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If we work upon marble, it will perish; but if we work upon immortal minds, if we imbue them with principles, with the fear of God, and love of our fellowmen—we engrave on these tablets something which will brighten for all eternity.—Daniel Webster.

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

Many perplexities beset the pathway of the child of God on every hand. Sometimes we are brought to a stand-still and are puzzled to know which path we ought to take. Before us converge several possible courses of action. In such a situation it is well for us to stand still and ask God to speak to us through our own judgment, and to close before us every path but the right. When we have done this and have calmly entered on the path which God has indicated as the right way, we should not dishonor God by looking back and fearing that God has failed us and has permitted us to make a mistake.

Even after we have prayerfully and carefully chosen the path which we believe to be the one which God approves, difficulties will most probably arise. These do not prove, however, that we have taken the wrong path and that God has failed us in our time of need. No doubt the difficulties are fewer in this path than would have been encountered in any other. Under such circumstances it is our duty to go forward without regret, without fear, without loss of faith, and travel the path which God in His wisdom and grace has pointed out to us. No doubt our experience will be much like that of "Christian" in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress"—we will find pathways in places where there seemed none, we will find fords by which we may cross rivers, we will find that the lions that threaten by the way are chained and cannot harm us, we will find that even the desert shall be like a highway to lead us to the Promised Land.

There are no uncertainties and contingent possibilities in our God. It is well for us, when we would express doubts or consider contingencies, to remember that these are accompaniments of human character and have no place in the divine. The man who asked Christ to cast the dumb spirit out of his son seemed at first to question the ability of Jesus, for he said, "If Thou canst do anything." But Jesus showed him that He had "if" in the wrong place; for He replied, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." It is well when we have learned to put the "if" in the right place.

In some churches an excellent plan is in use of having the names of any missionaries who have gone forth from that church inscribed on a tablet or an illuminated roll placed where it will constantly remind the young people of the missionaries' careers. Two such rolls of honor are hanging almost side by side in the Sunday school room of the First Presbyterian church, Utica, New York. On one of these are inscribed the names of fifteen young men and young women of the school who gave themselves to the work of God in foreign mission lands. On the other are the names of sixteen who were once boys in the school and who have entered the Gospel ministry. Such a roll may serve to call to the attention of the youth the needs and opportunities of God's service at home and abroad.

The splendid Laymen's Missionary Convention of our Church, held in New Orleans, March 13-15, claims large space in this issue of the "Christian Observer." The number of

men and women who were privileged to attend this convention was necessarily limited. For the inspiration and help of those who were not able to attend we are glad to lay before our readers several of the addresses in full together with a brief report of the proceedings. On pages 6 and 7 will be found the address of Rev. John M. Vander Meulen, D. D., on "The Price of Leadership." On another page will be found the address of Rev. James I. Vance, D. D., on "The Problem of the Aliens in America." It is a pleasure also to present the stenographer's report of the message of Rev. Dunbar H. Ogden, D. D., delivered at the Lexington Laymen's Missionary Convention, February 21, the substance of which was given also at New Orleans, concerning the life story of Rev. Gaston Reedy Buford. Mr. Buford laid down his life in an heroic effort to give assistance in response to cries of women for help. As he rushed into the house from which the cries issued he was shot through the heart by a drink-crazed man who had recently been released from the insane asylum.

The Executive Secretary of Foreign Missions, Rev. Egbert W. Smith, D. D., calls attention on another page to a serious situation confronting the foreign mission work of our Church. The total appropriations for this year's foreign work up to March 1, 1917, amounted to \$547,271. The total receipts for the regular work up to March 10 amount to \$364,018. The Church must contribute at least \$183,253 between March 10 and March 31 if a deficit for this year is to be avoided. Even if the Church should contribute the full amount appropriated during the year, the previous deficit of \$62,766 will need to be provided for in some way. Churches that have not contributed to Foreign Missions during the current year should send a contribution at once. Church treasurers that have funds for Foreign Missions should be careful to remit to the treasurer, Mr. E. F. Willis, 216 Union Street, Nashville, Tennessee, not later than March 31. The books of the Committee will be held open until noon April 2. God has greatly blessed the foreign mission work of our Church and He challenges His people to support it.

