

in the composition of a single writer. We miss the personality, but we see the national force, the continuity of ages, that lies behind the literary process. These are cases, it is true, of poetic inspiration, of historic and patriotic inspiration and are therefore far below the Inspiration that deals with religious and moral truths. But why should not the Holy Spirit speak as truly and as well through a school or a succession of writers, even if some of them did set special objects before themselves or shared the special tendencies of their day, as He could through a single writer? We have absolutely no ground in Inspiration or in history for assuming one to be the case more than another: how the books came into being, whether by one writer's labours or by a deeper and longer literary growth, study or criticism can help us to say. But the Inspiration is there as truly, and speaks to us as truly, in the latter case as in the former. It is hard for those who believe in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, who believe that He will and can be with us always, to deny the possibility of an Inspiration working in such a way.

It is impossible for us English Churchmen, at any rate, with our own Prayer Book and its history in our mind to deny it. We cannot claim Inspiration for our Prayer Book but we do surely believe that God has guided its history and its growth. It speaks to us of no one mind alone: no one writer is either hidden or revealed for us in its pages: it was composed at no one time: it has rather grown, and grown in the deepest sympathy with the spirit of our Church speaking in it. Versicles that take us back to the very earliest Church, collects from Gregory the Great or even earlier Saints, pages from the English Uses and Prayers from the Roman Sacramentaries, translations instinct with the literary power of Cranmer, revisions by the Church at large, all these form a magnificent growth which excels in grandeur, and in its varied associations, any work possible for a single writer. Other liturgic growths might teach us the