

ed me to drop it; but I think we are helping the young people less so, and I have never felt like giving up and feel less like it than ever now; but I need the help and prayers of all who can spare time to pray for me." Thank God for such a spirit of devotion on the part of any consecrated young soul, and there are more such than many people think. Give up? Surely not! Why should you? There may be indifference where there ought to be interest, even cynical criticism where there should be prayerful assistance; but, despite it all, stick to your post. There is a surety for him in the last clause of my friend's note. How many in these busy days "can spare time to pray?" One secret of weakness is herein laid bare, for the Church is robbed of much of her possible power because of the little time given to prayer. Help and prayers" form a combination that practically applied to the machinery of the churches, would make bountiful spiritual harvests sure. To the "older members" referred to by our sister, and to all like them, I commend the words in Philippians 4: 3. Look them up. They fit many a case to-day.

HERE is a practical problem. An extract from another President's letter sets it forth clearly. He writes: "Our chief difficulty is in keeping our members at work.—In a small town, where skating and hockey rule the winter months, we find it hard to keep all our members interested. Just at this hour there is a case in point. Two young ladies who should be helping at League have so much to attend to at the rink that they find it impossible to help in practice for a social are having on Monday evening next, and yet these young ladies are out of our best Christian homes." Rink vs. League! That is the situation in many places similar to the little Ontario town from which our brother writes. Can't you condemn either skating or skating-rinks; but when it comes to a choice between the League service and the pleasures of the ice, my opinion is that they are weak who sacrifice the former for the latter. And there is no need for it. If Solomon were living to-day I presume he would say: "There is a time to skate." If he did not, I should question his wisdom. But that time is not when the League calls. Many a time have I gone from League meeting to a jolly and healthful skating party with my young friends for an hour, during which everybody had a grand time and no sense of duty evaded or unperformed was a thing behind. It is not a question of the value or need of recreation and amusement to our young people, but of the compromise or neglect of duty for the sake of passing pleasure, that I am thinking about. We must all have recreation, but we need never sacrifice the higher for the enjoyment of the lower good. League first, ice second, should be the order.

TO sit "a passive bucket to be pumped into," as Carlyle put it, is not a very beneficial attitude, nor is the process of "pumping," particularly interesting one to the pumper. Yet many a Sunday School class, many an Epworth League, have risen no higher than this so-called religious instruction. It would be well for all concerned if there were a return on the part of all teachers to the method employed by our Lord in common with the greatest teachers of the past, that of conversational and suggestive questioning. I was in a Bible class recently and heard a very poor sermon. The members of the Epworth League service and listened impatiently to a dry and uninteresting homily. No wonder the few scattered members vanished in utter tediousness. And I

found out afterwards by a little surreptitious detective work for my own satisfaction, that the speaker at the Sunday meeting—the minister of the church—had a clipping from the *Guardian* in his Bible, and evidently, with no previous preparation of the topic had slavishly followed the outline prepared by Mr. Rutherford, and thus inflicted on us a wearisome and spiritless discourse. Such a proceeding, and it is all too common in both Leagues and Sunday Schools, is the surest way I know of to bring the whole matter into disrepute, and it is little wonder that many of our societies are dying from dry-rot at the heart. They cannot under such circumstances retain enough vitality to more than barely exist, and are surely doomed to extinction. Are you guilty of this practice? Quit it!

THERE is danger that in teaching the young we give them but partial view of the subject, and that the one-sided view of the lessons contained in the passage we seek to explain and apply. Too many teachers fail to make clear even that measure of the truth that they themselves may apprehend. A boy had been pretty well drilled in the story of how Abraham delivered Lot from the four kings, and knew the incidents quite fully. He was re-stating the event and said, "Abraham helped Lot when he was in need." "What lesson does that teach us?" the teacher asked, as the boy halted. Then followed a moment's thought and he replied: "It teaches that my neighbors should help me in my time of need." His view-point was evident. Is not ours often equally self-centered? One little girl explained the Golden Rule to her younger sister thus—"It means that you must do whatever I want you to, and you mustn't do what I don't want you to." Is not this a popular interpretation of it with the many of to-day whose ideal of religion is getting rather than giving? Let us, as teachers, find out as fully as we can the truth contained in the passage, apply it honestly to ourselves first, and then seek by verbal instruction and living example to make it clear to those whom we aim to teach.

