

fall, and get up and run again, with never a look behind him, until he dashed open the kitchen door and stood before his surprised parents.

"A bear—I knocked him down—with the leather!" he panted.

"A bear? Where's Dan and Abram?" shouted the father, getting down his old gun from above the fireplace. "We'll go after him—the same old feller that was sneakin' round our sheep pen last week, I'll be bound!" Dan! Abram!"

But Dan and Abram and all the others had apparently vanished from the farm.

"Just like 'em—never on hand when wanted. But I guess I'm equal to a bear. Come on, Abner, get the pitchfork, and come on!"

Proud to be called upon in such an emergency, and knowing his father to be an unfailing marksman, Abner ran for the pitchfork, and was soon courageously following his excited parent.

They went along the road as rapidly and quietly as possible, keeping a good lookout into its dusky borders, and were within a few rods of the place of Abner's encounter, when they were surprised to see a straggling group of large and small boys approaching. They were walking slowly, and one of them appeared to be supporting a comrade who was groaning loudly.

"Boys, is that you? Who's hurt? Where's the bear?" "Yes, it's us. Dan's hurt. And he's the bear—just rigged him up for fun, and Abner's mighty near killed him!"

Mr. Warren marched up to Dan, examined his face and head in the dim light and felt of his nose, which was still bleeding.

"Ye ain't hurt half as bad as ye ought to be, ye senseless critter," he said, giving him a shake. Then, struck by the boy's ludicrous make-up and the unexpected outcome of the masquerade, he burst into a roar of laughter in which the boys, all but Dan and Abner, gradually joined. The situation began to seem more cheerful.

"Why, Dan, I never dreamt 'twas you," said Abner apologetically.

"Go way; don't ye come nigh me!" growled Dan, nursing his nose with a fresh lump of snow. Then Mr. Warren and all except Abner and Dan roared again.

"Ye served me right, Abner," said Dan after they had reached home, and soothing applications had been made to his swollen nose and protruding under-lip—which even the staid mother could not regard without turning away to smile. "Ye served me right—an' I'll never call ye Sis' again, long's I live."

He kept his promise, but it was a long time before his father and brothers, and the neighbors for ten miles around, got through calling him "Bear Dan."—Forward.

A Clever Imitation.

A certain Cleveland attorney has two bright little children. They are quick at imitation, and have a talent for making up games in which they cleverly burlesque their elders. A few days ago their mamma found they were playing "Doctor." The youngest child was the patient, with head wrapped in a towel, and the older the physician, with a silk hat and a cane. The mother, unseen by the little ones, listened at the doorway.

"I feels awful bad," said the patient.

"We'll fix all that," said the doctor, briskly. "Lemme see your tongue."

Out came the tiny red indicator.

"Hum! Hum! Coated!" said the doctor, looking very grave indeed.

Then, without a word of warning, the skilled physician hauled off and gave the patient a smart slap in the region of the ribs.

"Ouch!" cried the sufferer.

"Feel any pain there?" inquired the doctor.

"Yes," said the patient.

"I thought so," said the healer. "How's the other side?"

"It's all right," said the patient, edging away.

Thereupon the doctor produced a small bottle, filled with what looked like either bread or mud pills, and placed it on the table.

"Take one of these pellets," the physician said, "dissolved in water, every seventeen minutes,—al-ter-mit-ly."

"How long mus' I take 'em?" groaned the patient.

"Till you die," said the doctor.

"Good morning!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

EDITOR, R. OSGOOD MORSE.
All communications intended for this department should be addressed to its Editor, Rev. R. Osgood Morse, Guysboro, N. S. To insure publication, matter must be in the Editor's hands nine days before the date of the issue for which it is intended.

Prayer Meeting Topic.

B. Y. P. U. Topic.—In the Far Country. Luke 15:11-24.

Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, January 15—Numbers 1:1-19, (20-43), 44-54. The sum of Israel. Compare Ex 38:26; Num. 26:51.
Tuesday, January 16—Numbers 2: The Order of Encampment. Compare Num. 24:2.
Wednesday, January 17—Numbers 3:1-13, (14-39), 40-51. Ministers before the Lord. Compare Ex 28:41.
Thursday, January 18—Numbers 4:1-20, (21-45), 46-49. Duties of the minister's helpers (vs. 15.) Compare Num. 7:9; 10:21.
Friday, January 19—Numbers (5):6. "The law of the Nazirite." Compare Judg. 13:5; Luke 1:15.
Saturday, January 20—Numbers 7:1-16, (12-83), 84-89. Dedication gifts. Compare Ezra 6:16, 17.

Prayer Meeting Topic.—January 14.

In the Far Country, Luke 15:11-24.
The gem of Christ's parables! No parable is more largely quoted or commented upon. No parable is more helpful to the preacher or to the soul seeking the Saviour. Why? Because it gives such a complete picture of our need of a Saviour and the readiness of God to meet that need. It is a mirror into which countless numbers have looked and have thus seen the reflection of their own lives. Let us look at the picture, or succession of pictures, and carefully watch the several steps in the experience of the younger son. Notice, 1. What he asks for, or how sin prompts us. He asked for a free right to use his wealth as his own heart desired; or, in other words, sin was prompting him to break away from restraint. One of the most subtle temptations of Satan. He could not work such tactics upon the elder son, but he knew that the younger son would take the bait for he had already been firing his imagination and perverting his desires. Under the careful teaching of Satan the younger son imagined that while his father kept the goods he himself was not reaping any benefit therefrom. He took no account of the fact that his father was still using his wealth not only for the present but for the future welfare of the son. He forgot, too, that all the wealth of his father's wisdom, gathered with years of experience, was now being used for the benefit of the sons. In every word of advice he saw, instead of the wisest counsel, cruel restraint. His vision had become distorted. And the father granted the request. He would not keep him at home to chafe under what the son thought was restraint, to be discontented and to grow more sullen and moody each day. He had had enough of that sort of thing with the elder son. Better let him go and discover by experience, even though it be bitter, that there are more unhappy places than his father's fireside. And so it is with God. He has created man with a will and the power of choice in using that will, and rather than force him to submission to his purpose he will let him learn by experience, though it be a hard lesson, the folly of using that will in opposition to the will of God. Better let him learn for himself that the only freedom is a freedom in God.

