

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

THE LIGHT ON LITTLE GRAVES.

It is very hard to become reconciled to the death of little children, even if they are not your own. It seems so much like the crushing and withering of buds of promise that the human heart naturally rises up in protest against it.

Just across the narrow space that separates two city dwellings, and almost within the reach of the hand that traces these lines, since early autumn the head of a little boy that looked like one of Raphael's cherub's, had peered above the window-sill, cheery as a ray of early sun, and thrown its light into the neighbour's house. But for two weeks the sweet face with its pleasant smile that lit up the golden hair like a halo of glory, did not press the pane and the dimpled hand did not throw the kiss of morning greeting. Little Clarence was sick, and a few days ago they bore his precious form away in a white casket to its burial.

The story may be an old—a re-presented one—

"There is no fold however tender,
But one dead lamb is there."

But we cannot get used to this. It is no comfort to a fond mother to know that other people's children have died. That may help the bond of sympathy, but it only increases the sadness to think of the sweep death makes.

Yet there is a very beautiful light gleaming from little graves. It comes not from anything earthly, for that would be but a phosphoric ray of corruption. No, the beam of hope and joy must be from above. The little ones go to heaven, not because they are children, but because the death and resurrection of Christ avails for them. In that relation to the Redeemer of the world, the "early lost" become the "early saved." Death is not a grim destroyer but a harvester. Through it God takes the lovely flowers as well as the corn ripe in the ear. And to faith there is no music floating over the little world of homes and sepulchres more sweet than the Canticle which says, "My beloved is gone down into his garden to gather lilies."

The lives of little children have not been in vain. The world has been brighter to us, for the song they sang, though they seemed to linger but a little while ere they winged their way, like the soaring lark, over the fading rainbow into the blue heavens. But our chief joy is in knowing that they are not lost, but gone before. Not only fond parents, but neighbours and pastors remember them as those they loved and hope to meet again. And they will be restored to us, not as angels—another order of beings, but as our own precious darlings, glorified in Christ Jesus. Thoughts of these and of all our own dear ones of whatever age, make us anxious for the coming of the Lord, when the lutes of salvation will blend harmoniously with the trumpetings of the resurrection.—*The Messenger.*

HOW TO SUSTAIN A TEACHERS' MEETING.

How are we to sustain teachers' meeting in our Church Sabbath schools? Have it regularly once a week. Select the most convenient hour and day for it. If possible, have it near the close of the week, to give all the opportunity for thorough study of the lesson. Have it as one of the rules that every teacher is expected to be present. Hold it if only two persons are present.

Do not conduct it as you would a Bible-class. The teachers' meeting is not for the study of the lesson. Pick up the nuggets that all have dug out. Let the one grand central truth of the lesson stand out bright and clear in everyone's mind and heart. The teachers' meeting should be a social one.

The teachers' meeting should be a meeting for prayer—much prayer. Raise the standard of teaching. Raise the dignity of the pupils by stopping talking in the school, the church, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly, as if the Sabbath school were for children only. Stop robbing our schools of boys and girls from fifteen to twenty years of age, who will not stand baby talk. Stop robbing faithful teachers of their precious thirty to thirty-five minutes for any purpose whatever. Use your best endeavours to enlist the entire congregation in the study of the International Series of Lessons, whether they attend the regular session of the Sabbath school

or not. Trust the simple study of the Holy Book to keep up the interest of your school, discarding all sensational methods or matter whatever. Urge systematic Bible study upon everyone for their own heart's sake, for their own growth in grace. We, who are officers and teachers in the Sabbath school, searching the word of God "as for hid treasures," should apply the lesson each week first to ourselves, asking, What has God for me in this lesson?—*Interior.*

"LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO,"

Lord, show me what the talent is
Which Thou hast given to me,
And how I must apply it best
To bear good fruit for Thee.

To each one Thou hast something given—
Some duty to fulfil.
For which, at last, when life is past,
Thou'lt render well or ill.

Then help me, Lord, whate'er it be
Thou wouldest that I should do,
To do it right, with all my might,
Thy praise alone in view.

When tempted by the fear of man,
Or borne away by pride,
Be Thou near by to hear my cry,
My wandering steps to guide.

And grant, O Lord, on that great day,
When Thou wilt call thine own,
I may among the happy throng
Be found near to thy throne.

J. B. D.

DIFFERING FROM PAUL.

