

better to think of the lessons which each may afford us.

In this Collect, prepared by Cranmer, we are taught that Peter had conferred upon him "many excellent gifts." But what were those gifts?

Perhaps the greatest is that referred to in St. Matthew xvi. When Peter had made the noble confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," the Lord had said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simeon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." He had a distinct revelation of the glory of Christ; and upon this Christ spoke of the truth he had confessed as a rock on which He would build His Church.

But Peter had other gifts likewise. What unshaken courage, what marvellous boldness was imparted to him by the Spirit! What heavenly wisdom did he display in casting in the Gospel net and hauling in so vast a multitude of souls! What unfeigned love did he bear to the Master! What deep humility is seen in his words to Cornelius, and in his two Epistles!

And especially how faithfully did he fulfil the thrice-given commission as set before us in St. John xxi. We are told in the Collect he was commanded "earnestly to feed the flock." No doubt we are here reminded of our Saviour's words to him: "Feed my lambs." "Tend My sheep." "Feed My Sheep" (Revised Version). And the first two chapters of the Acts of the Apostles give manifold proofs that he did this. In spite of opposition, imprisonment, and perils, he ceased not "to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

And for the flock of Christ in all countries and in all ages, what a green pasture-field did he provide in his two Epistles! What an answer do they afford to the peculiar tenets of a Church which professes to rest her whole policy and teaching on St. Peter! Not one word about the Virgin. Not a syllable about a sacerdotal priesthood in Christ's ministers. Even he himself claims but the position of an elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings. Not a word of any one of those functions which the priests of Rome claim as their right.

St. Peter himself declares that Christ is the sure foundation and cornerstone of the Church, on which all true believers, as living stones, are resting.

How the great Evangelical doctrines of Christ's Gospel are everywhere prominent in his writings!

It is well to notice also the two-fold petition which the Collect gives to us. It teaches us the view of our Church as to the great work which appertains to the Christian ministry. What is that work? In the eyes of our Reformers it is this: "Make, we beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors *diligently to preach Thy holy Word*, and the people obediently to follow the same."

—Rev. George Everard, M.A.

CHRIST OFFERING PARDON.

Lo, the loving Jesus standeth

Closely now by thee,

In His pierced hands a pardon;

He can set thee free!

Sue for mercy quickly, sinner,

Ere He passeth by;

When He once is out of hearing,

Thou must surely die.

Listen to His words of kindness,

They must win thy love,—

"For thy sins I brought a pardon

From the throne above.

"All the agony I suffered

Thou canst never know,

That I might afford the rescue

From eternal woe.

"Though by law thou art most justly

Doomed to suffer death,

Yet for thee I ask a pardon,

With my dying breath.

"If thou only wouldst accept it,

Oh what joy were thine!

Joy on earth and bliss in heaven,

Will be thine—and Mine!"

MAY THE LORD HELP YOU TO SAY,—

"I accept it, blessed Jesus,

From Thy pierced hand;

'Tis Thy precious death redeems us

From the law's demand."

—Rev. E. P. Hammond, in *Good News*.

For PARISH AND HOME.

OUR PRAYER BOOK.

ITS CHIEF EXCELLENCES.

In a former paper I dealt with the use of a form of prayer in public worship. If form must be used it is well to have the best, and there is no other form in the world equal to our Liturgy. It is far from my purpose to suggest that the use of a form of prayer is absolutely necessary in the worship of God's people. Thousands of Christians have been blessed in the simple devotions of services of prayer without a written form. Still there must be always a certain amount of form, for public extempore prayer is a form to all but the one from whose heart it rises

and from whose lips it comes. And it "order is heaven's first law" and it is impossible to escape form, let us as wise men be anxious to give God the most acceptable service.

Macaulay declared of our Prayer Book that "the style of that volume is such that it cannot be improved." Its chief excellence is that it is thoroughly scriptural. Next to his Bible the Churchman esteems it as the best of books. And one reason is that it contains so much of the Bible, appeals to the Bible and places upon our lips in petition and praise the very language, or when it departs from it the very spirit of Scripture. The Prayer Book grew out of the Bible. If you trace its roots you will find that they rise from that holy ground. It is not merely that words, phrases, sentences, passages can be traced to the Bible, it is that it has absorbed and is saturated throughout with the spirit of the Book of God. The truths that have been found precious, the promises that have been tested, the light that drove away the darkness, the hope that triumphed, in a word, the rich experiences of God's saints have been enshrined in our Book of Common Prayer.

Then the Prayer Book is a growth. It contains the public prayers of God's saints in the ages that have gone. It is like a stream, at first a little rill, but, as it flows, growing, and gathering in its mighty bosom the waters of a thousand hills. It refreshed our forefathers in their earthly pilgrimage and will do the same for our children. Its prayers have been upon the lips of the holiest of Christ's followers; its praises have been the language of the greatest saints. They have gone up from cathedral aisles and from dungeon cells. They have been heard beneath the minster's massive roof, in the college chapel, under the village spire, in the missionary's tent, and where the settler has reared the humble church on the forest's edge. The cry "Lord have mercy upon us," has risen from lips that found that "the prayers of those that suffer have the strength of love and death." The glad Alleluias of adoring praise have gone up from rejoicing and believing hearts all through the Christian ages.

The prayers can be understood by all. They are suited to every class in the community and fulfil the condition that we should "pray with the spirit