted aloft to the azure sky,
Chanting his love song, clear and high,
That so I should rise from the lowly earth,
And take to the heavens that gave it birth,
The perfect strain of the finished song;
The first few notes of which so long
We tried to sing, that men might hear
The music sweet of a nobler sphere.
But here I may listen, and listen in vain,
To catch the soft notes of its song again,
For as the bright air they cleave on the wing,
They are voiceless and mute. The birds
never sing.

And often I've wandered, when day was
done,
With a saddened heart and silent tongue,
And mused on the wasted hours, long past
For ever from me, till my tears fell fast.
And all at once, as a message from God,
The voice of the nightingale echoed abroad
In wordless enchantment, so potent a spell,
That, cheered by its song, my voice joined
to swell
The anthem of praise, that in night's black-
est hour
Bore witness to men of God's mercy and
power.
But here I may wander in passion and pain
Through shadow and gloom; and listen in
vain,
For never again through my sad heart shall
ring
Its message of love. The birds never sing.

A Memorable Service.

THE EX-PUPILS OF RICHMOND STREET
CHURCH SABBATH-SCHOOL HOLD
THEIR LAST MEETING IN
THE OLD BUILDING.

THE Richmond Street Methodist church, which is about to terminate its long career of usefulness as a place of worship, was on Sunday afternoon, March 18th, the scene of a very affecting gathering. Within the old walls were assembled about 600 persons, past and present scholars of the Sabbath-school, some of whom had come a long distance to attend the valedictory service of the school. The singing of favourite hymns and short addresses from grey-haired ex-pupils made the two hours' service seem very brief.

The school was first organized in George Street in 1832, with Mr. George Bilton as superintendent. In 1858 Mr. W. H. Pearson accepted the management of the school, and retained it without a break to the present time. In its day the school has turned out a long list of ministers, superintendents, teachers and church members. It is

estimated that during the 56 years the school has been altogether in existence from 8000 to 10,000 pupils have passed through it.

Gathered around Mr. Pearson on the flower-embowered platform were the present pastor, Rev. John Pickering, Rev. M. Pearson, Rev. R. W. Woodworth, Rev. Tho. Cullen, Rev. Hugh Johnston, Rev. E. A. Stafford, Rev. George Cornish, LL.D., Rev. W. W. Edwards, Rev. J. M. Wilkinson, Rev. J. Tamblin, Rev. W. H. Withrow, Messrs. R. Wilkins, J. Jennings, A. Brown, T. G. Mason, W. Gooderham, W. Edwards, R. Pratt, E. M. Morphy, R. H. Clark and Ald. Baxter. In the audience were many well-known faces now associated with other Methodist congregations.

Supt. Pearson said that as he looked around on his audience he was filled with peculiar emotions. Those before him were very different from what they were when he first saw them. When he looked at the young men and women before him he could hardly believe that they had passed through his hands when young children, and that many of them had been taken by him from the infant class to form junior Sabbath-school classes. He was thankful to Almighty God that they had all been spared to the present day. Many of the old scholars were now filling influential places in the world, but what was of far more importance, they had given their hearts to God and were fighting their way to mansions in the skies. When asked by the pastor to organize some memorial meetings he felt that nothing could be more profitable than a grand gathering of the old school children, because he believed it might be made a time of special power and gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. If there was one thing he desired outside the conversion of the members of his own family it was the salvation of all his Sunday-school children. It was some pleasure to know, after over thirty years' service, that there was not one towards whom he entertained an unkind feeling and he did not know of any who felt unkindly towards him. The school had a good record. He knew of many scores and hundreds of children who had been brought to God in it. Some of the ministers on the platform dated their conversion from the time they attended old Richmond Street Sunday-school. There had been a blessed outpouring of the Spirit last Sunday and a large number of the children had promised that they would live for God. There was a gentleman in the audience who had belonged to the old George Street school in 1832, which was before many of those present were born. There were eighteen Pearsons present—not all his family, though—(laughter)—as only eight of them belonged to him. The school had sent out 37 Methodist ministers.

