

sonal dealings with others be backed home by prayer.

Jesus believed in united prayer, for a week later "He took Peter and James and John, and went up into a mountain to pray." Luke 9:28. It was at this time He was transfigured before them, and talked to Moses and Elias. It is through prayer that we too, see Jesus and catch a vision that inspires us to greater spiritual heights. Let us not underestimate the value of united prayer, whether it be praying for a revival, special needs of the church, or around the altar where it creates such an atmosphere of faith that the powers of darkness are driven back, and souls get through to victory.

We also find Him in the Garden, pouring out His heart in a deep agony of prayer, saying: "Father, if thou be willing remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will but Thine be done." We may obtain that sweet spirit of submission to the Master's will through the medium of prayer.

Even upon the cross He still retains a sweet spirit of prayer, at this time praying for the forgiveness of His enemies. "Then said Jesus: Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. He closes His life in prayer, for the last words we hear coming from those sacred lips are: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus He gave up the ghost." Thus we have the most remarkable life of prayer ever left upon record. PRAISE the LORD. Let us rejoice in Him, and endeavour to follow His example in prayer.

(To be Continued)

#### PULPIT MANNERISMS

By Rev. H. C. Mullen

A good many preachers have peculiar mannerisms. Mr. Preacher, what is yours? Beverly Carradine, that inimitable writer and caricaturist, tells in his book, *Pastoral Sketches*, of a certain minister to whom he used to listen when he was a boy, who had a habit of hiding his handkerchief from himself and then would search all his pockets and at last when he had found it, would immediately hide it in the pocket of his coat tails or under the cover of the Bible and then go all over the performance again. One might say, well, what harm did it do? We could only reply that as in the case of Carradine, about all that one would remember from the sermon would be the frantic search for the handkerchief. There need be no argument that whatever detracts from the solemnity of the message is a detriment to the preaching as well as to the preacher.

No mannerism that could be avoided would add anything to a sermon, and with some listeners it would entirely spoil the effectiveness of the very best pulpit deliverance. The preaching of the gospel is so important and the time of a sermon so limited that no speaker can afford for his own sake or for his hearers' sakes to allow anything to spoil his message. Mannerisms soon become fixed habits and when formed are exceedingly hard to break away from, so a preacher should fight them as he would poison. Lucky is the minister that has a wife or sympathetic friend upon whom he can call to check up on him and remind him of his bad pulpit habits. A speaker who wants to excel in his message ought to solicit criticism rather than to resent it. It is only by constructive criticism that he can improve his speaking.

One exceedingly annoying habit that a mul-

titude of preachers have fallen into is the saying of "Ah" or "uh" at the end of almost every sentence. Our language is beautiful and full and expressive and these meaningless exhalations of breath do not add to its beauty nor expressiveness in any way. The writer once listened to no less than five preachers within a few weeks that all had acquired this habit to perfection. Perhaps one learned it from the other.

In conversation with a prominent member of the church of one of them, that person had this to say: "We have a good preacher and his sermons are good and helpful but we get so tired of hearing him say "uh" after almost every sentence." Recently a lady in commenting on the same matter in regard to the sermon of another minister, remarked: "All I could think about during the sermon was "ah."

To illustrate how this habit will captivate a speaker and how hard it is to get rid of it, the following facts will be in point.

At college a young woman, a prospective missionary, in sermon preparation class, had several times been criticised for this fault.

On one occasion after having delivered a sermon on which all the other students were to take notes, when she had finished she quite triumphantly said, "Well, I know I did not say "ah" this time."

But a check up by the students showed that she had said "ah" over fifty times in her short sermon. Again, another actual occurrence: A person was wicked enough to take paper and pencil and keep tally while a preacher was delivering his message, and one not too long at that, and what was the net result. The expression of "ah" at the end of words and sentences just exactly 350 times. Some person will say that the important thing is the message and it does not matter about the language or the grammar or the mannerisms, but surely no one would want to say that carelessness in these things will be an improvement in any way. These faults that are so needless, decrease the value and effectiveness of any message and become a real annoyance to the listeners.

Supposing we should try the effects of this thing "ah" at the end of every sentence in the Lord's prayer. It would almost approach irreverence. We might try it to the lines of some beautiful poem:

"Tell me not in mournful numbers "ah,"

Life is but an empty dream "ah,"

For the soul is dead that slumbers "ah,"

And things are not what they seem "ah."

Or we might try a beautiful worded hymn:

"Blest be the tie that binds "ah,"

Our hearts in Christian love "ah,"

The fellowship of kindred minds "ah,"

Is like to that above "ah."

Alas, it is not only in the pulpit but also in the pew that we often hear this much used but meaningless expression. And it would appear that some think their prayers would be altogether ineffectual, if they did not interject this useless and wearisome "ah."

Nineteen Methodist ministers in Michigan and many Southern Methodist ministers and laymen have refused to come under the jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church. A test case in court resulted in the ruling that the plan of union had been adopted by the necessary bodies and therefore was binding upon all.—United Presbyterian.

## Temperance Column

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging. Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Prov. 1:20.

Drys have won seventy-three out of ninety-five local option elections on beer sales in Texas.—National Voice.

In the year 1937 there were 5,390 people convicted of violating the federal liquor laws. This figure is estimated to be twice as many as in any prohibition year.—The Watchman-Examiner.

At Columbia University ten per cent of the smokers failed to pass an examination in which four per cent of the non-smokers failed.—Clean Life Educator.

California's appalling traffic accident record seems to have alarmed the more careful drivers of cars. The sale of gas shows a distinct curtailment from the 1,565,493,731.6 gallons sold in 1937. Evidently the hazard of driving on our crowded roads and the increase in the number of intoxicated drivers are frightening the people and leading them to stay at home, on holidays, at least.—The United Presbyterian.

The Bible in Germany outsold Mein Kempf by 200,000 copies. Now comes the order from the Reich's Literary Chamber banning the sale of Bibles and church tracts. Also another order goes with this one, forbidding religious broadcasts and religious teaching in the schools.—Selected.

One-sixteenth of all the persons who hold regular jobs in this country work for some agency of government, according to a study made public August 17 by the statistical division of the National Industrial Conference Board. Federal jobs total 833,000 in 1929 and 1,194,000 in June, 1938. The Watchman-Examiner.

Dr. W. Miles of the School of Medicine, Yale University, declares his studies reveal that three out of every ten men and women who drink become alcoholics. He states that there are different reasons why people drink, but the point is that three out of every ten who touch intoxicating liquors for any reason whatever become habitual drunkards. That should alarm every "moderate" drinker.—Lutheran News.

Somebody is murdered in the United States every forty-three minutes (The Evangel, Nashville). Wonder how many of these murderers have been told the plan of salvation, the love of Jesus, and had someone really interested in winning them to useful lives?—Baptist Standard.

According to Dr. Lewis M. Parks of Philadelphia, president of the Continental Distilling Company, Ohio is "Bootleg State No. 1." He says, "There is more bootlegging in Ohio today than there is in any other monopoly state, and it is coming from Kentucky." What a confession!—Herald of Holiness

In a report made by G. A. Norris, president of the National Association of Milk Control Boards, milk consumption dropped 37,000,000 quarts the first year after the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment; 59,000,000 quarts the second year; and 69,000,000 quarts the third year.—Alliance Weekly.