

most unlike the ordinary prayers of mere human framing, especially what are called extempore prayers. Too often men seem to think that they will be heard for their much speaking, or fineness of language; but this prayer teaches us that God only requires simplicity and brevity *with earnestness*.

But the words are so familiar that many persons, it is to be feared, use them without sufficiently realising the fulness of meaning in each petition.

"No prayer should be said, at times, at least, so slowly, so collectedly, so humbly, so reverentially. No prayer requires more teaching of God's Spirit to enter somewhat into its depth and fulness, and so to say it aright." (M. F. Sadler.)

*Our Father.* We address God as His children not only by creation, in common with all men, but in a special manner, "*by adoption and grace*," in Christ Jesus His "only-begotten Son" by nature. Hence this prayer used to be called "The Children's prayer," and in the early days of Christianity only those who had been baptized were allowed to use it.

But the next words—"Which art in heaven"—remind us that though He is our Father, we must ever think of Him with the utmost reverence and awe, for He is in Heaven, the Creator and Ruler of all things (Mal. i. 6). There, also, is Jesus Christ our Mediator and Advocate (Heb. ix. 24).

*Hallowed be Thy Name.* God's "Name," in Scripture, means Himself, His character, and all that belongs to Him. To "hallow It" means not only that we should keep the Third Commandment—

"Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain"—in all its fulness, but that we should endeavor to bring honor and glory to God by

1. Our lives as Christians (S. Matt. v. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 20);
2. Holy Worship (Ps. xxix. 2; S. John v. 23).

"I desire, my Lord God, our heavenly Father, Who is the Giver of all goodness, to send His grace unto me, and to all people, that we may *worship Him* . . . as we ought to do." (Paraphrase in Catechism.)

*Thy Kingdom come.* God's kingdom may be regarded in three ways—

1. His Kingdom—or His Church—visible here on earth.
2. His Kingdom of righteousness within the heart (S. Luke xvii. 21).
3. His Kingdom of future Glory, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ."

We therefore pray herein—

1. That the Church may grow and prosper, and spread over the earth. It is the great missionary Prayer.
2. That Christ's Second Coming may be hastened; and, in order thereto,
3. That we may grow in holiness, as children of the light. That Christ may reign over our hearts more perfectly.

"That we may *serve Him* . . . as we ought to do. (Catechism.)

*Thy will be done, &c.*

The Angels in Heaven do God's Will perfectly, lovingly, ceaselessly; by