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### EDITORIAL NOTES.

Pluck and persistence are virtues that are indispensable in the Christian life. Some one has said that "Pluck is fighting with the scabbard when your sword has snapped." Perseverance persists in the performance of duty even when it seems impossible to accomplish the task. A man who never knows when he is whipped never is whipped. By the help of God the man who refuses to surrender will never be overcome. God has said: "To him that overcometh will I give a crown of life."

The utterly selfish person will never taste the highest happiness himself nor be able to make anyone else perfectly happy. Selfishness destroys one's own peace of mind and prevents helpfulness to others. The unselfish person, however, gives himself—his sympathy, his talents, his enthusiasm—to all who may be helped by them, always perfectly serene in the knowledge that no matter how much he gives he will still have more to offer. Truly, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet but it tendeth to poverty." "The liberal soul shall be made fat."

The value of the daily reading and study of God's Word cannot be over-estimated. A correspondent, writing recently concerning this subject, said: "I do not see how one can have a clean, spiritual face without this God-given mirror of the Word that he may know what manner of man he is from day to day. Nor do I see how I can withstand the wonderfully skilled attacks of the old enemy without this God-given weapon always nigh." To neglect the daily reading of God's Word during the new year into which we have just entered will result in leanness of soul and loss of spiritual joy and power.

A million soldiers on European battlefields have been reached with the Word of God, and thus the goal of the World's Sunday School Association to provide a million European soldiers with copies of Testaments or Gospels has at last been realized. Portions of Gospels costing less than a nickel have been printed, and in this way many more soldiers have been reached than would have been possible had the original plan been carried out of giving each soldier a complete copy of the New Testament. Word has just been received from the International Y. M. C. A. that nearly 400,000 copies of the Scriptures have been distributed by that society. These Scriptures were printed in more than twenty languages.

The second installment of the new department, the "Mid-Week Prayer Meeting," will be found on page 9 of this issue. The subject chosen for the prayer meeting Wednesday, January 17, is, "Prevailing Prayer." No more important topic ever comes before God's people for their study and practice. Rev. John M. Vander Meulen, D. D., pastor of the Second Presbyterian church, Louisville, Kentucky, who is conducting this department, speaks out of his own experience in a pastorate extending over several years, and gives valuable suggestions to leaders of the prayer meeting service and helpful devotional stimulus to any who may be prevented, by reason

of illness, distance or demands in the family circle, from attending the public assembly of God's people in the prayer meeting. We are convinced that one of the greatest needs of our Church is a larger emphasis on the mid-week prayer meeting. It ought to be a tremendous power in the spiritual life and development of every church. Watch for this new department each week, use it in your church, talk up the prayer meeting and endeavor to double or quadruple the attendance at this vital service.

For the convenience of our subscribers we send from time to time statements of account printed on the inside of an envelope. These statements save the subscriber the labor of writing a letter. It is only necessary for him to enclose money order or check, fold and seal the flaps, and mail his remittance, and he will receive the correct credit. With this issue statements are sent to many who have not paid in advance.

### THE ROLL OF HONOR.

#### The Largest Ever Published.

The annual "Roll of Honor" for memorizing the "Shorter Catechism" and the "Child's Catechism," is published on pages 18, 19 and 22 of this issue. The "Roll" contains the names of 2,718 persons who have memorized the answers to questions that have to do with the essential doctrines taught in God's Word. Every one who has really studied the "Shorter Catechism" is amazed at its admirable arrangement, its sequence of thought and its comprehensive grasp of the fundamental truths taught in the Bible.

The number of those who have memorized the "Shorter Catechism" is 767; and the number of those who have memorized the "Child's Catechism" is 1,826. The number who are classified under the head of "Memorizing Hymns, Psalms and Memory Work," is 125. The total number is an increase of 249 as compared with the number reported last year when the "Roll of Honor" contained the names of 2,469. The largest "Roll of Honor" ever published prior to 1916 was in 1908, when the number was 2,329.

North Carolina again carries off the honor in both lists—the number of North Carolinians who memorized the "Shorter Catechism" being 163, and the number who memorized the "Child's Catechism" being 363.

South Carolina stands second in the list of those who memorized the "Shorter Catechism," the number being 85. Virginia is third with 83. However, the total number of persons in the foreign field who memorized the "Shorter Catechism" is greater than the number in either South Carolina or Virginia, being 98.

Virginia comes second in the roll of those who have memorized the "Child's Catechism," the number being 307. South Carolina is third, with 194. The total number of persons in foreign fields who memorized the "Child's Catechism" is 170.

The most interesting and remarkable feature connected with the "Roll of Honor" for 1916, was the fact that Mrs. W. M. Baker, of Wilmington, North Carolina, reared a Methodist, but now a thoroughgoing Presbyterian, broke all known Catechism records by memorizing all three Catechisms,—the

"Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, even so are we in this world" (I John 4:17).  
"There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I John 4:18).

reality should Nathanael behold great blessings coming through Christ, the only "ladder" between earth and Heaven. Nathanael had proclaimed Jesus as the "Son of God;" Christ accepts this confession but adds that He is also the "Son of Man." It is by his double nature, divine and human, that He can become our acceptable sacrifice and the effectual mediator between God and man, the ladder from our earthly pilgrimage to a heavenly home.