SEING a postcard in a paragonage recently, I casually noticed the opening words, "Before I forget," and then inquisitively read the rest. It was just a hurried note to the pastor from a very busy railroad man in his congregation, that a new family had come to town and were moving into such and such a house. I could not help thinking that a man who would take time to send such a message must be of great help to any pastor; but until I might write many things commending his action and recommending his example, I wish simply to press home the lesson of the three opening words quoted above. There were many things you intended to see to, but—you forgot. Be honest now, isn't that true? And you will forget many more if you put them off. It was a larger action that the man referred to, performed when he wrote that card, than appears at first sight. It signified thoughtful and sympathetic interest in that family of new arrivals, and showed a prompt decision on his part in writing his pastor at once. In the rush of his duties he might forget attending the card; but until it was sent he was responsible for remembering. How many families have been lost to Methodism because somebody forgot to report them, how many young people have dropped out of the Sunday School because the League because someone forgot to follow their removal with a post-card to the minister in the new town. Hearts have ached for a comforting word, little feet have wandered into sin, discouraged souls have sunk into

despair—just because somebody forgot. Is there some duty awaiting you? Then say, "I will do it now, 'before I forget!'"

POSTPONEMENT of present duty what ails a whole lot of us. It is surprising how many Presidents have answered my second letter who did not attend to the first, and the most frequently given is, "I laid it aside till I had more time and it was lost." Scores of our local Presidents have awakened to the fact recently that I, as your General Secretary, mean business when I write, and that I expect a similar interest in the *Business* of the Young People's Work on the part of the responsible officers in each Society. A District President called on me just now and asked, "Why don't our officers answer letters?" I wrote twenty-two on my District and have had only two replies." The reason is not that they don't intend answering them, but "not now" is the excuse given themselves for the delay. And the more convenient time never comes. No safer rule can be made and observed than to always reserve present duties *now*, for postponement means that many other similar claims will so accumulate that before you know it you are overburdened by them and stand aghast before the heap of things you haven't done. "Do it now" may be a hackneyed admonition, but it is a wonderfully wise one, and appropriate, I fear, to the most of us.

THE habit of daily prayer is one of the most beneficial that a young Christian can form. Not merely repeating a formal prayer, but the spirit of constant fellowship with God, so that at no time will any emergency arise to cause alarm. It is the basis of spiritual communion with God, and similar and sweet that no exigency will produce fright, is to know what Paul and Silas felt when the earthquake came and shook the Philippian prison to its foundations. Only by such intimacy can we face life's unexpected trials unmoved, and say without a tremor what Paul said when the shipwreck threatened all with a watery grave. "I believe God." Occasional petitions to the throne of grace will not ensure such peace of mind. Habitual spiritual converse with God will. I have read that on one occasion, when a severe storm at sea was raging, and men and women were fearful of the issue, D. L. Moody was apparently unconcerned and unafraid. As one after another began to pray, the preacher asked, "Mr. Moody, why don't you pray like the rest?" The reply was brief, but pointed, "My friend, I am all prayed up." There lies the difference between a consistent and faithful disciple who cultivates his Master's society in all things and a nominal Christian whose mind is only turned to the Lord when some personal favor is sought or pressing need is to be supplied. When life's storms are raging, with the stress heavy and the strain intense, it is the person who is "all prayed up" who can stand unmoved and face the issue with supreme confidence that all is well.

NO finer example of tact in dealing with mischievous boys could easily be found than one I read of recently. It is said that when Dr. Jowett, the celebrator's society in person, came to remove to New York, was a younger man by many years than he is to-day, he inaugurated a children's service in connection with his church at Newstead. At the opening service four boys boldly blew their English flutes in the rear of the gallery. By a little strategy the youngsters were trapped, and then brought before the preacher in the vestry, where, of course, they expected a severe