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I hold it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.
—Tennyson.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The spirit of sacrifice and service needs to be called out and exercised constantly if we would develop in our spiritual life. There is tremendous truth in the words of Illingsworth: "The pleasures of each generation evaporate in air; it is their pains that increase the spiritual momentum of the world." Mazzini once declared that the highest call that comes to young men is, "Go and suffer!"

Suppose you were asked to tell of the happiest day you ever spent. What would your answer be? It is said that Livingstone declared, "The happiest day of my life was the day I decided to give myself to Africa." Garibaldi said: "The happiest night I ever spent was the night after I made up my mind, let what would come, my life should be spent in the cause of Italy's liberation." Geraldine Guinness Taylor tells that one of the happiest moments in her life was when, on her way to China as a missionary, God seemed to come nearer than ever before in her life as she thought of the lovely home she had given up in England to carry the glad news of salvation to China's Christless homes.

Laymen of the Southern Presbyterian Church who did not have the privilege of attending the Laymen's Missionary Convention at Lexington, Kentucky, in February, will lose a great blessing if they fail to attend the New Orleans Convention, March 13-15. Some changes have been made in the program as previously published, but the general theme will remain the same as for the Lexington Convention: "America Must Not Fail." In these critical days Christian men owe a duty to both Church and country. The fires of patriotism are at white heat. Shall not the fires of Christian loyalty to Christ glow with the same fervor? The program arranged for the New Orleans Convention is a comprehensive one and will furnish a tremendous inspiration to the men who attend. The wisdom of the plan of holding a convention in duplicate in two sections of the Church has been abundantly justified. Every church should send a delegate. Mr. Ernest T. George, New Orleans, Louisiana, is chairman of the local convention committee. Write to him at once for hotel reservation, enclosing registration fee of one dollar. Will New Orleans be able to report a larger enrollment than Lexington?

The Protestant Episcopal Church of America has achieved a splendid goal in raising \$6,500,000 for the pensioning of aged clergymen, their widows and orphans. During the past year, under the leadership of Bishop Lawrence, of Massachusetts, a concerted campaign has been conducted throughout the United States for the purpose of raising a fund of \$5,000,000. The time limit was March 1, 1917, and if the amount was not secured by that time the subscriptions were not to be binding. On that date Bishop Lawrence announced that at least \$6,500,000 had been subscribed, although final statement of the exact sum cannot be made for two weeks. This

newly created pension system will permit every active clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church on reaching the age of sixty-eight years to receive a retirement allowance of a minimum of \$600 a year. Widows will receive one-half the sum to which their husbands would have been entitled, and allowance will be made to all dependent orphans of deceased clergymen at the rate of \$100 a year for each child under seven years, and \$200 a year for each child between the ages of seven and fourteen.

Our own General Assembly has directed that the endowment fund for Ministerial Relief should be increased to at least \$1,000,000 as soon as possible. It is now somewhat beyond the half-million mark. This cause should appeal very strongly to all the members of our Church. Especially ought its importance to be appreciated by those to whom God has given large means. There will be great joy in using some of one's wealth to provide a fund to care for the aged and infirm ministers and their widows and orphans. To supply the needs of those who have given their lives in the service of the Church is a great privilege. One ruling elder writes us that he will be glad to be one of a number who will give at least \$100 a year for ten years, unless providentially hindered, to increase the endowment fund to a million dollars. Rev. Henry H. Sweets, D. D., 122 South Fourth Street, Louisville, Ky., Executive Secretary of the Committee on Ministerial Relief, will be glad to hear from those who will agree to make annual contributions to this fund.