**Questions.**

Of those who found Jesus, who were led by the words of a preacher?  
 Who were called by Jesus Himself? Who were invited by friends?  
 What different characteristics do we see in those who came?  
 How did Jesus receive them? Whom did they accept Him as being?  
 Union Point, Ga.

**Young People's Societies**

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

**SEEING THE GOOD IN OTHERS.**

Prayer Meeting Topic

For the Week Beginning January 21, 1917.

Phil. 2:1-11.

DAILY READINGS.

M., Jan. 15. Good shines. Matt. 5:13-16.  
 T., Jan. 16. Rejoicing in good. Philemon.  
 W., Jan. 17. Recognizing good. Acts. 9:26-31.  
 T., Jan. 18. Christ's tolerance. Mark 9:38-41.  
 F., Jan. 19. Heart free from envy. Num. 11:26-30.  
 S., Jan. 20. Looking through Love's eyes. 1 Cor. 13:1-6.

This passage is a part of Paul's exhortation to humility through Christ's example. He said: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ." He then goes on and tells how Christ lived and died for others and that He so thoroughly humbled Himself, that He has made an impression upon the world. After His humiliation comes His exaltation.

Humility is a sign of greatness and strength; it is not ignorance or cowardice, but indicates thought and bravery. The humble mind in Christ is subservient to God's will. Men judge by outward circumstances, God judges by the heart.

"There is so much good in the worst of us,  
 And so much bad in the best of us,  
 That it hardly behooves any of us,  
 To talk about the rest of us."

Seeing good in others can be developed into a habit. We generally find what we are looking for. If the person is critical and fault finding, he will see faults. If he is sympathetic and good natured, he will see attractive traits of character in others. If you are hunting for roses, you are likely to find them; if you are hunting for thorns, there are plenty to be found. In one sense other people are to us a reflection of ourselves. Some of the old proverbs frequently quoted are doubtful; for example: "Familiarity breeds contempt." I have never found that true. To me, at least, familiarity breeds friendship. The more I know of others, the more I understand the conditions of their lives. The more I know of their attitude, the more I like them.

Christians should strive to follow the pattern of Christ in serving others. Service is the most heroic duty of life. Jesus said, "I came not to be served, but to serve." The Christian should live such a life as to be distinctly remembered by the service he has rendered.

Not to sympathize with others is more a reflection on yourself than on them. It is wonderful that almost every one has some attractive points in character when you know him better. It is interesting to note that even hardened criminals each have a pal, some one who sees good in them. "The image on the lost coin was defaced and dust-covered, but it was still the image of the King." A mother heart can even see good in a bad boy. "Love gives vision."

**Quotations.**

There is upon life's hand a magic ring—  
 The ring of Faith-in-Good, life's gold of gold;  
 Remove it not, lest all life's charm take wing.  
 —Eugene Lee-Hamilton.

In all the upward march of matter and force there has never been one single crisis and conflict where the higher has not been victorious over the lower. Witness the struggle between the mineral and the vegetable.—Newell D. Hillis.

When we see, as it were, countless drops and countless rays of goodness scattered about in the world, a little good in this man, and a little good in that, shall we not say that there must be one great sea, one central sun of goodness, whence all human goodness comes?—Charles Kingsley.

A man's good breeding is the best security against others' bad manners.—Chesterville.

**Mid-Week Prayer Meeting**

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

**PREVAILING PRAYER.**

Topic for Wednesday, January 17, 1917.

Suggested Scripture Reading: Mark 11:20-26. It would be well for the better understanding of the topic if the leader should collect in temporal or logical order all the teachings of Jesus on prayer and have them read at the meeting by different ones. The leader can preface each reading with a brief definition of the particular lesson in the passage to be read, for Jesus did not give the whole of His teaching on prayer in any one lesson.

Such a cursory resume of the complete Gospel teaching on prayer will bring to light other conditions of prevailing prayer than those mentioned in this particular passage in Mark.

For example, one other such condition is that prayer shall be made

**In the Name of Christ.**

In the earlier part of His ministry Jesus gave to the disciples what we generally know as "The Lord's Prayer." But, sublime as this is, it is incomplete since there is no mention in it of Jesus Himself. It was then still too early for the disciples to understand fully the person or atoning work of our Lord. Later on, however, when they were in a better position to understand it He insisted that prevailing prayer should be made in His Name. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

Still another condition of prevailing prayer is

**The Sphere in Which Prayer is Made.**

Jesus says: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" The suggestion here seems to be that while the answer to prayer is not impossible in the realm of matter it is much more probable in the realm of spirit. This lesson on prayer precedes in time the lesson of our text and interprets it.

