

passed that either Fred French or the Osborne girls did not come in to see Guy and Annie for an hour or more, these neighborly visits to be returned when the Blakes came home. This event happened in just ten days from the time they went away. Their daughter did not die, and was indeed out of danger.

"All owing to her having her mother to take care of her," Mr. Blake declared.

"And if it hadn't been for Guy and Annie Westcott, she wouldn't have had me," declared Mrs. Blake. She was delighted with the way they had attended to everything in her absence. "But now," she said, "you mustn't do another thing, except have a good time."

"It is going to be a part of my good time to help you some every day," Mrs. Blake said Annie.

"And choring agrees so well with my constitution," said Guy, "that really I can't give it up entirely."

Besides these little voluntary duties there were the visits of Fred and Mary to return. Then there was sleigh riding, and a season of fine coasting, a full moon at this time making it a delightful pastime for evenings, the only part of the day that Fred could leave his wood cutting. Then came a thaw, followed by a hard freeze, and there was skating and long walks in the woods and pastures.

"Annie," said Guy one day, "we're having a glorious time and I hate most awfully to leave, but doesn't it strike you as rather ridiculous that a healthy fellow like me, who can tramp about all day and sleep ten solid hours every night, should be staying on here in the country for his health?"

"Well," admitted Annie, reluctantly, "it doesn't seem really necessary."

So they packed their trunks and the Blakes carried them to the railroad station. Guy and Annie watched the old horse and the covered wagon from the car window as long as they could see them. When they turned toward each other again there were tears in Annie's eyes, and even Guy's were not entirely dry. One of the other passengers wondered what that pretty, delicate-looking girl and the well-dressed young fellow, with the curly red hair and the high forehead, were feeling badly about.

"Aren't they the very nicest, most interesting old people we ever saw?" said Annie.

"Yes," assented Guy, "and our own father and mother couldn't have been kinder."

"I hate to leave the Osborne girls, too," said Annie.

"They are unusually bright girls, both of them," said Guy, "and it seems as though they are more original and more sincere than city girls."

"Thank you," laughed Annie.

"Oh, I don't mean you," said Guy. "And there's Fred French," he added, "I admire that fellow. He has as good a head as mine, and he would like to have an education, yet he gives up all his plans to stay on the farm and help support his mother and brothers and sisters, and does it carefully, never dreaming he is doing anything out of the ordinary."

"Well," said Annie, after a pause and with a sigh, "we are going to Mrs. Blake's again some time."

"That we are," said Guy, emphatically.—Interior.

When I Wouldn't Buy a Bicycle.

I don't know all about bicycle riding, my dear Harry and Lucy, but your old professor has had many a delightful spin on the silent steed, and has probably ridden as far in his day as any of you—and on a lofty machine of the old-double-header type, which made every mile count for ten. You must not, therefore, charge me with ignorance concerning the fascination of the modern craze when you hear what further I have to say; which is this:

There are circumstances in which I would not get a wheel. No, I wouldn't, Harry and Lucy, strange as you may think it.

I wouldn't run in debt for a wheel, not even if it had wings and could whirl me to the North Star on demand. I would run in debt for an education, and if I had a good salary, I would run in debt for a home; but for a bundle of steel, no matter how many fairy-like possibilities were wrapped up in it—never!

I wouldn't buy a bicycle if it meant an old dress for my mother, or a shabby coat for my father, or fewer rides for them in the fresh air. And, you know, many and many a bicycle has meant this, and more of the same.

I wouldn't buy a bicycle until the butcher was paid, and the grocer, and the plumber, and the dentist, and the rest of them, and until I had assurance that they were going to be paid right along. Do you know, there are thousands of shopkeepers all over the country who say that they cannot collect their bills because their customers have bought bicycles? Well, you inquire, as I have, if you doubt it.

I wouldn't buy a bicycle—no, I guess I wouldn't!—if it was to mean one cent less in the church treasury, and one cent less in the treasuries of the missionary societies. I should expect such a wheel to carry me straight down to—well, where the wire would melt.