In our Assembly's scheme of Systematic Beneficence, March is the month devoted to the cause of Publication and Sabbath School Extension Work. Since Mr. R. E. Magill has been Secretary of this Committee, he has not asked the privilege of making a financial appeal from a single pulpit in our whole Church. The thirty-four field workers have visited churches, Presbyteries and Synods for the sole purpose of rendering aid, and their appeal has been for an opportunity to be helpful and not for a collection. The method of the Committee leaves the presentation of the financial needs of this cause in the hands of sessions and pastors of the churches where it properly belongs. If your church is using the "Assembly's Financial Plan" in an effective manner, you have arranged that this Committee shall get an adequate offering from your people. If your share in our work has not been provided for, the Committee asks that you present this cause during March and secure an offering for Sunday School Extension worthy of your people.

Our Church stresses religious instruction of the youth of the land as does no other body, and urges the wide dissemination of truth in printed form. No work she undertakes is more fruitful in immediate results, and the ultimate outcome cannot be measured by statistics. Our people will give this cause an adequate support if the matter is brought to their attention in an effective way. The Committee hopes to have the hearty co-operation of every pastor in securing the \$48,000 asked for by the General Assembly. Leaflets and envelopes for distribution in your congrega-

TRUST FOR THE DAY.

Because in a day of my days to come
There waiteth a grief to be,
Shall my heart grow faint, and my lips be dumb
In this day that is bright for me?

Because of a subtle sense of pain,
Like a pulse-beat, threaded through
The bliss of my thought, shall I dare refrain
From delight in the pure and true?

In the harvest field shall I cease to glean
Since the gloom of the spring has fled?
Shall I veil mine eyes to the noonday sheen,
Since the dew of the morn hath sped?

Nay, phantom ill with the warning hand,
Nay, ghosts of the weary past—
Serene, as in armor of faith, I stand,
Ye may not hold me fast.

And whatever He sends from day to day,
I am sure that His Name is Love;
And He never will let me lose my way
To my rest in His home above.

Mid-Week Prayer Meeting

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

THE VALUE OF DAILY PRAYER.

Topic for Wednesday, March 14, 1917.

Suggested Scripture, Daniel 6:10.

I. Its Value Scope.

If one is looking for values here is one. We have no doubt that it has even a commercial value. Paul writes to the Thessalonians: "We beseech you . . . that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business." So the Apostle connects quietness of spirit with the business of life. And it takes no great perspicacity or amount of observation or experience to know how much unquietness of spirit, temptation, grief, worry, unfit a man for even the secular business of life. So, inasmuch as prayer is second to nothing in producing such quietness of spirit, it has a commercial value, a value even in dollars and cents.

Its physiological or health value is coming more and more to be recognized. "As an alienist," writes Dr. Hyslop, the noted English specialist, "and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all the hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depression of spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a distressed mind, I would undoubtedly give the first place to the simple habit of prayer."

Its intellectual value has also been attested. Coleridge said of it: "The act of praying is the very highest energy of which the human mind is capable." And the Greeks, who are supposed to have represented the highest intellectual development attained by the human race, began their great masterpieces, Pericles and Demosthenes their orations, Homer his Iliad, with prayer; while Plato said: "Every man of sense before beginning an important work will ask help of the gods."

Its moral value, that is to say the influence of it on the moral conduct of men, is so obvious that, though testimony might easily be adduced, it needs none.

And its importance in the sorrow tragedies of the soul and its support of the spiritual qualities of faith, hope, and love, have been tried out in the spiritual experiences of every community of believers, nay, of every individual believer even.

II. Its Detailed Benefits.**The First One we Would Mention is Guidance.**

—Robertson, of Brighton, probably the greatest preacher England ever had, said: "It seems to me now that I can always see, in uncertainty, the leading of God's hand after prayer, when everything seems to be made clear and plain before the eyes. In two or three instances I have had evidence of this which I cannot for a moment doubt."

We are finite, and if there be an infinite wisdom which knows the end from the beginning, and if we can get in touch with it, as the Bible teaches us we can, then it is both our duty and our privilege to draw on it in prayer. The Bible passages guaranteeing this value of prayer are numerous. Psalm 48:14; Psalm 25:9; Psalm 73:24; James 1:5 and many others are in evidence.

