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laity? There may be many reasons given arising out of the action of Synods, Diocesan, Provincial, General. But one very good reason may be given here, and that is the want of a practical knowledge of the subject. The study of liturgy is not a very common one amongst our more learned clergy. The amount that is taught at theological colleges is very meagre, and at present it is hardly more than a fad or recreation of some few amongst the ritualistic clerics. And a very thorough knowledge of liturgies is a most necessary qualification for writing collects or compiling services. We have only to compare the authoritative leaflets put out from time to time with productions like the Priests' Prayer Book, the Manual of Intercession, and other unauthorized matter to see the force of my contention. Before a good Canadian Prayer Book can be obtained, we must have men who thoroughly understand the business. For this reason the attention of the whole body of the clergy must be turned to the subject of liturgies. Meanwhile we most imperatively need an interim book. For what have we now? A strange thing when we come to examine it. We have the English Book of Common Prayer, half used, sometimes mutilated, sometimes tortuously followed to the great detriment of the Church. One parson is pedantic, another is loose and rebellious. In addition to the unfortunate Book of Common Prayer, we have a multiplicity of various forms of service, special collects and episcopal "suggestions" for various occasions. None of these actually follow out the Prayer Book scheme, and some have missed the mark very conspicuously. (As an instance, one may mention the introductory sentences of the harvest thanksgiving service. The sentences in the order for Morning and Evening Prayer are examples of the "sundry places" in which "the Scripture moveth us . . . to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins, etc." On the day of harvest thanksgiving, the exhortation is to be prefaced with: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.") Of course we must use these things first, because in our necessity for a special service we often have nothing better, and secondly, where canons have not restricted a Bishop's action, he is at liberty to act autocratically, so that his authorization of a form of service is almost tantamount to a rubric. Now what we need is that these things, these loose leaflets, be collected, systematically arranged, and inserted in their proper places in an adapted English prayer Book, as special Collects, Epistles and Gospels, among the Collects; special Psalms in the table of proper Psalms; special lessons likewise; special prayers not put forth as "Collects for the day," inserted with the occasional prayers and special suffrages put in the Litany. Added to this, if some rubrics were altered, where Provincial Synod canons have already amended them, and prayers, which only concern the realm of England, left out, we should then have a serviceable interim Prayer Book which would serve until a wider knowledge both of liturgical lore and modern needs made a thorough revision both useful and practicable. The issue of such a

Prayer Book, by some Canadian house, under the authority of the General Synod, ought not to find any objectors except perhaps the King's printers.

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## IS CHURCH DOCTRINE BIBLE TRUTH?

Sir, In your Christmas number, the Rev. Benjamin P. Lewis, B.A., rector of Iberville, P.Q., says: "I agree entirely with the statement" [of the Rev. Dr. Sheraton in the "Record Sunday School Lesson Helps" for November], "that infants first receive the seal of baptism, and afterwards, when they repent and believe, they receive the blessing of which baptism is the sign and seal." I think this is the only view that can be gathered from the Prayer Book teaching in its entirety. Now, the passages of the Prayer Book which I remember as relevant to this point are:—(1) "A means whereby we receive the same," i.e., "an inward and spiritual grace," afterwards defined as "a new birth." (Ch. Catechism). (2) "We call upon Thee for this infant, that he coming to Thy Holy Baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration. Seeing now, dearly beloved, that this child is regenerate . . . let us give thanks. We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant. (Public Baptism of Infants). (3) "We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant. (Office of Private Baptism, when there are no sponsors, no promises and, therefore, no possible excuse for presuming the existence of conditions). (4) "I certify you that . . . this child being born in original sin and in the wrath of God, is now, by the laver of regeneration in Baptism, received into the number of the children of God and heirs of everlasting life." (Private Baptism). (5) "Give Thy Holy Spirit to this infant that he being born again and being made an heir of everlasting salvation may continue Thy servant." (Private Baptism). (6) "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is by baptism regenerate," etc. (Do., do.). (7) "We yield Thee hearty thanks . . . that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant." (Do., do.). (8) "Wherein I was made a member of Christ." (Ch. Catechism). Will the Rev. Mr. Lewis please tell me what passages of "the Prayer Book in its entirety" contradict, or even modify, these plain statements of the doctrine of the Church?

C. R. W. BIGGAR.

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## THE LITANY.

