

"Te, te, it's too bad," said Johnson. "An' I have to pass over that bridge myself, too. Well, so long."

The two men started on, then, on their separate ways, but Elsie had already thrown on a dress and was ready to join them. Softly she unlocked the hall door and reached out into the dim morning light.

"Mr. Johnson," she called to the man who was bound for the city, "do you go through Pleasanton on your way to town? If you do, will you please let me go with you?"

She had come quite close to the wagon then, and by the light of the lantern which she had quickly lighted the surprised man saw that she was haggard and distressed.

"You ain't runnin' away from home, little girl, are you?" he asked anxiously. "Cause, if you are—"

"No, no," she interrupted. "I live in Pleasanton. I've been going to school here. My father—my father—"

Elsie's voice choked with tears and sobs and she looked at the man helplessly.

"I see," he said. "Homesickness. Well, jump right in. The horses is fresh an' as there ain't much of a load I'll make pretty good time."

Elsie ran back and scribbled a note of explanation to Mrs. Treadway, then, burdened with no luggage except a hat and an odd pair of shoes, she climbed up beside Mr. Johnson and began the trip to Pleasanton. It did not occur to her that she ought to explain matters to her companion. Besides she was too miserable to talk. She could do nothing but think. Remorse was eating at her heart and the pain was terrible. Oh, she had so many things to regret—her disrespect, her coldness, and worst of all her shame of him. This had dated from the day some careless, thoughtless youth had called him a "hayseed" and had wondered why "Elsie didn't make the old man trip up a little." Since then Elsie had avoided being seen in his company whenever it was possible, and when he came into Abbottsville for her, she had insisted upon his driving down back streets that were little frequented. And last of all came her refusal to receive the bouquet that he had taken such pains to gather. Poor, despised little flowers. How it must have hurt him. And he was such a good man, so gentle, so kind, so true. How could she have grieved him so?

To add to her suffering, she felt that she was directly responsible for his accident. Oh, if only she had gone home with him as he wished. Her keen young eyes could have guided Ned safely over the bridge, and all would have been well. Or, what was still better, if only he had stayed at Mrs. Treadway's all night. Elsie felt sure he would have done so had not she vetoed the plan, and she cried aloud at the thought that she had been actuated in this by the fear that he would stay for breakfast next morning and put her to still greater shame by eating with his knife.

Oh, it seemed such a mean, pitifully low thing to do. She was very, very sorry. She sobbed out her anguish on the horse-hair cushions of Mr. Johnson's wagon, and prayed again and again that he would live until she got home so she could tell him all this and let him know how dearly she loved him.

Mr. Johnson kept his word as to making good time, and it was scarcely six o'clock when he put Elsie down at the end of the lane that led back to her home. Everything seemed very quiet about the house when she drew near and she wondered if he were already dead. The front door was locked, and she went around to the kitchen. The back door was ajar, and she saw that a freshly-lighted wood fire was blazing in the cook-stove. She passed through the plainly-furnished rooms, calling as she went, but there was no response.

"He isn't here," she cried, with a terrible sinking feeling at her heart. "They must have taken him to one of the neighbors to give him better care, or, perhaps, to lay him out."

Aimlessly she walked down the worn path to the barn. The wide double doors stood open and just inside she saw the little spring wagon, without an extra scratch or blemish.

And farther beyond she saw her father. One arm was resting against a wooden pillar, and in the crook of his elbow lay his head. Elsie had seen him in that attitude once before. It was the day her mother died. When she came back from Mrs. Dolan's, where they had sent her until it was all over, he was leaning so, against one corner of the smoke-house. She remembered how very white and set his face had been then. It looked something like that now.

"Father, father," she cried, "I thought you were injured—dead. I thought it was you who fell off the bridge last night. O father, father."

He turned round slowly.

"Why, Elsie," he said, "you home so airy? How'd you come? No, 't wa'n't I that got hurt. 'Twas Lem Baker. He'd been in to the commencement, too. I happened along about that time an' helped take him up. An' you thought it was me, an' come all the way home to see about it. Why, Elsie, little girl, don't take on so."

When Elsie looked up again she saw that he held in one hand the bouquet of wild flowers. They were withered and faded but they were fragrant still.

"I want to tell you about these, father," she said, touching them gently. "They're far prettier than any of the others I got last night."

