

Mrs. Allen seemed a little taken back by this presentation of the case.

"Now, let me tell you, dear Mrs. Allen, that I think you are making the mistake of your life, and one that you will regret most bitterly later along. The trouble with Harry this morning was that he had taken a pencil from his father's coat, and did not return it when I asked for it. Taking the pencil was disobedience, not returning it was defiance. His father wanted me to take it from him, and settle the matter; but I said: 'No; he must give it to me. I have told him to do so.' So for an hour and a half he sat on a chair with me beside him. All I did was to say in an even, firm tone, 'Harry, give mamma the pencil.' At the end of that time, he handed the pencil over, threw his arms around my neck, burst into tears, and promised of his own account to be good. I shall not have any trouble with him for a long time again. To be sure, he is but two years old, but he understands."

Mrs. Allen was learning a few things. "And, dear Mrs. Allen, believe me, they really understand much earlier than one gives them credit for, if one only notices. And as to 'breaking their spirit.' Oh, that is an awful thing to do! Imagine! why, you are crucifying all the determination out of them. Don't you know you ought to thank God every day of your life for the obstinacy in your children? Don't you know that that is what makes will power and determination later in life, if it be properly directed?"

A light broke over Mrs. Allen's face. "That must have been what my Cousin Mary meant one day. I forgot to ask her. Her mother was complaining of the second child as being so obstinate. 'Now I never have the least trouble with Jack,' Aunt Louise said; 'he is very easy to manage. No matter what happens he gives in right away; but, as for Jennie, she is as obstinate as a mule, when she takes a notion.' That's just the trouble, mother," said Cousin Mary, with a worried expression on her face. "I've no fear about Jennie getting along in the world. Her obstinacy will carry her through. But Jack troubles me a good deal. To be sure, he is only five now, but he is so easily governed that I fear for him. He will be easily led. Pray God he may learn to be firm as he grows older, or I fear there are bad days ahead of him." It struck me strangely at the time, but I think I see what she meant."

Mrs. Travers nodded, and then replied, eagerly: "And then their tastes, Mrs. Allen! These should be consulted, or how can the children learn to form judgment? From the time I can remember, my mother always took me with her to buy my clothes, and, selecting two or three pieces suitable in kind, price, and color, allowed me to choose one for myself. She also gave me a choice as to what I should put on, explaining why anything I selected was unsuitable. We never 'fussed' at home about anything, and we were all very close to mother."

There was a little silence, and then Mrs. Allen said, with a little quaver in her voice:

"I hope that after this my children, too, will become 'close to mother,'" and she went away without another word, while Mrs. Travers lay back again in her chair, her face illuminated with a tender smile.—Emma Churchman Hewitt, in *Christian Work*.

The Unsaid Part of Excuse.

Paul says sinners "are without excuse." Jesus tells us in the parable of the great supper that they "all with one consent began to make excuse." There seems to be but "one consent" amongst excuse makers now, as the same excuses are used to-day as in centuries gone by. But all excuse-makers leave much unsaid when they are trying to get out of serving God. If the whole truth were told by them, they would not appear in an enviable or commendable light. Are excuse-makers untruthful? Generally speaking, yes. In excuses "more is meant than meets the ear;" and in the illustrations that follow what is really said is italicized, while all they should have said to be truthful is in parenthesis. The occasion of each excuse will be recognized. The following will serve as illustrations:

1. "I never go out at night" (except to balls, parties, theaters, clubs, concerts, sociables, weddings or something that will give me more pleasure than a Sunday night's service or a prayer-meeting).

2. "I can't sing a note" (except in the parlor and at concerts and entertainments of various sorts. At such places as these I sing very well).

3. "I am too poor to give" (unless it be to beautify my home, purchase some luxury or pleasure, or add in some way to creature comfort or that of my friends who do not need my handsome and expensive presents).

4. "I do not have the time" (I need it all to myself. My social and business matters so take up my time, along with what I spend idly, that I have none left for church matters).