Moreover it is especially this side of prayer that ought to appeal to the young. They have had little experience and have all the problems of life to settle, some of the most important of them, such as the choice of a vocation and marriage, while they are young. The aspect in which they ought constantly to think of God is as their Guide. They might escape many of the sorrows of "the garish day," if they would learn in youth the real value of that prayer: "Lead Thou me on."

It is also the aspect in which prayer ought to appeal to those who hold responsible positions involving the interests of others and demanding the exercise of much initiative, whether in business, politics, or the church. Moses, and David, especial-

ly in his earlier career, were shining examples of those who profited by this prayer value.

2. A Second Prayer Value is Defense.—We mean more specifically defense against temptation. It is not the only defense against temptation. The associations one forms, his own will power, these are others. But prayer is the most important defense one has if earnestly and continuously used. It was one of the petitions which Jesus put for us in the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." It is like the cry for help when one is suddenly attacked and overwhelmed and can just make that cry and no more. The old hymn writer knew what he was saying when he wrote:

"And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

3. A Third Prayer Value is Support.—We mean more specifically support in the trials and sorrows and disappointments of life. There are two ways in which at such a time a soul may get relief. One would be if the burden were removed. The other would be if one's shoulders were made so much stronger that it would not be so much of a burden. Now when Paul prayed for the removal of his thorn his prayer was answered but only in the second way. He was given so much strength to bear the burden that apparently it was no longer a burden, at least not the burden it had been.

The tragedies of life are so heavy that they are crushing to mere human strength. Nothing is better proof that God never intended they should be borne by mere human strength. He never laid plans for a soul to go through life without Him.

And this same need of Divine support is felt by all those who bear heavy responsibilities, especially at a critical time. In his wonderful little book on "The Meaning of Prayer" (which we would advise all our readers to buy if they have not already done so), Dr. Fosdick says: "General Kodoma, of the Japanese army during the Russian war, used to retire each morning for an hour of prayer. When asked the reason, he answered: 'When a man has done everything in his power, there remains nothing but the help of the gods.'" It is said that Stonewall Jackson's men always knew when there was going to be heavy fighting on the next day by the length and intensity of their great leader's prayers. He was getting help in the crushing responsibility, using the privilege of God's invitation: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee."

4. A Fourth Prayer Value is Assurance.—We mean especially assurance of the eternal verities. It is the sovereign remedy both against that doubt which causes a man to have misgivings about the objective reality of God and immortality, of Christ and the coming of His Kingdom, and also against that more subjective form of doubt which questions whether these realities are for him. Our surest way of continuing our trust in a friend concerning whom doubts have arisen in our minds is to go to him directly. It is not otherwise with our doubts of God. We may find help in what others say and tell us about Him. But there will be nothing so reassuring as to go to Him ourselves. Many a man would have been saved from skepticism and unbelief if he had only done that. It was so that the disciples saved themselves again and again.

5. And a Fifth Prayer Value is Inspiration for Service.—For we are all prone to "grow weary in well doing." That is what our Saviour meant when He said: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing." The greatest and most tireless exemplars of social service are men who renew their strength through prayer. The whole key to the life of Livingstone, who still went about with his sick and emaciated body, ministering to the last, is in the fact that they found him dead on his knees. Social service without religion and prayer is bound to lose its enthusiasm and exhaust itself at last.

6. Finally, a Sixth Value is Our Own Development.—No soul life can grow without prayer. It is the atmosphere of all spiritual unfolding.

III. Its Being Daily.

All the above benefits of prayer are illustrated in the life of Daniel. But this text is also interesting because it shows what helpful associations he made to converge on private prayer. It is such associations and habits we need lest we become slack in it.

First of all, he connected it with all his love of the Church and his native land. He prayed with his windows open toward Jerusalem.

And then, secondly, he connected it with the three outstanding moments of every day, morning, noon, and night.

It is such constantly repeating daily experiences in our life with which we need to connect the habit of praying lest we forget it altogether. Some one tells of a ministers' meeting in London where the discussion turned on how a soul could obey the injunction to "pray always." A maid servant happened in the room and one of the ministers asked her whether she prayed always.