"Oh, pahaw, no they ain't," laughed David. "Don't you say anything like that. I know better. Why, they ain't a patchin' to them roses an' lilies."

"But I love them better, anyway, father," said Elsie.

"Oh, well," quoth David, "that's different."

"Yes, Mis' Dolan," he said, when later in the morning, that good woman "ran in, just to see how they were getting along." "Elsie's come home to stay, except when I take her over to Abbottsville Wednesday night for the 'lumi banquet. She says I've got to fix up an' go, too, but la, I couldn't think of such a thing. Yes, them's my flowers, same ones I picked yesterday. Elsie prized 'em more'n anything she got, didn't you, Elsie?"

And when Mrs. Dolan noted Elsie's fond, deferential manner, she could not doubt it.—The Interior.

For every suffering heart there is at hand, or can be found, some noble task, into the energy necessary for the doing of which it can transmute the energy of its grief and pain.—John W. Chadwick.

The Young People

EDITOR,

J. B. MORGAN.

Kindly address all communications for this department to Rev. J. B. Morgan, Aylesford, N. S. To insure publication, matter must be in the editor's hands on the Wednesday preceding the date of the issue for which it is intended.

Prayer Meeting Topic—March 19.

B. Y. P. U. Topic.—Self-mastery, 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, March 20.—Ezekiel 16:1-14. Unbounded favors. Compare Heb. 7:25.

Tuesday, March 21.—Ezekiel 16:15-34. Rank impenitence and insolence. Compare Ezek. 21:32.

Wednesday, March 22.—Ezekiel 16:35-63. But God never forgets. (vs. 60). Compare Lev. 26:42.

Thursday, March 23.—Ezekiel 17. The recompense of impenitence. (vs. 19). Compare John 3:16.

Friday, March 24.—Ezekiel 18:1-18. The soul that sinneth. (vs. 4). Compare Rom. 6:23.

Saturday, March 25.—Ezekiel 18:19-32. One purpose of penitence. (vs. 30). Compare Rev. 2:5.

Prayer Meeting Topic—March 19.

Self-mastery. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

1. Self-mastery is not a delusive dream, it is possible. 2. Jesus puts self-mastery at the very threshold of the Christian life. "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself."

3. The mastery of self is not an easy thing to attain.

4. In order to be achieved, self-mastery must be deliberately determined upon and judiciously attempted.

5. Self-mastery is indicative of strength and nobility of soul. "He who ruleth his own spirit is better than he who taketh a city."

6. In so far as one fails of self-mastery he fails of the highest respect of others. He who holdeth rein over his appetites and passions, who brideth his tongue and keepeth his temper, who controlleth his affections, ambitions and impulses, in a word, who is sovereign of himself will command respect.

In order to realize in one's life his possibilities of usefulness, one must be master of self. This was one reason why St. Paul fought and kept his body under control, lest failing to fulfil God's purpose in his apostleship he should be removed as a cumberer of the ground and become a castaway from the apostolate.

9. Every victory over self makes another victory easier and more probable.

10. Whoso would gain mastery of himself may count on God's help and should not fail to seek it.

The Parsonage, Kentville, N. S. B. N. NOBLES.

Hello Again, Unions.

"It never rains but it pours." A few weeks ago we had such a rush of reports from societies that we could not find space for them, and now behold, none last week and this week a single report. As the good colored sister said about the church of which she was a member, I guess we're backslidin' gettin' ready for another revival. Let us have these encouraging reports without any abatement.

The Practice of Sincerity.

In recent numbers of the Christian Endeavor Herald the editor has been putting into the form of a story the troubles of a young man over the singing of hymns the sentiments of which he could not subscribe to. Hymn after hymn was announced which contained expressions of faith or feeling which did not agree with his life conviction. He therefore remained silent, and excused his silence while others were singing by saying within himself, "Why I cannot sing that and mean it." This might be a case of extreme conscientiousness or simply an illustration of the working of many minds during the singing of hymns. Most people sing thoughtlessly. Their minds are not occupied with the words that come from their lips. There might be more or less emotion in the heart, but no intelligent devotion. Most of our favorite hymns are far too fervent and ecstatic for average Christians to sing with absolute sincerity. They are, in many cases, the highest utterances of men and women of pre-eminent saintliness, and it is likely the language in which they wrote was over-strained, and over-expressed their innermost life. Few can sincerely adopt the sentiments of such writers as Faber or even Frances Havergal. We have seen persons ceasing to sing "Nearer my God" when coming to the line "E'en though it be a cross, that raiseth me." But this kind of conscientiousness is rare. What are we to do, when coming to a verse at variance with our present experience and feeling? For every one to stop singing at words or lines with which he could not agree would be to destroy harmony and render the service of song valueless. In order to protect