5. "I was too sick" (to go to church, but quite well enough to make a visit, receive company, go to the store or office or to the opera).

6. "I didn't have anything to wear" (but my nice dress, or suit, which I keep to receive company in or to wear out at teas and sociables, and of course I could not wear a party dress or full dress suit to church).

It is not hard to discover the free use of such excuses. All Christian workers come athwart such quite frequently, but the whole truth is rarely told when such excuses are rendered. John does not exactly call names, but he tells just what such people do. See 1 John 1:6.—Sel.

The Young People

EDITOR,

J. W. BROWN.

All communications for this department should be sent to Rev. J. W. Brown, Havelock, N. B., and must be in his hands at least one week before the date of publication.

Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, Feb. 3.—Romans 5. Source of the best peace (vs. 1). Compare II Cor. 5:18.
Tuesday, Feb. 4.—Romans 6. Free gift of God is eternal life (vs. 23). Compare John 3:16.
Wednesday, Feb. 5.—Romans 7. The law of sin and the law of God (vs. 25). Compare Rom. 8:2.
Thursday, Feb. 6.—Romans 8:1-17. Who are the sons of God? (vs. 14.) Compare Gal. 3:26.
Friday, Feb. 7.—Romans 8:18-39. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (vs. 35). Compare Rom. 8:38, 39.
Saturday, Feb. 8.—Romans 9. God's mercy behind our salvation (vs. 16). Compare Eph. 2:8.

Prayer Meeting Topic—February 2.

Mary; or, Choosing the Better Part. Luke 10:38-42.

If we knew all the circumstances, no doubt, we would better understand the narrative. As it is we will do well to be moderate in our rebuke of Martha, and praise of Mary. Though Jesus did rebuke Martha and commend Mary, surely he did not therefore teach that it was wrong to serve, but right to spend all one's time in hearing only. A careful reading of Matt. 25:31-46 will give Jesus' view of serving.

It seems safe, however, to say that Martha was spending too much time in minor things. Yet it should not be thought that the busy Martha had been indifferent always to the words of Jesus. That she had given heed to his words sometime, is seen in her conversation with Him when He came to raise her brother. John 11:23-27. She seems to have understood Jesus about as well as Mary.

The one thing needful for Martha and Mary, is our need. It is the need of the whole body of believers, but especially the great need of our Young People. There is much work being done, but very little real study of the Word of God. We seem to lack desire for the word. The most difficult work to sustain is Bible study. But the Marys have always lived and always will.

"Be ours the bliss to sit,
Waiting at Jesus' feet—
The twin in one;
Whether we hear, or do,
With patient heart and true
To toil and listen, too,
To him alone."

Halifax, N. S.

G. W. SCHURMAN.

Just a Word.

BY REV. W. J. RUTLEDGE, SEC'Y-TREAS. OF MARITIME UNIONS.

1. In general: Through our advancing recognition of the increasing demands for an intelligent, spiritual and disciplined churchmembership the institution known as the Young People's Union has become a positive necessity to us and is being accorded a deservedly permanent place among our churches. The stage in its history, when the Shakespearean question "To be or not to be" might have been taken as defining our attitude toward the organization, has been happily passed through and, under the stress of the law of demand, we now exalt the institution to its throne of service by the side of our other denominational and church agencies. Henceforth we may expect it to be held in that respect, to be clothed with that dignity and to be given that vital loyalty which we reverently accord to the essential and the Providential. It is true that the Union constitution is not yet adopted by all our young people's Societies, but the purposes specified therein are being more or less systematically pursued by these societies. It is, therefore, in our judgment, only a matter of time before variety gives way to uniformity of organization—a consummation to be devoutly desired for most obvious reasons. The Union Constitution is wide enough in its scope and elastic enough in its workings to allow the local society the utmost freedom in meeting its peculiar requirements. But meantime we shall rejoice in the unity of purpose and endeavor so increasingly evident among us and which binds us together in loyalty to the essential spirit of the Young People's Movement. It may again be said that our local societies, whatever their form of organization, are equally recognized in the Constitution of the Maritime Union, are equally entitled to its privileges and are equally responsible for its support. Indeed the Maritime organization is necessitated by and ever dependent upon the local societies. Through the latter the former lives and moves and has its being. They must furnish the working data of the general Union.