"I hope so," was the answer.

"But how can you," said the minister, "when you have so much to attend to?"

"Oh," she replied, "the greater the variety I

have to attend to, the more I am assisted to pray. In the morning when I open my eyes, I pray, 'Lord, open the eyes of my understanding, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.' Whilst I am dressing, I pray, 'Lord, may I be clothed in the robe of righteousness, and adorned with the garment of my salvation.' As I am washing myself, I pray, 'O Lord, may I be washed in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.' When kindling the fire I pray, 'O Lord, kindle a fire of sacred love in this cold heart of mine.' And whilst sweeping the room I pray, 'Lord, may my heart be swept clean of its abominations.' And so, gentlemen, I am praying all the day."

Louisville, Ky.

Young People's Societies

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

THE CURSE OF COWARDICE.

Topic for the Week Beginning March 18, 1917.

John 18:15-27.

DAILY READINGS.

M., Mar. 12. The root of cowardice. Isa. 51:12, 13.
T., Mar. 13. Giants in the path. Num. 13:26-33.
W., Mar. 14. The apostles' shame. Matt. 26:55, 56, 69-75.
T., Mar. 15. Safety first. 2 Sam. 15:13-23.
F., Mar. 16. A cure for cowardice. Luke 12:1-9.
S., Mar. 17. Fearing man, we defy God. Prov. 29:25.

The shameful denial of Christ has caused the whole Church to wonder through all the centuries. Before the temptation came Peter had professed the firmest loyalty. "Though all else deny, yet will not I." And yet a girl with a simple question proved him a coward. Not once but three times he denied the Lord, and revealed in his soul's experience the curse of cowardice. It may be that his failure was due to "Following Christ afar off." To deny once would have been bad enough; to deny twice is much worse; but think of denying the Lord three times in succession.

Look at the elements of Peter's sin which reveals the curse of cowardice. It was a falsehood. How low must be the moral, spiritual, and mental conditions of one who would thus tell a lie. A lie is a symptom of an awful disease. It is a cardinal sin mentioned in the ten commandments. Dr. Young has well said, "Truth was never indebted to a lie." It was also profanity, a violation of another law. It is therefore proven to be rank cowardice. Evidently Peter's mind was filled with selfish fear. The curse is emphasized by the fact that he persisted in this denial.

Notice also the aggravations of this sin in Peter's experience. For months he had lived in close connection with Christ. He had heard much of Christ's teachings and was one of the inner circle of three. He had seen many of Christ's miracles and should have been convinced as to Christ's character and worth. In addition Jesus had given him repeated warnings. "Satan hath desired thee, that he may sift thee, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." As has already been stated, he had most strongly professed his devotion to Christ. And that night in the garden, he had actually drawn a sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. He had said in a public way, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

There are certain things which mitigate this sin which we must keep in mind. The temptation was very brief and it came on him suddenly. The circumstances were highly confusing and it is difficult to tell beforehand what one would do under these conditions. His sin was never repeated. An incident in strict contrast with this one occurred on the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached to the multitude and 3,000 were converted.

The chief causes of his sin were:

1. Self-confidence. There is great danger to a self-confident man. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." He that exalted himself shall be abased.

2. He was evidently blind to the fact that he was near danger.

3. He neglected the reasonable precaution that every Christian must continually exercise in the possible presence of dangerous temptations.

4. There must have been an element of the fear of derision in his mind in the presence of that company in the court yard.

But we should remember that Peter the coward became Peter the brave man on the day of Pentecost.

Every coward should try to become a brave man. There are so many things in life in which we play the coward. It is cowardice not to protest against a vile story when told. It is cowardice not to correct profanity when used in our presence. It is cowardice not to stand for the principle of right that is being violated in our presence.

Ways to Cultivate Courage.

1. By standing firm on some conscientious principle.

2. By being faithful to truth and right on some occasion.

3. By trusting in God for help and power.