I wouldn't buy a bicycle unless I was going to use it; not take a few demultery rides, and then get tired of it, and put it away in the cellar to rust.

I wouldn't buy a bicycle unless I was going to have time to ride it that could well be spared from my business and my home.

I wouldn't buy a bicycle unless I was going to have sense enough to ride it at proper times—not on Sunday; and in proper ways—not scorching; and in proper costume!

And finally, I wouldn't ride a bicycle unless I was sure I had sense enough to stop riding it when I had ridden enough for my health.

There now, Harry and Lucy, what do you think of that list? Frown over it all you please, every item will stand the test of common sense.

But if on all these points I could satisfy conscience and good judgment, would I buy a bicycle?

Yes, indeed, quicker than you could say Jack Robinson!

—Golden Rule.

The Young People.

EDITORS, REV. R. R. DALRY,
A. H. CHIPMAN.

Kindly address all communications for this department to A. H. Chipman, St. John.

Prayer Meeting Topics for July.

C. E. Topic.—Belief in Christ; what it is, what it does, John 4:46-53; Acts 16:23-34.

B. V. P. U. Topic.—The natural history of sin, James 1:13-15; Rom. 6:21-23.

B. V. P. U. Daily Bible Readings.

(Baptist Union.)

Monday, July 19.—Proverbs 9. The elements of wisdom, (vs. 10). Compare Ps. 111:10.

Tuesday, July 20.—Prov. 10:1-12. The side to be chosen. Compare Prov. 11:4.

Wednesday, July 21.—Proverbs 10:13-22. Silence a merit, (vs. 19). Compare James 3:2.

Thursday, July 22.—Proverbs 10:23-32. How to live long, (vs. 27). Compare Prov. 9:11.

Friday, July 23.—Proverbs 11:1-11. A false balance—a just weight, which? (vs. 1). Compare Prov. 20:23.

Saturday, July 24.—Proverbs 11:12-21. Don't strike hands with strangers, (vs. 15). Compare Prov. 17:18.

Prayer Meeting Topic for July 13.

"The natural history of Sin," James 1:13-15.

NOTES BY REV. W. N. HUTCHINS.

In the three verses before us James does not give a full history of sin. He simply suggests the titles of three chapters of what might have been an extensive volume.

I. The first chapter deals with the origin of sin. The people to whom this letter was written were passing through a season of severest trial. Persecution and worldliness were testing the metal that was in them. Adversity had laid her rough hand upon them and was inducing some to give up a life so full of hardship.

Worldliness was appealing to others and by her smiling face and beckoning finger was enticing them to a life of sin. The strain upon their characters was therefore very severe, and while many withstood many also yielded to the temptations before them. But the worst feature of the case was not their fall but their denial that they were to blame. They tried to vindicate themselves by the plea of necessity. They urged that circumstances, which were beyond their control, had exercised an irresistible power over them and compelled them to do as they did.

Have you never heard men talk like that? If they are the victims of some ugly trial of disposition they defend themselves on the ground that their weakness is a family failing. If they are in bondage to some vicious lust—they take down the same genealogical chart and inform you of the wickedness of their dead ancestors.

So on account of their ancestors and their environment scores of sinning men excuse their sin and persuade themselves that it was unavoidable.

But James replies, "each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed." Our sin has its parentage not in ancestors or environment, but in our own evil desires. The evils of a bad past and the evils of present surroundings are not omnipotent. We could have resisted the temptation had we determined to do so.

The blame, therefore, rests upon our own, and our own shoulders alone. In sin, as elsewhere in life "every man must bear his own burden."

II. The second chapter of this "Natural History of Sin" deals with the growth of sin.

Sin is never to be recognized by what it is to-day. Sin is a germ. It has the power of reproduction. It is a seed and not a stone. No sin planted in the human heart remains inactive. The expansive power of its life will burst asunder its husk. The poisonous weed will grow, spreading over the entire surface of your life and crawling into every corner and crevice of your character.

That evil habit was once a tender and tiny sprout just peeping above the surface of your life. To-day its great roots reach out into every part of your character and are twined and twisted and gripped about your entire being.

