

PRAYER FOR UNITY.

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace, give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one Hope of our calling! one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COLLECT FOR ADVENT SUNDAY.

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BY way of illustration of what was lately said as to the prevalent ignorance of the Liturgy, I would offer a brief analytical exposition of this beautiful collect; not that it excels the others, but because it stands first in the Church year. It is a fair sample. It is rich and full: there are others of greater depth of thought.

First, then, the *invocation*: "Almighty God." The epithet "Almighty" is prefixed here of set purpose. So arduous is the work to be done, none but a Being of infinite power can give the "grace" needed for its accomplishment.

Secondly, the two-fold *basis of the petition*—the two Advents of Christ. Next, the petition itself, for "grace" to enable us to rise 'now' to the new life of the soul; so that, in both body and soul we may rise at the 'last day' to 'the life immortal.' Lastly, the exaltation and mediation of Christ, through whom alone we may approach the Father, and ask, and receive.

There is a noteworthy *dualism* running through this collect. Two Advents: one in 'humility,' the other in glory; the first in grace to save, the second in majesty, to 'judge.' Two empires: darkness and light, or death and life. Two characters: the slave in chains, and the soldier in armour. Two resurrections: one 'now,' the other at the 'last day.'

Antithesis or *contrast*, also, is a marked feature in its structure. Casting "away," and putting "on;" slaving and fighting—"works of darkness" and "armour of light;" probation and account—"now" and the "last day;" mortality and immortality—"this mortal life," and "the life immortal;" the Visitor and the "Judge;" the humiliation and the "majesty;" the "quick," and the "dead."

Now, our prayer for "grace that we may" do a thing, is in itself an admission of our incapacity to do it without such grace. And what is this thing—this task we here set ourselves? It is the noblest, the most urgent, the most difficult of achievement, "to cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light." It means a ceaseless life-war with sin in every form. Its aim is the

total demolition of the "old man," and the complete up-building of the "new." Laying figure aside, by this double course of action we arrive, through a genuine evolution, at the "fulness of the stature of Christ,—not by the enchanted path of "faith without works," but the painful, peaceful highway of holy obedience. Self slain; love at its full fire and compass; the will absorbed in the will Divine; the stature reached; our work done,—what lack we for the "last day" and the "life immortal?" With so-called "faith" alone, what lack we not?

This work must be done "now." To dream of the possibility of *post-mortem* repentance and reformation may not be a thing forbidden: to say the least, it is hazardous. It overleaps Scripture, which says: "Now is the day of salvation." It outruns the theology of the Prayer Book, which here echoes back the call, "Now, in the time of *this* mortal life." This collect is a demonstration that our reformers did not even "*faintly* trust the larger hope." What is, or shall be, "behind the veil," is but dimly revealed: on this fact streams the very moonlight of the skies: "Now is the *accepted* time."

In sum the prayer is for Divine aid so to spend this day of grace that we may be blameless on that day of judgment: so to develop *here* the Christ-life in the soul, that *there*, in the final evolution pace, body and soul as one conjoint mystic entity, may pass to the life everlasting. Observe, it is not a prayer for grace to "believe," or grace to "accept" what has been done for us: it assumes in the supplicant the *possession* already of such acceptance and belief. Not what has been done *for* us, but what may be done *by* us, and *in* us. It proceeds on the line of this grand central truth, that in the work of man's salvation there are two factors, God's part and man's part; human effort with grace Divine co-operating: what is done and *doing* for him, and what must be done *by* him. Here are the very warp and woof of salvation. The cloth will wear. Neither the moral infidel nor the immoral "believer" will it clothe in the judgment. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Let him not: but he does. The divorce is prevalent. The very air is tainted with the arch-heresy. There is a Plymouth tract on "Deadly *Doing*!" Antinomianism gone mad. But between the first symptoms and the mad stage there are various developments of the malady. It is said that "General" Booth has produced a new Bible with the "deadly doings" left out. He differs from certain others mainly by greater honesty. He excinds; they overlook. This "essence of the Gospel" is simply the Gospel mutilated, a Gospel of ease, a crossless Gospel,—a Gospel that displays its false zeal for the Redeemer's honour by the unscriptural exclusion of man's co-operation; a Gospel that ignores His own solemn assurance that not to *do* His "sayings" is to build on the "sand;" that, of love to Himself, "*doing* His will" is the synonym at once, and the demonstration. The prayer is for *grace*. The twofold end in view—the risen life here, as preliminary to the "life im-

mortal" hereafter. The *means*,—"manful fighting under Christ's banner against sin, the world, and the devil." The twofold *motive*,—love and fear: love, answering to the love which impelled the Saviour "to visit us in great humility:" fear, of His offended "Majesty" when He comes again, as Judge of "quick and dead." Not that merely higher and finer form of selfishness whose one thought is to secure the bliss and the repose of heaven, and "escape" the flames of hell; but simple gratitude and love, and fear of displeasing our great Benefactor.

Thus is this collect, like the entire liturgy, a standing protest against the Antinomian heresy which makes salvation a sort of psychical legerdemain; against the now popular but perilous post-mortem contingency; and against the all but universal delusion that heaven may be reached and enjoyed by one who, all his life long, has been an utter stranger to the whole law of God as condensed in the two great Commandments. It assumes, on the contrary, that the way is long, and arduous the ascent; painful, but not dismal; for, on the goal faith fixes the eye; and through the dark hills flames the torch of hope; so that "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

RECEPTION OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION BY THE GENERAL CONVENTION AT CHICAGO.

[COMMUNICATED.]

THE Canadian delegation consisted of ten members chosen from all parts of the Dominion—from Halifax to Huron. Only six of these, the Lord Bishops of Nova Scotia and Toronto, the Prolocutor, the Dean of Montreal, the Hon. Mr. Stevenson, and Mr. Baynes Read, availed themselves of their privilege. No less than six days were consumed between the arrival of the first and last of these, so that the delegation was not formally presented to the convention till the Monday after its inauguration.

In the meantime the people of Chicago had provided for them the most munificent hospitality, and each member of the delegation as he arrived was billeted at the Tremont House, which it is needless to say is one of the first class hotels in Chicago, and in which ten of the best rooms had been secured in anticipation of the arrival of the whole Canadian delegation. The members who arrived first had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the working of the convention and of visiting many personal friends. They had also the great privilege of hearing the addresses of the missionary bishops on the state and prospects of the Church in their various jurisdictions. This to outsiders, was perhaps the most interesting part of the whole proceedings of the convention. The mind was literally overwhelmed at the vastness of the field that was spread out to view, as the illimitable opportunities and responsibilities of the Church were dwelt upon. It was heart sickening to hear everywhere the fields white to the harvest, everywhere the labourers so few.