

PULPIT AND PRESS.

How the religious newspaper may aid the pulpit and benefit the home, is well stated in the following extract from Dr. Murphy's work on Pastoral Theology:—

"In a previous chapter we sought to show that it is for the interests of pastors to keep themselves well informed, through religious journals, of the progress of Christ's kingdom; we would now strongly urge upon them that they should also use their influence to introduce such journals into the families of their congregations. As almost all great enterprises of the day have their newspaper to support them, so every denomination of Christians, and every important Christian undertaking has its journal. There are papers adapted to every class of minds and to every drift of religious thought. This subject the minister should look into, and endeavor to have his people benefited by the rich stores of instruction which are flowing out from the religious press.

"He may draw much important aid in his work from this source. The periodical religious press, when habitually perused, will undoubtedly make the people more intelligent, and, consequently, more interested in the kingdom of Christ; it will supplement the teachings of the pastor, which must necessarily be limited in extent; it will enforce by adding additional authority, the truths which are uttered from the pulpit. Its assistance will make the work of the pastor easier. It will give the people fuller information than the pulpit possibly can, about the great enterprises of benevolence which the church is carrying on, and so will interest them in those enterprises, and make them more liberal in their support. If religious journals did no more than take the place of, and so crowd out the pernicious literature that is issuing from so many other presses, it would be an unspeakable blessing to the Church and the world. *That pastor is neglecting a splendid auxiliary to his work, who is not using every effort to induce his people to take and read papers which are devoted to the spread of the righteousness of Christ in the salvation of souls, and purifying the lives of believers.*

"We need to give continued thought to the subject, in order to appreciate the value of a good religious newspaper, coming regularly into a family, and being read by its various members. Weekly it preaches its timely sermons to the household. Some of the most able and pious ministers, and other writers, that are to be found in the land, are those who may be heard through its pages. And they send forth, in this way, the very best of their thoughts. The religious newspaper keeps the people informed of what is going on in the Church and the whole kingdom of Christ. It says many things plainly to them which the pastor, from delicacy, or other causes, could not say. Many of the people will scarcely read anything else than newspapers; how deeply important it is that those papers be of the right kind! The family which habitually reads a good religious journal, will undoubtedly have a higher and more intelligent tone of piety than that which neglects this method for growth in knowledge. They will have wider views and more generous impulses towards the truth, whether it is to be supported at home or extended abroad."

WHAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE READ.

The "Sunday School Times" pertinently remarks: "Of books and periodicals unsuitable for young persons' reading, there are two great classes, the *bad* and the *vulgar*. A bad book is one which is positively injurious in tendency; one which, for instance, inculcates false notions of morals, and which, by example or precept, leads the reader to adopt or excuse wrong thoughts or evil practices. A vulgar book is one whose whole character is commonplace and unrefined; which deals with low—not necessarily indecent—subjects in a manner lacking delicacy and gentleness. Sometimes a vulgar book, as thus defined, is not a bad one; just as a bad book may not be a vulgar one. The reading of either is to be deplored. The guide of youth should feel that his duty in aiding them to

choose good reading includes the selection of books both of a high literary grade, and of those not pernicious in moral teaching. Many of the trashy "story papers" are quite careful not to admit into their columns matter which violates propriety; and theatrical managers say that "moral plays" best suit their lower-class patrons. But an intelligent parent would hardly wish his child to read sensational papers, or to witness plays in low theatres, on this account. On the other hand, some of the most eminent writers, of unquestioned merit as far as literary ability is concerned, write books which, though printed in the most refined periodicals or issued by the most fastidious publishers, ought to be banished from the family. The evil work of the bad book is worse than that of the coarse-grained one; for the former slays, where the latter stupefies. Let the reader and the guide of reading see to it that his own books and those of his dependants be both righteous and well-written."

THE STREAMLET AND THE POOL.

A minister of Philadelphia in illustrating the blessedness of cultivating a liberal spirit, uses this beautiful figure.

"See," he says, "that little fountain yonder—away yonder in the distant mountain, shining like a thread of silver through the thick copse, and sparkling like a diamond in its healthful activity. It is hurrying on with tinkling feet to bear its tribute to the river. See! it passes a stagnant pool, and the pool hails it.

"Whither away, master streamlet?"

"I am going to the river to bear this cup of water God has given me."

"Ah, you are very foolish for that—you'll need it before the summer is over. It has been a backward spring, and we shall have a hot summer to pay for it—you will dry up then."

"Well," said the streamlet, "if I am to die soon, I had better work while the day lasts. If I am likely to lose this treasure from the heat I had better do good while I have it."

