

in. I have waited a long time. I ought to have been at home an hour ago. I came by purposely to give you the box.' Then, with the strangest smile I had ever seen on her face, she said, 'But, you see, with me business came before rest and bed.'

"I felt the color flash to my forehead. It is always exasperating to have your own words flung into your teeth. "I am sorry you put yourself to so much trouble," I said, stiffly. "There was no necessity for it. I could have sent for the box in the morning just as well."

"Then something pushed me on to add, 'Of course I am greatly obliged to you. But while we are speaking frankly, let me repeat a clever thing you said the other day, "He who reminds me of a favor cancels it."'

"She laughed as queerly as she had smiled.

"So be it! We will consider all favors done and received canceled up to date and forever! Good night!"

"I was too angry to stop her as she went away at that. I stayed angry all night and the next day, and, on the evening of the second day, my father asked me at supper time if I knew that Mary Allen was dangerously ill. He had met her father on the street. She had had a chill on the train coming home, after getting soaked in a shower, had kept on her wet clothes for hours, and arrived at home after ten o'clock, delirious. Pneumonia of the gravest type had set in that night.

"I rushed around to Mrs. Allen's like a mad creature. Mary was too ill to be seen by anybody. Mrs. Allen was very kind, but would not let me go upstairs.

"We have heard from a friend, who was on the train with her on Tuesday evening, that she had a chill on the way out. She made light of it, and said she would be all right next day. She reached the station at eight o'clock. Delirium must have come on at once, for she did not get home until ten."

The narrator's face worked convulsively, and I put a deprecating hand upon hers. "Don't go on," I pleaded. "But we thank you for the solemn lesson."

She rallied voice and composure. "There is little else to tell. She died four days from the evening of her call upon me. She never recovered consciousness. That was thirty years ago."

Mrs. Sargeant's voice never breaks up a silence. It stole out of it presently into gentlest speech:

"I am literally afraid to part in anger from anybody. The risk is too great."

And Mrs. Blount, in something betwixt a sob and a laugh,

"I needn't be ashamed, then, to tell that I have, again and again, called my husband back from the front door, and even from the corner of the street, to ask forgiveness for a hasty word. I always say to myself, by the time his back is turned, 'What if he should never come home alive.' As Mrs. Sargeant says, I can't take the risk."

"Is it coincidental, or providential, that I should have clipped this from a paper today, and put it into my pocket-book for future reference?" said Mrs. Sterling, in grave tenderness.

I wish I could convey to the reader's ears, with the lines, the cadences of the voice that rendered them for us:

"I might have said a word of cheer
Before I let him go;
His haggard visage haunts me yet,
But how could I foreknow
That slighted chance would be the last
To me in mercy given?
My utmost yearning cannot send
That word from earth to heaven.

"I might have looked the love I felt;
My brother had sore need
Of that for which (too shy and proud)
He had no words to plead.
But self is near, and self is strong,
And I was blind that day;
He sought within my careless eyes,
And, thirsting, turned away.

"I might have held in closer clasp
The hand he laid in mine;
My full, rich life to his sad soul
Had been like generous wine,
Warming a heart whose streams e'en then
Were ebbing faint and low.
Mine might have been (God knows) the art
To stem the fatal flow.

"Ah, word and look and touch withheld!
Ah, brother heart, now stilled!
Dear life, forever out of reach,
I might have cheered and filled!
Talents misused, and chances lost,
O'er which I mourn in vain,—
A waste as barren to my tears
As desert sands to rain!

"Ah, friend! whose eyes today may look
Love into living eyes;
Whose word and look perchance may thrill
Sad hearts with sweet surprise,
Be instant, like your Lord, in love,
And constant as his grace,
With light and dew and manna fall;
The night comes on apace."

—The Housewife.

The topic for the Missionary Conquest Meeting for November is, "Some Forerunners of Modern Missions." The matter in "The Baptist Union," is presented by Rev. Lemuel C. Barnes, D. D., of Pittsburgh, Penn. Dr. Barnes is a specialist in missionary literature. He deals with four widely separate groups.—The Romanic Jesuit, The American Puritan, The Danish Lutheran, and the Moravian Brethren. It would be difficult to pack more interesting information into the same space than Dr. Barnes presents in his four articles. All Unions that can—and which one cannot—should observe this meeting.

EDITOR,

R. OSGOOD MORSE.

Prayer Meeting Topic.

B. Y. P. U. Topic.—Conquest Meeting. Some Forerunners of Modern Missions.

Alternate Topic. Our Return for the Lord's Benefits, Psalm 116: 12-19. (A Thanksgiving Meeting.)

Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, November 27.—Exodus 9: 8-35. Two plagues.—A broken promise (vs. 28, 34, 35). Compare Prov. 19: 9.

Tuesday, November 28.—Exodus 10. Two plagues.—Threat on Moses' life (vs. 28). Compare 1 Kings 19: 2.