The Litany sprang from an age gloomy with disaster, when heathenism was still struggling with Christianity; when the Roman Empire was tottering to its ruin; when the last great luminary of the Church, St. Augustine, had just passed away, amidst the forebodings of universal destruction. Besides the ruin of society, attendant on the invasion of barbarians, there came a succession of droughts, pestilences and earthquakes which seemed to keep pace with the throes of the moral world. Of all these horrors France was the centre. On one of these occasions, during the Easter festival, a sudden earthquake shook the church at Vienne, on the Rhone. It was on Easter Eve; the congregation rushed out; the Bishop of the city (Manester) was left alone before the altar. On that terrible night he formed a resolution of inventing a new form to call down the mercy of God. He determined that in the three days before the Ascension Day there should be a long procession to the nearest churches in the neighbourhood. It seemed to be a new vent for a hitherto pent-up devotion.

Such was the first Litany—a popular supplication, sung or shouted, not within the walls of any consecrated building, but by wild, excited multitudes following each other in long files,

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through street and field, over hill and valley. It was, in short, what we would call a revival. To any one who has a heart to feel, there is a pleasure in the reflection that the prayers which we use were not composed in the dreamy solitude of the closet or the convent, but were rung out of the necessities of human sufferers like ourselves. We hear in those responses the echoes of the thunders and earthquakes of Central France, or the eruption of wild barbarian hordes, of the ruin of the falling Empire. That the Litany, which we use for our homelier sorrows, was, as Hooker says, "The very strength and comfort of the Church" in that awful "distress of nations." The "offences of our forefathers," the "vengeance of our sins," the "lightning and tempest," the "plague, pestilence, and famine," the "battle and murder, and sudden death," the "prisoners and captives," the "desolate and oppressed," the "troubles and adversities," all these phrases receive a double force if they recall to us the terrors of that dark, disastrous time when the Old World was hastening to its end, and the New was hardly struggling into existence.

This service was translated from Latin into English by Cranmer or King Henry VIII., and in its present form expressed the cry of distress in that second great convulsion which accompanied the Reformation. It is the first utterances of the English nation in its own native tongue, calling for Divine help, at that extremity of perplexity when men's hearts were divided between hope and despair for the fear of those things that were coming on the earth.—Dean Stanley.

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## THOUGHTS FOR THE THOUGHTFUL.

One of the best proofs that this life is only a preparation for another is its incompleteness. Those who reach the highest development that earth can give feel as if they were but just prepared to begin to live.

God hides some ideal in every human soul. At some time in our life we feel a trembling longing to do some good thing. Life finds its noblest spring of excellence in this hidden impulse to do our best.—Robert Collyer.

Give us this day our daily bread we pray.

And give us likewise, Lord, our daily thought.

That our poor souls may strengthen as they ought,

And starve not on the husks of yesterday.

—Phillips Brooks.

Life is what we are alive to. It is not length, but breadth. To be alive only to appetite, pleasure, pride, money-making, and not to goodness and kindness, purity and love, it is to be all but dead.

I do not know when or how it may please God to give you the quiet of mind that you need; but I tell you that I believe it is to be had; and in the meantime you must go on doing your work, trusting in God even for this.—George Macdonald.

## Children's

PETER'S

Peter was only and in the fifth which, his mamma ing very well. long division "per fidid to his best fr and all the childre read the loudest ar words in the read sure, they weren't as his teacher sai never gave up tryin

He had a way straight and lookin bright gray eyes w that made you wa occasionally his could not grasp a s often wondered v at his questions : then grown-up fol things.

The other day h school quite grie teacher, Miss Ave dearly, had laugh ed quite pensive forgot to eat his g a minute.

"But why did Peterkin? What i you make?" Som made him feel she anyway. So, taki gingerbread and l ings he explained

"Well, I don't You see it was i was teaching ex and that's easy"

You see, if you it's exports, but it's in-ports, of co see that. But M going and a-goin it. And I was you'd have puddi heard her say, 'N

give me an 'lustr she didn't mean couldn't tell 'zac off. They'd b

'boots' and 'Lynn that, so I got up sends some boe Boston, why it w and I couldn't t that old puddin'.

kind of cross-like said, 'It would 'Yes, Peter, wha case of?' And I loud as I could,

"She looked at then she laughed Peter," she said, "or I?" Just a gingerbread, ple mean, mamma?"

## THE CLOD

Bob looked up day from a bo over by the what he and I e was not in the one finds at the