

The Missing Link.

Not long since an article appeared in *The Christian Advocate*, from the pen of the Rev. A. N. Craft, D.D., with the title, "The Missing Link between the Church and the Sunday-school." It is characterized by vigor and frankness, and contains some pungent truths that the Church will do well to heed.

After referring to the difficulties in the way of securing the conversion of the children in our Sunday-schools, the writer develops his plan for supplying "The Missing Link." He says:

"The pastor's children's class, as a meeting separate from the Sunday-school, will not do this. As to two meetings of the children on Sunday, hard-worked mothers have to be consulted. The children themselves would become weary; week days are absorbed in day-school; and they need Saturday for play. A children's class, with a separate hour of meeting as a permanent thing, will reach but a small portion of the children.

"This work must be done in the Sunday-school. The old class-leader system, as applied to the children, must be abandoned unless the teachers are the leaders. The class-meeting people and the revival-loving people must become workers in the Sunday-school. I do not mean the cranks; they must be kept out. We must have thoroughly Christian teachers, who will be both teacher and class-leader. Let there be a Sunday-school prayer-meeting, once a month, fifteen minutes long. Let the opportunity for rising for prayer be given as often. Let the appeal be short, but as earnest as those which are given at protracted meetings.

"All ten years of age and younger" (using the language of the Discipline) will respond at once. Most of the boys and girls in their teens will soon be reached. Some adults will yield. I have tried this experiment, and would pledge myself to go into any Sunday school and secure this result. Any good superintendent can do this without the aid of the pastor.

"Let a secretary be appointed, whose sole duty it will be to keep a record of those who have become seekers, of their age, home influence, their state of experience, their baptism, their teacher and leader, and report to the pastor those who are judged to be ready for full membership in the Church. Let the bell tap five minutes before the close of the lesson as a signal for the teachers to speak to their scholars especially on the subject of experimental religion. Let the pastor, superintendent, or teacher invite those who from time to time especially need it to a place of private conference and prayer. This, we think, if carried out would supply the missing link between the Sunday-school and the church."

A pastor in the State of New York writes us, referring to this article:

"If our Sunday-school workers could all catch the idea suggested by Dr. Craft, and throw themselves into the work in that line with inspiration and enthusiasm for Christ, thousands of our children might be brought to

Christ. We must act quickly, and with vigor and love, or they are lost to us, to the Church, and to heaven, many of them.

"It seems to me that we are not as largely securing the conversion of our children as we should, and yet what interests are soon to be committed to these children! The salvation of our country and the world is suspended upon this issue. Has there ever been a time when it has been as important as now—the early conversion of the rising generation?

"The thought of what is before our children and youth is to me well-nigh overwhelming. May God help us all to do with our might what our hands find to do in this direction."

It is a hopeful sign when the hearts of our faithful pastors turn in the direction of practical results in our Sunday-school work.

Single Shots.

BY GEORGE MAY POWELL.

The salvation of souls being one of the great ends of Sunday-school work, the most effective methods to that end should be kept before the superintendent. Too often the richest opportunities to do this work for Jesus are lost by waiting for great chances to "reach the masses." We forget that an audience of one was at times deemed large enough for the Master. His messages to the woman at the well, Nicodemus, and others, were his single shots.

Study individual cases, so that when, either purposely or casually, you meet one, you are prepared to open conversation easily on some subject of interest to that one: any pleasant or unpleasant experience he or she has had, giving advice or sympathy, as the case may need. Pray for wisdom to make such chat easily the stepping-stone to a cheerful exhortation to "come to Jesus just now," by deciding in earnest to do as he wants one to do all the rest of life; and daily and regularly to read the Bible, and pray for wisdom and strength needed to carry out that decision. Especially let the message be coupled with the true and startling suggestion that every minute of delay to so decide is one of rejecting the One who loves us with a love both tender and mighty. After this, the boy or girl needs to be shown that one thing Jesus wants is that they should tell the "old, old story," in some form, every day. Thus the Superintendent, as he ranges on the line of battle, will fire hundreds of single shots every year. If wisdom is asked to find and improve opportunities for this kind of single shot firing, the result will surprise any one patiently fighting on this line.

Individual cases need often to be worked in conjunction with the teacher of the class, or the parent, or both. If lovingly and cheerfully the pupil addressed is told by the Superintendent that his teacher and mother have agreed to join him in prayer for his conversion, it is likely to set him thinking, and keep him thinking.

This kind of work is adapted to being made