But a sinful act does more than reproduce itself. It produces and leads to other sins. One sin introduces us to another and the first act that commences our sinful career is only the leader of a numerous gang. Sin is a chain and the devil within us is trying with all his might to pull in every enslaving link and so the first sin is sure to drag in another and another and another unless we bar the door by a resolute act of the will. Bacon starts out with an avaricious ambition—avarice leads to bribery and bribery ends in ruin. Jealousy is sown in the heart of Macbeth, ripens into avarice and passes into murder.

But there is another phase to the growth of sin. It is sown in one life and it passes on and on—blown by the wind of an evil influence—until its evil harvest is reaped in countless lives. We cannot confine our sin to the field of our own life. In spite of our best endeavors it will bear a harvest in other hearts. It will crawl under and climb over the lightest and highest fence that can be made. One bad man may be a curse to an entire community.

III. In the third chapter of this brief history we have the end of sin. "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." There is in the apostle's words a suggestion that at present we fail to recognize the results of sin. The end as yet is not apparent. To judge the net proceeds of a life of sin you must look to the end. The godless man may appear to be living an abundant life and you may be tempted to follow his lead, but before you commit yourself look to the future. For sin when it is finished has not an abundant life.

"Sin bringeth forth death." Death is the necessary consequence of sin. It is the inevitable end in which a life of sin must terminate. Death is not an arbitrary punishment inflicted on sin by God. Sin is the parent and death is the child. Sin bringeth forth death. Paul in a different figure expresses the same truth when he writes, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." In sowing your wild oats you are planting the germs of death. In living a life of sin you are preparing for a harvest of corruption. He that sows sin will reap sin and sin in its ripened fruit is death. This is a terrible truth, for it links our sin and death together in a connection so natural that we cannot separate them. Sin and death are as closely united as the cause is with its effect, as the seed is with its harvest, as the parent with its child. Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.

The Maritime Baptist Convention.

III. ASSOCIATIONS UNITED IN CONVENTION.

The multiplication of associations was in many respects beneficial to the churches, which were widely scattered over the land. Enlarged opportunities were thus afforded for the greatest number of persons to participate in the privileges of such gatherings. One of the chief aims of the association is to reach the masses, to bring them into close contact with the enterprises of the denomination, and to stimulate them to increased beneficence and activity. But a new and more comprehensive bond was now needed to unite all the associations, as well as the churches, in harmonious action, and to form a sort of central executive body, to superintend and push forward the great departments of religious work undertaken by Baptists. Such a body, formed of representatives from both associations and churches, could assume responsibilities which the individual societies could not feel themselves to be competent to undertake. A body of this character, uniting the energies of the denomination, must of necessity command the respect and confidence of Baptists generally.

The Maritime Baptist Convention became this grand bond. On September 19, 1846, representatives from churches and associations met in the city of St. John, N. B., for the purpose of organizing the new body. Much enthusiasm was shown in the movement. Rev. Theodore S. Harding, the venerable pastor of the church at Horton, N. S., was chosen as president. Business of paramount importance was transacted, and questions of general interest discussed. The fiftieth anniversary of that great event was observed with appropriate exercises in the same city, in August, 1895.

In the original constitution of the convention it is stated that the object of the organization is:

"To advance the interests of the Baptist denomination, and of the cause of God generally; to maintain the religious and charitable institutions of the denomination; and to preserve correct information relative to denominational growth."

Various changes have from time to time been made in the constitution. Its main objects remain, however, practically the same as at first. Its membership consists of delegates from the several associations, and from such churches connected with these associations as contribute annually toward the objects of the convention.

The leading enterprises under the jurisdiction and control of the convention are, Acadia College, Home Missions and the Ministers' Annuity Fund. To form an intelligent idea of the magnitude of these responsibilities, it will be necessary for us to look a little more carefully into the details connected with each of the interests, named.

In the first reading in the article on "Maritime Baptist Convention," the error in the Union is reproduced in MESSENGER AND VISITOR, namely 2,800 church members in Nova Scotia, instead of 28,000, and 1,800 members in New Brunswick, instead of 18,000.