Therefore:

2. In Particular: The record which the Maritime B. Y. P. Union will make in connection with the work of

the Kingdom of Christ shall be determined by our local organizations. The efficiency of the body as a whole results from the strength and sympathetic co-operation of all the particular members. You, local Unioners, hold the commanding position. Your energy must supply the vital element to the institution. Your deeds must form the substance of our story to be incorporated among the annals of the Kingdom. Encouraging intimations as to the work being undertaken are coming to us from some of you. These lead to the anticipation that this year's chapter of our history will minister to optimism when again we meet in annual convocation. But, fellow-workers, fall not to push that which has been well begun towards a satisfactory issue. Circumstances are prone to arise which make for the nipping of our endeavors in the bud. Faces set as a flint towards accomplishment are, therefore, urgently demanded. By indomitable energy and resolute application make straight and steadily for the goal.

Since we have as an organization entered upon the serious business of making history, let me remind you of the importance of keeping a strict record of your doings. Such will greatly help to give continuity and permanence to your local work; and as well will it greatly facilitate the preparation of your statistical report for the annual meeting of the general Union. It will be of much interest and value both to yourselves and to those who may follow you to know who were identified with your society; who served you as officers and when; whose names were, by the grace of God, transferred from the Associate to the Active membership; what studies were pursued and under whose leadership and what other lines of work you adopted; what public meetings held and the nature of the programmes; what the offerings made and for what purpose, and what the nature of your entertainments that those coming after may be warned or encouraged by your example in this peculiarly delicate matter.

I would also take advantage of this opportunity to impress upon you the importance of preparing faithfully and forwarding promptly your yearly report to the Maritime Union. At the proper time statistical cards will be sent out to you for infilling and with your own Secretary's record before you it will mean but a few minutes' work to accomplish what we ask. Your failure in this matter shall mean weakness to yourselves and the discouragement of all. Furthermore you should make, if necessary, a strenuous effort to have your Society represented at the annual gathering. There is information and inspiration to be had at such meetings which your Society cannot afford to miss. And lastly, please do not fail to provide the Maritime organization with the sinews of war in the shape of a good big money offering. And the sooner your offering is in the possession of the Treasurer the better and more useful that offering will be. Kindly take the hint and then take the collection. Amen.

Port Maitland, N. S.

Illustrative Gatherings.

SELECTED BY SOPHIE BRONSON TITTERTON.

It is better to see clearly one or two things, in life than to move confused and blinded in the dust of an impotent activity.—Hamilton W. Mable.

"I dare no more fret," said John Wesley, "than to curse and swear." One who knew him well said that he never saw him low-spirited or fretful in his life. Wesley himself says: "To have persons at my ears murmuring and fretting at everything is like tearing the flesh from my bones. By the grace of God I am discontented at nothing. I see God sitting on the throne and ruling all things."

The true, wakeful life is a thing of intensity and depth. It carries ever about with it the air of calm and trustful dignity, of inward power and greatness. It is fervent but not feverish; energetic but not excited; speedy in its doings but not hasty; prudent but not timid or selfish; resolute and fearless but not rash; unobtrusive and sometimes, it may be silent, yet making all around to feel its influence; full of joy and peace, yet without parade or noise; overflowing in tenderness and love, yet at the same time faithful and true.—H. Bonar.

We must buy and sell in the market. We must earn our daily bread. But just in doing these usual acts may the soul be helped and fed. It is not in keeping the day's work and the day's prayer separate so, but by mixing the prayer and labor that the soul is taught to grow.

—S. F. Smith, D. D.

Beloved, let us love so well,
Our work shall still be better for our love,
And still our love be sweeter for our work!
And both commended for the sake of each
By all true workers and true lovers born.
—Mrs. Browning.