Rev. J. G. McFerrin, D. D., died at his home in Bristol, Tennessee, March 10. Dr. McFerrin was born at Rogersville Junction, Tennessee, and was graduated from Tusculum College in 1872. His theological course was pursued at Princeton Theological Seminary and under private teachers. He was ordained April 3, 1879, by the Presbytery of Holston. For six years he supplied the Mt. Zion and Timber Ridge churches while acting as Professor of Latin in Tusculum College. In 1882 he moved to Morristown, Tennessee, and established the Morristown Female Seminary. While teaching in this institution he supplied churches nearby. In 1888 he became pastor of the Presbyterian church at Morristown, where he remained until 1894. In that year he moved to Bristol and occupied the chair of Mathematics and Science in King College. During the past four years he had supplied the Paperville and Weaver churches. For several months prior to his death he had been in ill health and unable to engage in the

## Mid-Week Prayer Meeting

BY REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D. D.

### GLORYING IN THE CROSS.

Topic for Wednesday, March 28, 1917.

Suggested Scripture, Galatians 6:14.

This text comes, so to speak, in the postscript of the letter. But the postscript is meant by the apostle to be, perhaps, its most important part. Apparently he has been dictating the body of the letter to an amanuensis. But now he seizes the pen himself and writes in large letters that will attract attention and be imprinted on the memory this climactic close. It is in this important climax that he writes in his own handwriting these words: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world."

#### I. The Object of Paul's Glorifying.

1. Submerged but obvious is the implication of the things wherein he did not glory. Some men glory in their possessions. The farmer loves to have the finest pigs and calves anywhere around. The Fifth Avenue millionaire of New York prides himself on having the finest house, the finest automobile or yacht, the finest set of furniture or paintings. He flaunts these things in the face of the world or of his friends. It is his glorying.

With others it is their family. These parents brag about their children as if there were no others crows in all the world so white as theirs. With others it is some accomplishment. And, indeed, it is remarkable how varied is the range of accomplishments on which men and women pride themselves, from the artist who glories in his paintings, to the pugilist who glories in his fist; from the pianist who is proud of her music, to the housemaid who is proud of her pies. We all are apt to have something wherein we glory.

And Paul had that wherein according to the mere natural man he might have gloried. Nor was that something merely trivial. Even if Paul had never become a Christian, the world would probably have heard of him. He is one of the intellectual geniuses of the world. He might have made his mark as a scholar, as an orator, as an organizer, as a reformer. He manifested power in all these lines.

And yet in none of these things did the apostle take any pride; at least, not for their own sake.

2. The object of his glorying was the Cross. And yet that was about the last thing in all the world wherein Saul of Tarsus might have been expected to glory. It isn't always easy for one age to understand the prejudices and passions of another age. But if there was one particular "bete noir" of the Jew of that age, one thing that chagrined and shamed him more than any other, it was "the scandal of the cross."

In a little daily paper published in a small Michigan town the present writer noticed some time ago the account of the death of a man of some means, but who had lived an eccentric life. He had kept himself aloof from his fellows. He did not want them to know anything about him. But when he came to die, they looked in his belongings and found a letter that implied that his father had been a criminal and had ended his life on the gallows. All this was in England. So the son had come to this country and had tried to live a life so exclusive that no one would know that he was the son of a gallows bird. Rightly or wrongly he dreaded the scandal and shame of the thing.

Now it was in some such way as that that the Jew of the first century felt about the cross. It was the Roman's hangman's gallows of that day. It was a thing to be taunted with, that one's friends or a member of one's family had died on the cross. Paul calls it in this very Epistle, "to skandalon tou staurou," "the scandal of the cross."