2. Where he went, or where all sin leads. "Into a far country." He wanted to get as far away from home as possible. Not that he so hated that home. He was ashamed to sin and to plunge into his proposed debauch before the members of his home. Something in the very nature of sin makes us ashamed of it. And now watch him in the far country. See the natural consequences of sin unrestrained. Poverty, especially poverty of soul, disgrace and loss of self respect. "He began to be in want." He could have a good time as long as riches lasted. But where was he left when they were gone? Stranded! Without money, without friends, without self respect, but with a sting of conscience that always comes from having indulged in sin. Sent out to feed swine, he knew that was all he ought to expect. Even should he go home he couldn't look for anything more than to be "a hired servant." So hungry that he filled his belly with the husks that he knew could give no nourishment. Down to the depths he had gone and now he clutches, like a drowning man, at a straw, anything, everything that can offer the least semblance of hope. What a picture!

3. How he came home, or the way to break from sin. "He came to himself." He had come to the end of riches, end of friends, end of self respect, almost to the end of existence and it was only by a mighty effort he pulled himself together that he might think on his condition. He had been letting himself go at the rate of madness and now, just as he reaches the last extremity,

he begins to think. Ah, how the Father loves to see a sinner stop to think. Here are all the steps of conversion—the sight of sin, the thought of sin, and repentance for sin. He sees the ruin wrought by sin. Then he compares the two states. His father's home, even though he be no more than a slave in that home, and what he must now endure. He not only sees the ruin that has come into his life, but he sees that by his wilful sinning he has brought it upon himself. "I have sinned." And his repentance is genuine for he does not remain in sin. Right about face he turns and back to his father's home he goes. "And he arose and came to his father."

4. His reception at home, or the way the Father treats those who return from sin. We have all seen pictures of this. Out on the road, away down as far as can be seen from the house, the father has run to meet the son. There is the son with his head bowed on his father's shoulder, ashamed to look up into the father's face, and the father with his arms about the boy's neck and a smile upon his face that can't be mistaken. Ah, yes, he has a thousand times forgiven him. He doesn't give the son time enough to make all his confession. He sees repentance in the prostrate form. And when they get home, music in the house. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Can any one doubt God's willingness to forgive? "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Great Village, N. S. O. N. CHIPMAN.

Spa Springs W. B. M. U.

On Nov. 7th, during the last session of the Annapolis County Convention, a B. Y. P. U. was organized by our pastor, Rev. C. W. Corey. Officers elected were: S. Marshall, Pres.; Mrs. L. F. Wearer, Vice-Pres.; Mrs. S. Marshall, Sec'y. and Treas.; Eva B. Jackson, Cor. Sec'y. Hurlbut's Normal Lessons are taught by the pastor at the weekly meetings, in which a good deal of interest is manifested by our members who number forty-two.

E. B. JACKSON, Cor. Sec'y.

Milton, Queens Co. N. S.

The recently elected officers for the B. Y. P. U. are, Pres. Willard N. Freeman; Vice Pres., Frank Cole; Sec'y., Miss Nellie Nickerson; Cor. Sec'y., Mrs. F. B. Shields; Treas., Miss Blanche Brown. With a membership of eighty, we ought to do good work for the Master through the coming year. The old year with all its opportunities for work has passed away. We will go bravely to work anew, doing our best and relying on God's promises we may expect great things. Yes, and how the thought of His perfect sympathy, His infinite power to help and to save, gives us strength to face the future! The Lord is our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear?

MRS. F. B. SHIELDS.

Fairville Baptist Church.

The attendance of our B. Y. P. U. meetings is getting larger now than in the summer months. Our programme for each month is as follows: First Tuesday, consecration service led by our president, on second Tuesday, devotional, led by one of our members, and third we have Conquest Missionary meeting, led by a committee of two appointed to act for six months, fourth same as the second, with the study of the Normal Lessons the last half hour of each meeting, conducted by our pastor, which proves to be of great benefit in the study of the Bible.

CLARA MCKENZIE.

Some of these reports were written on both sides of the sheet. This necessitates the work of transcribing. Please write on one side only.

We would call the attention of the Unions to the recommendation of the Ex-Com. made at the last Convention, that the Cor. Sec'y., wherever possible, be made a prominent officer. The correspondence of the Union is conducted through this officer. It is therefore important that the most suitable person available be elected to this office and continued therein.

The past two weeks we have received and presented several reports from Unions. We have scanned them eagerly, but in vain, for records of Home Mission work being done. Are our young people neglecting our Judea? We fear they are. If this work is neglected we cannot be strong in our Samaria and in the regions beyond. We must lengthen the lines and strengthen the stakes at home, that our basis of supplies may be enlarged. Our Unions must be more than mutual improvement societies. The "Culture for Service," acquired, must be used in aggressive service else it defeats its own end. Do not neglect the work at our door.