

to come from such prayers, provided only we do not allow ourselves to be led into adopting dreams and fictions concerning their condition. We do not know—we cannot know, for God has not told us—what is happening to them in that other world, and we have no right to set up inventions of our own and adapt our worship to such inventions. What they may need in order to be fitted for final entrance into perfect happiness we cannot tell. We are told that there will be at the last day some whose work will be burned, but who, nevertheless, will themselves be saved; and we see men die who seem to be forgiven, but nevertheless so full of imperfections that we can hardly believe them as yet fit for heaven. They are not yet sanctified; they have not the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. We have no right to invent accounts of the way by which they may be purified. We know that they will be changed when the Lord comes, but the nature, the manner, the process of the change, is not made known. To pray for the dead is not forbidden by the New Testament, and it is not forbidden by the Church of England, and our ecclesiastical courts, accordingly, have so decided. But while the Church of England nowhere forbids prayers for the departed, it nevertheless does not authorise the introduction of such prayers into our public worship, except in the most cautious and guarded manner. In our public worship we pray for ourselves, that we “with all those that are departed in the true faith of God’s Holy Name may have our perfect consummation and bliss in body and soul in God’s eternal and everlasting glory.” This is the model which we are bound to follow.

and in our public worship we ought to confine ourselves within the limits here indicated, for, where we know so little, it is the duty of reverence to let our words be few, lest, perchance, there may be something said which is inconsistent with that which God is doing; lest perchance we may be pretending to understand what is altogether hidden; lest perchance, we may induce others in following an example to be incautious and to step beyond the limits which ought to confine all approaches to the very presence of God. In our private prayers there is nothing in the Church’s teaching to forbid our prayers for those whom we love and who are gone before us. But in our public worship there is need of that kind of reverence which restrains the language and which perpetually acknowledges our own ignorance—our ignorance both of what is happening in the world of spirits, and our ignorance of how God will bring to a completion the work which He has begun in Christian souls.

The following extract is from Dr. Welldon’s new book the “*Hope of Immortality*.” “We too may, and must pray for the dead, and they for us. Without such prayer the Communion of Saints becomes but a dream. The duty or privilege of prayer for the dead does not so much rest upon isolated passages of Holy Scripture; it rests upon the whole conception of immortality as expressed in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. *Le culte des morts*—that beautiful habit and act of the Catholic Faith—needs revival in Protestant theology. Protestantism . . . has too much forgotten the dead.”—*Dr. Welldon, “Hope of Immortality.”*

A very beautiful prayer has been