And now on the background of all that prejudice, the apostle writes these startling words: "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It was probably a long time before even the average converted Jew of that first century could come to that. He might be induced to accept Jesus as his Messiah and his Saviour, but it was rather in spite of the Cross than because of it. The things on which he loved to dwell were the resurrection, the ascension, the second coming in glory. He wanted to slip over and dismiss from his mind and memory as quickly as possible the shame and scandal of the Cross. But Paul had thought himself through on this matter. And he had reached the point when in his eager enthusiasm for the Cross he could brush aside his amanuensis in order, in his own handwriting, to pen those words in letters big and startling (Galatians 6:11): "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And today still to the natural man the Cross is often the great stumbling block to Christianity. A few years ago Mr. R. H. Hutton, editor of the "London Spectator" and one of the keenest philosophical minds of England, wrote that today men found no difficulty in accepting the fact of the crucifixion. Their great difficulty today, he said, was in accepting and believing the fact of the resurrection.

But perhaps if Mr. Hutton were writing today he would modify his statement. Owing somewhat, but

by no means altogether, to the investigations of psychology there seems to be coming quite a change in the attitude of men hitherto skeptical as to the resurrection. They find it, at least, easier to accept than they did a decade or two ago.

But they are as far as ever from understanding and accepting the meaning of the Cross. So far as the mere external historical fact is concerned doubtless Mr. Hutton is right. Men are, of course, ready enough to accept that. But in its vicarious and atoning significance that here the sins of the world were washed away by the death of God's Son, it is still "to skandalon tou staurou," "the scandal of the Cross."

The reason is that the significance and worth of this fact is not to be grasped according to the standards of intellectual, any more than it is according to the standards of material bigness. Its significance is wholly moral and spiritual. Philosophers who believe that the ruling factors of this universe are material laws rather than moral ideals can never appreciate the fact of the Cross. But if men can only once see that dollars and brains are not the chief things here, they can also see that there is no key that fits into the mystery of human life like the conception of the Cross of God on Golgotha.

#### II. How it Had Changed Paul's Attitude to the World.

1. First of all it had crucified the world to him. That grim old soldier, the hero of Waterloo, Wellington, whose praise had been in every English mouth, when some years later the infuriated populace had torn down his fence, said: "Let it lie. Don't build it up again. It will serve to remind me how fickle and worthless is the praise of the populace." That act had revealed the populace to him and the worthlessness of its praise.

Now in a very much more thorough-going way than that, the world had become dead to the apostle; not only its opinions and praise, but all it had had to offer. What had killed it for him? The fact that it had crucified Jesus. We all know something of that process. Here is some man or woman whom you greatly admire. They have always been lovely to you. But some day you discover how that man or woman has treated some relative of theirs or it may be some friend of yours. Henceforth your fair opinion of them, or your desire to be their friend, is gone forever. Now it was so with Paul. In that act of crucifixion by which the world had crucified Jesus, it had crucified itself for Paul. So he could write, "By which the world is crucified to me."

If you should counter with the proposition that the men who crucified Jesus were not fairly representative of the world of natural human society, Paul would not have agreed with you. Neither would Plato. Plato, perhaps with the fate of the greatest of the Greeks, Socrates, in mind, said that if a man should ever live a perfectly righteous life in this world, he would not, if he were a public man, be permitted to live but three or four years. And Jesus Himself so estimated the world. He said to His disciples: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you."

It ought to give a man, who is seeking his praise and his glory from the world, pause to remember that it is this same world that crucified Christ. That is why worldliness is never consistent either now or ever with the Cross of Christ and its glory. In one way and another worldliness still is crucifying Christ, and in that act it ought to crucify itself with every one of His true followers.

2. But then, secondly, through that crucifixion Paul had become dead to the world too. The world, his old world, didn't care about him any more. There was a time when the world, his set, had been very proud of the brilliant young fellow. They had predicted for him a great future. There is an evident echo of all this in the text. But they had crucified and buried him now since he had become a follower of the Crucified. If any one still asked after Saul of Tarsus in his old circles, it may be imagined how contemptuous was the answer.

And every Christian since may be sure that if he is living the earnest and enthusiastic Christian life that he ought to be living, a worldly society is going to lose interest in him. The burning passion, the thrill and the romance of such a life as that of Paul or Livingstone—what do blase worldlings in or out of the Church know or care about that?