"So on it went, blessing and rejoicing in its course. The pool smiled complacently at its own superior foresight, and husbanded all its resources, letting not a drop steal away. Soon the mid-summer heat came down, and it fell upon the little stream. But the trees crowded to its brink, and threw out their sheltering branches over it in the day of adversity, for it brought refreshment and life to them; and the sun peeped through the branches and smiled pleasantly upon its dimpled face, and seemed to say, 'It's not in my heart to harm you,' the birds sipped its silver tide, and sung its praises in the overhanging branches; flowers gemmed its border, and breathed their perfume upon its bosom; the beasts of the field loved to linger near its banks, and chewed the cud of content under its cool shadows, and the husbandman's eye always sparkled with joy as he looked upon the line of verdant beauty that marked its course through his fields and meadows; and so on it went, blessing and blessed of all!

"And where was the prudent pool? Alas! in its inglorious inactivity it grew sickly and pestilential. The beasts of the field put their lips to it, but turned away without drinking; the breeze stopped and kissed it by mistake, but shrunk chilled away. It inhaled the malaria in the contact, and carried the ague through the region, and the inhabitants caught it and had to move away; and at last the very frogs cast their venom upon the pool and deserted it, and Heaven in mercy to man, smote it with a hotter breath and dried it up!

"But did not the little stream exhaust itself? O no! God saw to that. It emptied its full cup into the river, and the river bore it on to the sea, and the sea welcomed it, and the sun smiled upon the sea, and the sea sent up its incense to greet the sun, and the clouds caught in their capacious bosoms the incense from the sea, and the winds, like waiting steeds, caught the chariots of the clouds and bore them away—away to the very mountains that gave the little fountain birth, and there they tipped the brimming cup, and poured the grateful baptism down; and so God saw to

it that the little fountain, though it gave so fully and so freely, never ran dry. And if God so blessed the fountain will He not bless you, my friends, if 'as ye have freely received, ye also freely give?' Be assured He will."

SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTITUTE.

For the many Sunday School workers who were not privileged to attend the Institute lately held in Toronto, we give a few points made and emphasized by the several speakers.

Rev. D. J. McDonnell, on "Some characteristics of Christ as a teacher," noted the following:—(1.) Authoritative and dogmatic—"I am the truth," etc. (2.) Illustrative—"Without a parable spake He not." "The Kingdom is like," etc. Urged teachers to learn to make analogies: get illustrations from nature, home-life, history, everywhere. (3.) Paradoxical—full of apparently contradictory statements. "My peace," and "I came not to send peace," etc. (4.) Suggestive—Dropped seed thoughts, which the disciples afterwards thought over. So should the teacher in the Sabbath School. (5.) Reticent—Did not attempt to explain all mysteries. The silence of Christ is suggestive. (6.) Discriminating—Christ has no cut-and-dried method of dealing with men; no uniform plan in His approach to men; e.g., Nicodemus—young Ruler—Zaccheus—Woman at well, etc. The wise teacher will study human nature. (7.) About Himself—He was his own theme, "I am the truth." Let Christ be the Alpha and Omega of the teacher.

Mr. H. I. Clark, superintendent of the Northern Congregational Church Sunday School, on "How to conduct a Sunday School Session," gave prominence to the fact that this was a *teaching* service, and that the larger part of the time should be devoted exclusively to teaching. Would give one quarter of an hour to opening, one quarter to close, and three-quarters to teaching. He allows no interruption to teachers while teaching. Punctuality and order were imperatively necessary. Opening prayer by superintendent to be brief, earnest, devout. Few words at close, emphasizing the *golden thought* of the lesson.

Rev. J. B. Silcox, on "What the pastor can do for the Sunday School," urged the following:—(1.) That as *pastor* of the School, he should be in the School as regular as in his pulpit. (2.) Give the Sunday School its true place in the Church. It is the teaching department of the Church, and as important as the preaching. (3.) Assist the superintendent in the selection of teachers. (4.) Conduct the teachers' meeting. (5.) Aid in the choice of the literature of the Sunday School. He argued that the Church is responsible to God for the religious education of the children. "Let the children first be fed."

Rev. Dr. Castle, on "What the home can do for the Sunday School," made these points:—(1.) Punctuality—send the child in time. (2.) Home study of the lesson. (3.) Review lesson taught at School. (4.) Parents should know the teachers, take them into confidence, and so both together work for the child's spiritual good. (5.) Teach child to respect the teacher; let the teacher be held in high esteem in the home. (6.) Should visit the School often, and manifest their appreciation of its work. (7.) Supply the School with plenty of money. The teachers give their time: the parents should not allow them to be compelled to raise the money.

The Institute was conducted by Rev. Jesse Hurlbut, of New York. His last address was on "The Trained Workman." This is the great necessity of the Sunday School to-day; more attention should be given on how to teach. It is not the man who knows most, but the man who knows best how to make the most of what he knows, that succeeds as a teacher.

REV. R. W. McALL, who has done so much in establishing evangelical missions for the workmen of Paris, has introduced similar efforts in Lyons, since the close of the Paris Exposition. He has already secured four rooms in densely-populated districts of the city, and the opening meeting, on November 17, was crowded. Lyons, with its 350,000 inhabitants, is not only the headquarters of ultra-Romanism, but is as well the hotbed of scepticism and atheism.