After singing "Shall we Gather at the River," Rev. W. W. Edwards, of Dorchester, spoke. He claimed to be

a twin brother of the church, as he was born the same year in which the corner-stone had been laid—in 1844. He attended the Sabbath-school, was converted there, and preached his trial sermon for the ministry in the old school-room. He led the audience in singing a number of old time hymns.

Mr. William Gooderham was a secretary of the school in 1843, and this service made him feel that he was getting old. He told the young people that when Neil, the murderer, was asked what led him to enter upon his evil course, he replied "bad company," and this should be a solemn warning to them.

Mr. R. H. Clark, an old Sabbath-school teacher, said he thanked God for his early connection with the school and church, for in them he had often been helped in his upward course.

Mr. Fred Warrington, another old scholar, gave a sacred solo, after which the programme was interrupted to allow the presentation of a handsomely illuminated and framed address to Mr. Pearson from the scholars and teachers on the occasion of his retirement from the Sabbath-school superintendency after a service of nearly 30 years.

Mr. Pearson replied very briefly and feelingly, and remarked that his connection with the school had been the most happy period of his life. The audience then broke into a verse of "Shall we Gather at the River."

Mr. John Dillon, of Montreal, who had been a scholar, teacher and secretary of the school, recalled a few facts, notably the election of Mr. Pearson to the position of superintendent.

Ald. John Baxter attended the first Sabbath-school of the church in George Street. There were only about half a dozen present who went to school with him. He was thankful to say that through all his career the germ of Christianity that was then sown had never left him.

Mr. Richard Brown, who is now superintendent of Sherbourne Street Methodist church, spoke a few words about his early connection with Richmond Street.

Mr. Alex. Brown was a pupil of Mr. Pearson 33 years ago. He said that his attendance at the school had followed and blessed him all through life. The present meeting was not a funeral, but rather a grand transplanting bee. He prayed that the blessed work might still go on in the new church.

Mr. James Jennings, whom Mr. Pearson introduced as having stood up with him at marriage, related his connection with the school and his conversion in it. Mr. E. M. Morphy spoke with much effect, as did also the Rev. Hugh Johnston.

As it was impossible to get through the programme, it was decided to continue it at the evening service. The morning service was conducted by Rev. James Woodsworth.

The closing of this old church does

not mean the cessation of religious work on this historic ground. It means rather the extension of that influence in another form. It often happens that old churches become converted into theatres or dime shows, not so with old Richmond Street. It becomes the headquarters of the publishing, missionary and other departmental work of the Methodist Church. As a Sunday-school agency this old centre will be the source whence shall issue a continual stream of hallowed influence, reaching from Bermuda to Japan. From its presses shall pour out 150,000 printed pages of Sunday-school papers and lesson helps every day, besides the weekly issues of the grand old *Guardian* and the other periodicals of our Church. This is not the death of Methodism on this spot, it is rather its rejuvenation—the beginning of a new epoch, of an era of wider usefulness and permanent blessing.

"Five Minutes More to Live."

A YOUNG man stood before a large audience in the most fearful position a human being could be placed—on the scaffold! The noose had been adjusted around his neck. In a few moments more he would be in eternity. The sheriff took out his watch, and said, "If you have anything to say, speak now, as you have but five minutes more to live." What awful words for a young man to hear, in full health and vigour!

Shall I tell you his message to the youth about him? He burst into tears, and said, with sobbing, "I have to die! I had only one little brother. He had beautiful blue eyes and flaxen hair. How I loved him! I got drunk, the first time. I found my little brother gathering strawberries. I got angry with him, without cause, and killed him with a blow from a rake. I knew nothing about it until I awoke the next day and found myself guarded. They told me, when my little brother was found, his hair was clotted with his blood and brains. Whiskey has done it. It has ruined me. I have only one more word to say to the young people before I go to stand in the presence of my Judge. Never, never, NEVER touch anything that can intoxicate!"

Think what one indulgence in drink may do! This youth was not an habitual drunkard. Shun the deadly cup which steals away your senses before you are aware of it; for you cannot know the dreadful deeds you may commit while under its influence. —*Sunday-School Messenger.*

Do not be desirous to have things done quickly; do not look at small advantages. Desire to have things done quickly prevents their being done thoroughly. Looking at small advantages prevents great affairs from being accomplished.—*Confucius.*