For when Jesus, in the text, speaks of the removing of mountains in answer to prayer, the probability is that He meant to be understood symbolically and spiritually rather than literally. The whole setting of the text seems to point that way.

The day before, as He was on His way from Bethany, Jesus had cursed a fig tree which bore only leaves and no fruit. The next morning the fig tree had "dried up from the roots." It can hardly be thought that Jesus meant this miracle for any other purpose than as a symbolical lesson to the disciples of the judgment that would overtake the Jewish nation for its spiritual barrenness. The nation had manifested all the foliage of pride and show, without any spiritual fruitage. This miracle was the only one that Jesus wrought in His capacity as judge. It was this capacity, however, which was a part of His self-revelation to His disciples. And this miracle picturesquely emphasized it in their minds.

It was immediately following their wonder over this that He gave them this lesson on prayer and said: "Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, those things which he saith shall come to pass." Now if the barren fig tree stood symbolically for the fruitlessness of the Jewish nation, the mountain stood for an obstacle to the coming of God's Kingdom. It is thus used in Scripture. See Isaiah 40:4; Jeremiah 51:25, etc. It was apparently so used also by John the Baptist in his preparatory ministry: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. Every mountain and hill shall be brought low." Perhaps Jesus may even have had in mind

Jerusalem and the Temple, which were situated on a mountain, when He said: "Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, those things which he saith shall come to pass." In other words, the Jewish nation should be cursed not only for its fruitlessness but, being even more positively an obstacle to His Kingdom, the nation should be removed. So the particular object of prayer that He was thinking of was the prayer for the coming of His Kingdom and the removal of obstacles that stood in the way of that. For it is such tremendous obstacles that the disciples would presently have to face as they tried to make that Kingdom come.

Now the two conditions of the prevailing prayer which should accomplish that were first, Faith; and second, Forgiving Spirit.

**I. Faith.**

(a) **The Encouragements To It.**—In praying this prayer for the removal of obstacles to the coming of God's Kingdom, what fulfillments are there not all along the path of the history of that Kingdom, since Christ first uttered these words, to encourage us! Not only was the obstructing mountain of Judaism, but the much greater mountain of the hostile and persecuting Roman Government also, finally "brought low."

Or think of it in our modern day. There is no clearer answer to prayer in history than the way the barriers of heathen countries to the entrance of missionaries have been removed in response to the earnest prayers of Christian men and women in the Church.

Think also in this connection of the liquor traffic. How Christian men and women have been praying for the removal of this apparently insuperable obstacle to the coming of Christ's Kingdom. And with what speed and completeness of fulfillment in these days this horrible mountain is being "removed" and "cast into the sea."

(b). **The Spirit of This Faith** is to be a confident and aggressive one. It was in such a faith that the apostles labored. "Prayer," says a modern author, "is not only a passive asking, but the eager straining of every nerve towards fulfillment." Even in the natural world God honors such a spirit.

"A man went down to Panama  
 Where many a man had died,  
 To slit the sliding mountains  
 And lift the eternal tide.  
 A man stood up in Panama,  
 And the mountains stood aside."

But the most glorious reward of this kind of faith is in the spiritual world. There we are sure that God is for us and that while our faith is a fighting faith, the victory is the gift of God. As Paul puts it, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory."

**II. A Forgiving Spirit.**

But there is a second condition of prevailing prayer in this matter of the removal of mountains. It is a forgiving spirit. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any." Jesus felt it necessary to add this. It was an exceedingly gracious word. The disciples might have gathered from the cursing of the fig tree that the attitude of the Judge, thus passing sentence on the Jewish nation, was a harsh one. This word dispelled any such error. It was a judgment passed in the spirit of Him who wept over Jerusalem and prayed for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And in the intensity of our fight against modern sins and institutions and men who stand in the way of Christ we must not forget, if we are to prevail, that while we fight gallantly against our human foes, we are against them only in so far as they stand in the way of Christ's Kingdom. For themselves as men we must cherish only kindness. If that had been done more by the followers of Jesus, many an obstacle that still blocks the way would already have been removed by God.

And so we may come to the wider generalization that in all prayer, for "whatsoever ye desire," the two mental conditions that God requires, if we are to expect an answer, are faith in Him and kindness to all our fellows, bar none, but especially to those against whom resentment and personal anger are most apt to flame up in our soul and burn its wings so that it can not rise to the mercy seat of God.

Louisville, Ky.

For the Christian Observer.

**A MEDITATION.**

BY REV. EUGENE B. READ.

Almighty Maker of this wondrous earth,  
 Through whom all things existent have their birth,  
 Whose power not only made the worlds we see,  
 But all the worlds that thread immensity.  
 We cannot comprehend infinity,  
 Nor ever grasp Thy personality;  
 Yet we can worship Thee, and love Thee too,  
 And serve Thee as Thy loyal people do,  
 Looking to Jesus, as the only Way,  
 And trusting Him to keep us every day.  
 Lockport, Ills.

Prosperity is no just scale; adversity is the only balance, to weigh friends.—Plutarch.