our sincerity we should pour as much of devotion as our souls possess into the words of our songs. We should keep the mind alert and the heart in a spirit of devotion, so that we may not be found singing words without putting our worship into them. As far as possible we should make them our own. The pastor can assist the sincere singing of hymns by calling attention to the thought expressed in them. An occasional comment on them is as profitable as comment on a passage of Scripture.—Commonwealth.

Among the Societies.

NEW HARBOR, GUYSBORO CO., N. S.

Our Baptist Young People's Union is not often heard from but we thought it was time for us to report. We have appointed new officers. We have a membership of 30 active members and 7 associate. Two years and a half ago when it was organized we had ten active members. We are still growing in number. We ask all the sister unions to remember us in prayer, that we may grow in grace, and that we may be the means in God's hands of bringing lost souls from nature's darkness into His marvelous light and liberty.

CELIA GILLIN, Cor. Sec.

LUNenburg CO., UNION.

The Lunenburg county organization of the Baptist Young People's Union met at New Canada, February 27th. In the absence of the president, Rev. E. P. Churchill presided. After the usual preliminaries and an address by the leader, the following program was carried out: Reading "God's army," Miss Minetta Crandall; Duet, Winning souls for Jesus. A very excellent paper was read by Mrs. Churchill showing the origin, development and growth of the B. Y. P. U., followed by a discussion by the pastors on some points brought out in the paper. Rev. E. N. Archibald spoke to the young people of New Canada, giving reasons why they should interest themselves in this great movement. The meeting was a very interesting one, and we hope will be productive of great good to those who were present.

ELLA D. CRANDALL, Secretary.

When is the Brain at its Best.

The brain takes a longer time to develop to its highest capacity than any other organ in the body. Like the limbs, it increases in strength and power, or falls into decrepitude, just in proportion as it is exercised or neglected.

The late poet Laureate was fifty years of age when his idylls, "Elsie," "Vivien," and "Guinevere," were published, and his series was not completed until the poet had reached his sixty-second year. Macaulay's essays take a deservedly high place in English literature, but these collectively are not works by which the great thinker and writer would have been remembered. They were the outcome of his early manhood, and pale into insignificance compared with his magnum opus, the "History of England." And it must be remembered that although the first two volumes were issued when Macaulay was forty-eight years of age, the two following did not see the light until he was fifty-five.

Swift was fifty-nine when his brain gave birth to "Gulliver's Travels," and John Stuart Mill fifty-six when his essay on "Utilitarianism" was published, although his "Liberty" was the child of his fifty-three-year-old brain. Milton's mind rose to its highest capacity when the blind poet was between fifty-four and fifty-nine. It was at this period of his existence that he offered the world that sublime brain-fruit, "Paradise Lost." Sir Walter Scott was forty-four when his "Waverley" made its appearance, and nearly all those stories which have conferred lasting fame upon him were composed after the age of forty-six.

Cowper had turned the half century when he wrote "The Task" and "John Gilpin," and Defoe was within two years of sixty when he published his wonderful "Robinson Crusoe."

George Eliot, perhaps one of the most eloquent and remarkable women writers who ever lived, was near her fiftieth year when she wrote "Middlemarch" and this was succeeded by that powerful book, "Daniel Deronda." Darwin's "Origin of Species" was evolved by the philosopher when he had reached his half century, and his "Descent of Man" when twelve years older.

Bacon's great work took fifty-nine years to mature, and Grote's "History of Greece" some few years longer. Every reader and literary critic will admit that of all Thomas Hood's works, the two which stand pre-eminent are "The Song of the Shirt" and "The Bridge of Sighs." Yet these were written at the age of forty-six.

Longfellow wrote "Hiawatha" at forty-eight, and Holmes gave us "Songs in Many Keys" when he had passed his fifty-fifth birthday. From these data it would appear that the intellectual faculties of manhood, speaking generally, are at their brightest and best any time between forty-five and fifty-five years of age.—The Happy Thought.