

they can throw at me. Besides, I have got a Rock at my back.'

'Got a what?' asked the timid girl.

'Why, you see, God is on my side, and so I have a Rock at my back.'

And so again the grace was repeated aloud.

For many days, and even weeks, the taunting continued; but Maria showed no signs of faltering; she had indeed 'set her face like a flint'; and at last it became a recognized thing for all the girls to wait for Maria's grace. Some even went so far as to close their eyes during the recital; and one day, when Maria was absent, the very girl who had received the first grace with a drawing 'Ah-men' astonished the others by announcing:

'Look here, girls, I am sub-chaplain while Maria is away.'

After a pause the girl repeated reverently:

'For health and strength and daily food we praise Thy Name, O Lord.'

Isn't this a grand lesson to timid Christians?

### Powerless Prayer.

(Rev. S. W. Trousdale, D.D., Platteville, Wis., in the 'Northwestern Advocate'.)

A professing Christian quarrelled with a sinner whom he wished to pay him what was due on rent. The sinner refused, and before they separated each had lost his temper and used unseemly words. In the evening both were at the revival meeting in the church. They sat on opposite sides, well to the front. When opportunity for voluntary prayer was given the Christian knelt and prayed that the Lord would convert and save sinners. The sinner sat upright in his place, saying to himself: 'You old hypocrite! There wasn't any power in that Christian's prayer that night to convince the sinner of his need of a Saviour. From the time, however, the Christian had lost his temper and quarrelled with the sinner he had felt guilty. Before coming to meeting that night he had been to the Lord and confessed and asked his forgiveness. Could he go to the sinner, sinned against, and confess to him? All the old Adam there was in him said 'No!' The new Adam said 'Yes!' The new Adam was the stronger, as he is in every truly regenerated heart. The Christian went to the sinner, confessed his haste, asked his pardon and offered to make reparation if he had injured him in any way. When the sinner saw the Christian do that which he never thought of doing, although he was the greater sinner and the real offender, he began to make his confession, how he was at fault, and asked the Christian's pardon, and in a few nights after was at the altar seeking to know the Lord, whom he had seen sanctified in an erring but penitent brother, who confessed his sin to man as well as unto God.

Moral: If Christians would be a power to win others to Christ we must be as ready to confess our sins to men sinned against or before as we are to confess to God.

There are thousands of cases of paralysis, heart and lung difficulties, besides numerous other difficulties that are caused by breathing air poisoned by tobacco. In fact, smoking is a habit that sometimes kills one's friends even faster than one's self.

### Post Office Crusade.

#### NOTES.

The subscriptions for the 'Northern Messenger,' to be sent out from the office in connection with the Post-office crusade are all paid up until December. After that date a number fall due. Many subscribers may wish to renew.

Mrs. Cole acknowledges, with thanks, three dollars from Miss Lizzie Harrison, New Brunswick, for the P. O. Crusade.

Miss Dunhill is particularly anxious that every one shall put their name and address on parcels sent to her. She has been receiving, unfortunately, some infidel literature.

### Disadvantages of Excuses.

(The 'Advocate'.)

Excuses are sometimes valid and necessary. These are rare, however. But excuses for rejecting religion are never valid and never valuable. They hurt the person offering them. They do no good to anybody. They shut many rich blessings out from the heart and life. Persons addicted to the habit of making excuses should ponder the following:

1. We can excuse ourselves out of all the best blessings that God can bestow upon manly men.
2. Excusing ourselves from the duty demanded also excuses us from the promised reward.
3. He who is expert in excuses is lame in effort.
4. The habit of making excuses robs the heart of courage.
5. Satan always helps an unfaithful person to find ample excuses.
6. Never was a good and valid excuse given for rejecting Christ.
7. To claim that one cannot be what the gospel requires him to be, is an insult to God. Mr. Moody once said to his large congregation, 'If any of you have a good reason for not accepting Christ, you will not be condemned at last. Write it out. Hang it on your walls. Cherish it. Take it with you to the judgment. It will be your Saviour.' Reasons have weight with him, but excuses carry with them his righteous condemnation.

### Children and Churchgoing.

(By the Rev. Theodore Y. Cuyler, D.D., in 'New York Evangelist'.)

Statistics carefully collected prove that the regular attendance at church—both in the cities and the rural regions—is not increasing. In many localities there is a lamentable decrease. This is partially to be accounted for by the falling off in the attendance of the children. That a vast number of children who seldom or never attend the preaching service belong to the Sabbath school is very true. Now I yield to no man in admiration and advocacy of a well-managed Sabbath school, but I have always protested against giving it the false name of 'the children's church.' It is no such thing; it is only one spiritual department in every properly organized church. Attendance upon the Sabbath school can never be defended as a proper substitute for attendance upon the regular services of public worship—especially for all those who have outgrown the 'infant department.'

It is to be borne in mind that the habit of going to church must be formed in

childhood if it is formed at all. It must also be remembered that the most favorable time for impressing vital truth upon the heart and for winning the heart to Christ is in the early morning of life. In spite of these two most palpable facts it is also a most painful and indisputable fact that the average attendance of children upon the service of public worship is steadily decreasing.

In this matter of church attendance the parent and the pastor must combine. The parents should require and expect the children to accompany them to God's house as much as to sit at their table for daily food in their own houses. The pastor should endeavor to attract the young to church by making his sermons simple in language, earnest in delivery and interesting with illustrations. Very few sermons are fit to be preached at all which are utterly beyond the comprehension of an average boy of ten or twelve years old. Such a boy does not relish baby talk any more than he needs to be fed from a nurse's bottle. Grown people, in turn, relish fresh, vivid, simple, earnest, practical preaching as much as their children do. Some ministers are accustomed to deliver a brief sermon to children before their regular discourse. Most ministers, however, must rely on the single sermon's reaching both the old and the young. Therefore let them have the young in their eye as well as their older auditors when they prepare their sermons. The Bible is the book for children in the Sunday school; is it any less so when it is explained, expounded and enforced in the pulpit? Our children eat the same food with their parents at the table; why cannot they be fed with the same spiritual food if the minister has the good sense and the grace to prepare it? 'Preaching up to this age' is a will-o'-the-wisp; the human heart is just what it always was, and God's heavenly message must come down to it, in all simplicity, burning earnestness, and winsome love. Pastors and parents, the children must be reached, must be brought to church, and must be saved. Cold, dry, and formal services will kill any church. Warm, earnest practical services—both in sermon, song and prayer—will bring old and young to church and bring down the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

### A Life Experience Verified.

In connection with the death last summer of the Rev. Chas. A. Fox, the 'Poet of the Keswick Movement,' the following little poem will be read with interest, particularly by those who are passing through trial or suffering.

For more than six months previous to his death in December, Mr. Fox suffered intensely from cancer in the face:

#### I.

(Written some years ago.)

Ah, He knoweth; ah, He loveth!  
Master, never let me go!  
Every wound Thy skill fresh proveth,  
Every cloud conceals Thy bow.

#### II.

(Verified To-day.)

Yes, To-day needs nothing newer,  
This brief record burns like fire:  
Old truth but flames forth the truer,  
As He draws still nigher, nigher.  
Sweet His whisper, Come and rest,  
Wrecked outright on Jesus' breast!

—Charles A. Fox.