Wednesday, November 29.—Exodus 11: 1-12: 28. The passover blood. Compare Heb. 11: 28.

Thursday, November 30.—Exodus 12: 29-13: 16. The fatal plague (vs. 29). Compare Num. 8: 17.

Friday, December 1.—Exodus 13: 17-14: 31. Jehovah rescuing his people (vs. 30). Compare Ps. 106: 8-11.

Saturday, December 2.—Exodus 15: 1-21. Song of praise to the Deliverer. Compare Ps. 18: 1, 2.

Prayer Meeting Topic.—November 26.

Thanksgiving, Ps. 116: 12-19.

The day officially appointed for thanksgiving has past, but not the time when every Christian should be filled with gratitude to our all-Provident Father, and should abound in its loving expression. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" The mercies of the Lord are "new every morning," day by day our thanksgiving should be rendered to him.

It is no wonder that the Psalmist spoke of "all his benefits." How many, how varied, how unspeakably great they are! Think of these: The blessings of free, British institutions; of bountiful harvests and national prosperity; of peace within our borders, and prospective victory in a righteous war abroad; of happy homes; of Christian civilization; but above all, of "Christ in the heart," the calm of wounded spirits, the strength and joy of life, the inspiration to noble service, "the hope of glory."

Measured by the nature and extent of his "benefits," our gratitude should be very deep and our thanksgiving spontaneous and enthusiastic. How shall this be effected?

(1) By a cordial reception of our mercies. We honor God by receiving cheerfully what he sends upon us. "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good," (Rom. 8: 28.) Yet how often his choicest blessings are disregarded! Eternal life is offered through his Son, yet multitudes choose death. He is willing to make all grace abound toward his children, yet how far beneath this glorious privilege many of us live! "I will take the cup of salvation," is the first act by which we manifest gratitude.

(2) By due recognition of the fact that the cup is of God's filling.

(a) At the moment it may not be pleasing, yet it comes to us charged with good.
(b) From no other source comes any blessing. The cup of salvation, the cup of blessing, is from the Lord. All good is from him. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. . . . The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." (Ps. 145: 9, 15 and 16.)

(3) By fitting acknowledgement of God's blessings. Not only in private communion with our Heavenly Father, but in his sanctuary should we render praise. "I will pay my vows unto the Lord, yes, in the presence of all his people, (verses 14 and 18, revised ed.) "In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem," (verse 19) And then comes the Psalmist's exhortation appealing to us, "Praise ye the Lord." The spirit of humble gratitude will elicit public acknowledgement. Thanksgiving is the normal outcome of gratitude. If the thanksgiving is not forthcoming, there is a serious reflection upon our gratitude. Will not genuine gratitude always prompt to cheerful acknowledgement of our blessings? Can that properly be considered gratitude which does not lead to expression? And the unfeeling bestowal of his gifts calls for unceasing praise from us. In this way not only is a right service rendered—a service prompted by all that is high and noble—but the name of our God is magnified and his goodness made known.

(4) Lastly, by asking for more. "And call upon the name of the Lord," (verses 13 and 17.) He delights in our large requests. It is thus that our faith honors him. We show our appreciation of what he has already given by generous petitions for further favors.

Shall not we delight to render thanksgiving to the Lord "for all his benefits," a thanksgiving prompted by our sincere gratitude, and uniting in itself a cordial reception of blessings; due regard to their divine origin; fitting acknowledgement thereof; and solicitation for more, yea, an increased supply? A. F. NEWCOMB.

Amherst, Nov. 9.

The Lawrencetown, Annapolis County, B. Y. P. U.

Our Union has been organized several years. At first we had poor success, but we have found that if we cannot rise by "a single bound" it is well to "mount round by round." During the past two years we have had much encouragement. Our presidents, in that time, have been active, energetic and efficient, Reg. Morse, J. E. Schafner and Frank Wheelock, the latter now in office; Silla Bishop, vice-pres.; Frank Whitman, sec.; Clara Daniels, treas., assisted by a corps of willing workers. During the last year we have procured a good organ for the church, and by means of sociables and concerts it is now all paid for. We have a good C. C. Class well conducted by the pastor. We purpose this year to follow the Conquest Missionary Course and hope to reap much benefit. Our devotional meetings are not lacking in vitality and enthusiasm and are largely attended. On the whole it is a pleasure to be able to say we are doing good work and the outlook is bright and hopeful.

ROS. MOND MORSE, Cor.-Sec'y.

Middleton, N. S.