Does any man shrink from such a crucifixion? Well, he will if his Christian life remains merely a negative thing to him, a series of "don'ts." Paul cared nothing about it. Nay, he was glad of it. He had become interested in, fascinated by the Cross of Jesus and all it stood for in the world. He felt much as a missionary to Japan felt when he was on furlough to this country and I mentioned to him the fact that he was being prominently mentioned for a chair in a seminary. It was the most prominent place the denomination to which he belonged could offer. Moreover it was good work, Christian work. But he answered: "Mr. Vander Meulen, you know that naturally I love theology above all things. But I tell you the truth when I say that I would rather be a missionary in the loneliest village in Japan than to hold the finest position in the country." That man was not mourning over the fact that he was henceforth dead to worldly glory or even semi-worldly glory. He was under the fascination of the Cross.

Louisville, Ky.

## Young People's Societies

BY REV. WM. M. ANDERSON, D. D.

### THE QUIET WAYS OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

Topic for the Week Beginning April 1, 1917.

I Kings 19:1-13.

(Consecration Meeting.)

DAILY READINGS.

M., Mar. 26. Surpassing wisdom. Rom. 11:33-36.  
T., Mar. 27. Protection for travelers. Ps. 121:1-8.  
W., Mar. 28. Care for the body. Matt. 6:25-34.  
Th., Mar. 29. Reviewing God's ways. Deut. 8:1-9.  
F., Mar. 30. God's leading. Exod. 13:17-22.  
S., Mar. 31. Trusting the Father. Ps. 91:1-16.

This passage is a striking illustration of the topic. Elijah had had a very exciting eventful life. He needed to learn the lesson of God's quietness. He had been trying to do things in his own way, and needed to learn that God's way is best. He needed a great lesson from God, for he was very downhearted. He threw himself down under a juniper tree and requested that he might die. "It is enough; now O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers."

Then God strengthened him with food, and revealed yet more of His grace and power. The lessons that Elijah learned are worth learning. Truth is worth the price at any cost when God is the teacher. In so many times and ways God represented Himself by Elijah, it was highly important that Elijah understand "the quiet ways of God's Providence."

Providence means (pro-vidéo) "to see for" or "to see before." As the old negro said, "Providence means God will provide." God's providence is both general and particular. He looks after all things, therefore He will look after everything. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." God's providence is permanent. All things are under His control, and His ways are quiet.

The finite is noisy, the infinite is powerful and quiet. "Still waters run deep." Many of the mighty forces of nature work quietly. Who ever heard the force of gravitation at work? Yet where is a mightier force? Electricity is a mighty force, and yet only heard in a few of its results.

Our Lord taught us the simplest things about His Father and Our Father. Among other things He taught us about the providence of God. Read Matthew 6:25-34, and you will see how plain He made the truth. We there learn that God feeds the whole of nature. The flowers toil not, and yet God takes care of them. If we want to understand God, let us read what Christ says about Him. His character and ways are revealed in our language, and thus we see how much may be known of Him.

#### General Providence.

Gen. 8:22: "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Psalms 36:6: "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast."

Psalms 104: The entire passage.

Psalms 136: The entire passage.

Psalms 145: The entire passage.

These and many others specify the quiet ways. All these show that "In Him we live, move and have our being."

#### Special Providence.

Josh. 10:28 tells how that when Achan had sinned against God, His providence revealed him and he was punished. God is thus revealed in the everyday events of life, and we do well to remember this and get in line with God; find out God's plans and work with Him. How quietly God here revealed the guilty party! How certain and correct was the revelation!

I Samuel 6 tells us about how the Philistines returned the Ark of the Lord when they realized that they were doing wrong in keeping it. They were trying to find out the will of God and laid down certain conditions which God met and showed them what was right.

Now God is both creator and providential ruler. The latter is co-incident with and based upon the other. God is revealed as a God of love; all that He does is based upon love. All our blessings come from the hand of love; all our trials and sorrows are prompted by the same love.

"Beneath His wings of love abide,  
Be not dismayed whate'er betide,  
God will take care of you.

"Through days of toil when heart doth fail,  
When dangers fierce your path assail,  
God will take care of you.

"All you may need He will provide,  
Nothing you ask will be denied,  
God will take care of you.

"No matter what may be the test,  
Lean, weary one, upon His breast,  
God will take care of you."

Dallas, Texas.