In a leading editorial review of "Godet on Romans," the "Central Presbyterian" says: "It is astonishing how people will fight against the doctrine of election. It is a disagreeable doctrine to the human heart, and a metaphysical puzzle to the human mind." Exactly so; and this goes a long way towards explaining why people "will fight against the doctrine." We knew a very devout and highly intelligent lady who used to say that she "thought the apostle Paul might have been better employed when he was writing the eighth and ninth chapters of the letter to the Romans." Of course she did not like the doctrine of election. An old Baptist preacher, who was in the habit of reading and commenting upon a passage of Scripture at family worship, once happened upon the thirteenth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The old preacher was a decided Democrat, and a great admirer of Mr. Jefferson. He read: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation," etc. This did not sound much like the Jeffersonian doctrine. The old preacher paused, and then delivered his comments as follows: "There's whar I differs from brother Paul. He was a great preacher and a splendid writer; but it's just as plain as daylight that he wasn't no Democrat. Mr. Jefferson tells us that all power comes from the people," etc. Now, this was honest, if it was not orthodox; and we confess that we dislike it less than we do the elaborate attempts which some learned commentators make to explain away the plain teachings of certain passages, whose obvious meaning is not in accord with the scheme of doctrine which the said commentators have determined to defend.—*Religious Herald.*

THE CLEAN NEWSPAPER.

There is a growing feeling, in healthy communities, against journals which make it their special object to minister to a perverted taste by seeking out, and serving up in a seductive form, disgusting and licentious revelations. There is good reason to believe that the clean newspaper is more highly prized to-day than it was four or five years ago. It is also safe to predict that, as people in all ranks of life who protect their own, at least, from contamination, become more conscious of the pernicious influence of a certain class of journals, called enterprising because they are ambitious to serve up dirty scandals, they will be careful to see that the journals they permit to be read in the family circle are the class that never forget the proprieties of life. Already men and women of refinement and healthy morals have had their attention called to the pernicious influence of bad literature, and have

made commendable efforts to counteract the same by causing sound literature to be published and sold at popular prices. These efforts are working a silent but sure revolution. The best authors are more generally read to-day than at any previous day. The sickly sentimental story paper and the wild ranger and pirate story books are slowly but surely yielding the field to worthier claimants. In praise of the decent newspaper, it may be said that where it has a place in the family, and has been read for years by young as well as old, it has developed such a healthy tone and such a discriminating taste that the life-nature of the slums has no admirers. Fortunately, the number of such families is increasing in the land, and as they increase the journal that devotes itself to sickening revelations of immorality will be compelled to find its support solely among those classes who practice vice and crime, or are ambitious to learn to follow such ways.—*Printers' Circular.*

SENTIMENTALITY.

"The God of Evolution," says one of the believers in that theory, "is not God as men in the Christian Church understand the name." Mr. Ingersoll, in the latest funeral oration which he has pronounced, and which was simply sentimental "gush," said that the dead man "was not a Christian," "but for himself solved the problems of the world." "Humanity was his God—the human race the Supreme Being. In that Supreme Being he rested." "There be gods many and lords many," but one only living and true God, whom these people, alas for them, seem to have wholly missed. By the way, the "Hartford Courant" sharply describes Mr. Ingersoll's funeral orations thus: "Mr. Ingersoll's sepulchral eloquence is very sorry stuff. It seems hardly worth while to make such exertion to put his dreary, bald negations into pretty rhetorical forms. Amid the great concert of Christian voices that speak or sing at the door of the grave, in strains of faith and hope and peace, Mr. Ingersoll's utterance is as discordant and painful as the snap of a breaking violin-string heard in the *andante* of the Fifth Symphony."

MR. RUSKIN ON THE PSALMS.

The Psalter alone, which practically was the service book of the Church for many ages, contains merely in the first half of it the sum of personal and social wisdom. The 1st, 8th, 12th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 23rd, and 24th Psalms, well-learned and believed, are enough for all personal guidance; the 48th, 72nd, and 75th have in them the law and the prophecy of all righteous governments; and every real triumph of natural science is anticipated in the 104th.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE.

No sin looks so sinful as the sin of a saint, no blot so black as the blot on beauty. You never notice the blight on a nettle, you do that on a rose; you never notice a flaw in a flagstone, you do that on a stone of glory out of which a statue is to spring; you never notice a spider when she dangles from the rafters of a barn, you do when "she taketh hold with her hands in kings' palaces." So it comes to pass that a Christian in the world is a man under a microscope; fierce is the light that beats upon him, and all his faults are magnified. Men of the world will be the first to charge him with worldliness.—*Charles Stanford, D.D.*

KIND DISCIPLINE FOR CHILDREN.

In the bringing up of children an encouraging word has in it a great deal more of power than most people imagine. So thinks the Rev. Dr. Cuyler, who says in the "Evangelist": "One sentence of honest praise bestowed at the right time is worth a whole volley of scolding. The sun understands how to raise plants and to open flowers at this time of the year—he just smiles on them and kisses them with warm rays, and they begin to grow and unfold." A storm of scolding that sets in in the morning, and lasts till night, has about as good effect on childhood graces as a hailstone has on young plants.

THE first missionary to South Africa was George Schmidt, who was sent out by the Moravians in 1757. He preached to the Hottentots, and at the close of five years had gathered a little church of forty-seven members.