Our Union is taking up the S. L. C. with real enthusiasm. The Juniors are also engaged on these courses. A class of thirteen for the study of the S. L. C. is formed at Hanley Mt. We have no Union there, but a number

of intelligent young people are finding the lessons helpful. We expect to organize a B. Y. P. U. at Spa Spring very soon and will have another class in that section. The latter part of September we held a social, a part of the programme of which was the presentation of diplomas for last year's studies. Twenty-three diplomas were presented to Juniors and Seniors. The pastor spoke on the work and presented the diplomas. O. P. Goucher, our retiring president, spoke on "The Educational Factor of the B. Y. P. U." We think these studies just the thing for our young people. Our Union has raised money enough during the summer to paint the church. It has also contributed \$25 to the mission funds of our Convention.

FANNIE BURDETT, Sec'y.

This excellent report from Middleton was taken from the Baptist Union. We should like all such reports sent to us also. Reports appearing in this column find ten times as many readers in these Provinces as those appearing in the Baptist Union. Moral.—Send to both papers.

During one year of Rev. J. E. Goucher's pastorate in Truro it was our privilege to attend his ministry. The prayer meeting service of his church was more helpful than that of any other church we have ever attended. Everything was done "decently and in order." There were no long pauses. The worshipful spirit of the service always helped us in life's duties. Immediately upon assuming charge of this department we resolved to ask Bro. Goucher to write something on the prayer meeting. We present below his stimulating article. We think many will be grateful to Bro. Goucher for his earnest words, and will ask themselves to what extent they may possess the secret of "A good prayer meeting."

A Good Prayer Meeting.

Pity 'tis we should ever have a poor one. Why should we? The resources of heaven are infinite. We are not straitened in God, but, alas, for the limitations of poor human nature, we fall of our best and most cherished ideals. What pastor, what live member of the church, what leader of B. Y. P. U. does not remember prayer meetings that make the mouth water and set the heart longing for similar experiences? Nothing does the writer remember, in a pastorate of more than thirty-five years, that he can recall with more satisfaction than the prayer meeting service, not that it always or often reached his ideal. And yet judging from impressions made on many minds, the uplift they received, the courage inspired to face temptations and overcome difficulties, the souls convicted of sin and set upon the search for the new life, and as he watched the growth of these young disciples and the ripening into maturity of more advanced Christians, and how much the prayer meeting had to do with this growth and development, it is his deliberate conviction that no agency in the church is more potent for good or bears more distinctly the stamp of divine approval than the weekly prayer meeting. God intended it should be a halting place on the way of life for weary pilgrims to rest and refresh themselves.

Here the whole family without invidious distinction can give themselves up to the delights of the hour. Within those walls, elaborate or plain, there may be and ought to be sweetest fellowship. The more there are to share the voluntary service the better. Many can join in the service of song. Others can kneel in devout prayer, and others still can speak a word of testimony. If the leader of the service be the pastor, it is fitting that the shepherd be with the sheep and lambs in this restful, sacred place. But the best common sense and sanctified tact should characterize the leader in this department. It is a family gathering and for their special benefit. The old and young, the simple and the profound have right of way here. No one should have a monopoly of these flying moments and they should be used for the greatest good of the greatest number. It is monstrous that the leader should consume half of the allotted hour. Were you met for a lecture or sermon it would be different. But the main idea of the prayer meeting is not instruction but worship, fellowship. Let the leader's preparation be ample but simple, not mental merely or mainly. The whole spiritual nature be aroused. Open your sympathies as you would a garden to all comers. Make the prayer meeting hour the brightest, gladdest of all the week.

That is what God intended it to be. To such a place the weary can come and find rest. The heart hungry for fellowship can be satisfied.

But alas, there are prayer meetings and prayer meetings. Those that drag out a miserable sixty minutes, or worse still, ninety minutes' existence, with the result of depressing rather than stimulating those in attendance. But thank God, there are those that are bright and cheery, radiant as the face of an angel from start to finish. All present feel the uplift and linger after the benediction, loth to leave this "house of God, this gate of heaven."

These you say, are the extremes, yes, and between these poles are varieties almost infinite.

But the question is, how may we approach nearest the bright extreme? Not by trusting to merely accidental circumstances, or as it is sometimes said to the inspiration of the hour.

We want inspiration, the inspiration of the spirit. But it does not come fortuitously. The success of the prayer meeting is usually assured before the hour to begin has come. To have a spirit-filled service, you must have a spirit-filled heart or hearts.

Many seem almost surprised when they find themselves surrounded by a heavenly atmosphere in the prayer meeting. But there are some present not surprised, they have looked for this result. Find out these and the secret of a "good prayer meeting, is out." These are the ones that maintain the life of the service, when others less interested, might let it die or degenerate into a meaningless form.

It is significant when you hear a brother or sister say in testimony (as I have often heard,) My first waking thoughts this morning were with God, about this prayer meeting. As true as the needle turns to the pole, the hearts of these hidden ones turn to the service of prayer, and praise, and testimony.

Let there be a few such in every church and community, and the hands of the pastor will not fail for a stay when the day settles into gloom or the night grows pitchy dark.

J. E. GOUCHER.