

of all when these "quotations" militate against the distinctive doctrines or principles of the Church and in their study of Holy Scripture in the languages in which it was written they will find how often wrong interpretations, of our English New Testament especially, have given rise, and apparent foundation to the various religious divisions of our day.

But this equipped, and thus qualified they would make the Church what the world calls a "success,"—but it would be in a far higher acceptance of the term—for they, would have been doing the Master's work in the Master's way.

Again, in our Ideal Diocese we should not have the "cure of souls" committed to the solitary charge of young lads fresh from College life, least of all to men without training for some years beforehand. The ordination examination they should have to pass would consist of more than a mere acquaintance with a few selected books of divinity, or of so called "Evidences of religion," some of which are utterly unsuited to the needs of the day; nay! rather *aid* than *confute* the modern objector against the New Testament Revelation. On going forth they will be put under a more experienced brother and—*watched over by the Bishop*—will be trained to meet, as far as human knowledge can meet them, the difficulties as well as the cavils of unbelief, or misbelief.

And this time of preparation for a higher post will have its intervals of spiritual work wrought out in their hearts by prayer and meditation and study of the things that concern the dealing with the soul and spirit.

And such a clergy will never forget the warning of the prophet that if the "people are to seek the law at his mouth" "the priest's lips should keep knowledge."

And one word more. As the physician to be quite successful must not only know the disease, but also have a personal knowledge of the habits and temperament of the sufferer. So must the physician of souls get acquainted with the personal spiritual temperament of his people. He must be constantly among them, almost make himself of them. If in a city, he must be ready to meet the quickness that is born of our hurrying business-life, and adapt his teaching to the intellectual keenness of his flock. He will have to be "apt" in teaching; ready in illustration, sharp to *keep from fallacious teaching*, no less than to *detect it*.

While in quieter scenes among people of *sluggish intellect*, though perhaps keen in the ways of their own mode of life, he may expect to find his powers of patient persevering endurance often sorely tried. He will find ready forgetfulness of what he thought he had securely impressed upon his people; and no less a trial in the readiness with which he will find them drawn away, by some loud-voiced, overbearing perversion or contradiction of what he thought he had made so clear, and given such reasons for believing.

Hence the need of intimately knowing and adapting himself to the circumstances in which he will find himself placed. And there will be no desire felt by a clergy thus trained, ever guided by the Spirit of Christ to deviate in the least from the prescribed mode of doing the work of the Lord and Saviour of men in the Church's way. It will be felt that what has done the work of the Lord Christ in the Kingdom of God 1800 years will suffice; yes, even to the end of the world, to continue on that glorious work!

Lastly, to complete the picture of our Ideal diocese, there will be found an ever-increasing desire, on the part of the laity to aid such a band of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in the grand work of winning men to a true allegiance to the King of the kingdom of Heaven. In every parish, for many a day to come, there will be work of that kind for the well-instruct-

ed layman to do; to go to his fellow-laymen and unfold to them the true nature, and work, and scope of that Kingdom that is to absorb the kingdom of evil, if only the will of the Christ-King can have its way.

And in *combined* action as well as in individual effort this may be done. To instance one way: Could not one evening during Synod week be devoted to this end? Call it "The Layman's Evening." Let the *Clergy* if they wish to be present, attend only as *listeners*.

At first it might not issue in much of real benefit; but its usefulness would grow! Men would come up with greater zeal from the country. And even if things crude or even rude might be said, the knowledge thus gained of what was in men's minds might surely be turned to advantage. Thus, in our ideal diocese, we should have joint work of the whole Christian priesthood, lay and cleric; and it is *joint work*, carried on in an helpful and loving way, that ever produces *joint interest*, bearing fruit in lasting good.

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

The Book of Common Prayer which the English Church provides for her children is the strongest bond uniting us to her. There is no state, or condition of life, for which this book does not afford some consolation or advice for her children.

'In all time of our tribulation,' the Church, speaking through this book, teaches us to pray, 'Good Lord deliver us,' and, 'in all times of our wealth,' our well-doing, her wisdom would have us say likewise, 'Good Lord deliver us.' To help us tell out our sins to God, she gives us a Confession that is unequalled.

When tried by the unkindness of those about us, when 'friends stand aloof from us, and kinsmen afar off,' then her love puts words into our mouth, that breathe the very spirit of forgiveness.

Are any in anxiety for some dear one who is sick? Or anxious for some friend travelling by land or sea, or an unrighteous person who is wandering away from God? Then she teaches us to pray for each. With a far seeing tenderness, she remembers the condition of those who are more sinned against than sinning, who are more to be pitied than blamed; who have been led by false guides out of the prepared, appointed way, and in the gentlest accents, her 'Mother-love,' prays: 'Bring into the way of truth all such as have erred, and are deceived.' Is there a child of hers deficient in moral courage, weak of will, yet longing to do right in the sight of the Lord? Then her voice is heard saying: 'Comfort and help the weak-hearted.'

Comes there upon any woman the woe of widowhood, or upon any child the grief of orphanhood? Then that woman and that child are given one of the Church's tenderest prayers: 'Defend and provide for the fatherless children, and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed.'

Are our hearts full of loyalty to our earthly Sovereign? Our Church provides words wherewith to express that feeling, words that speak not only of our Queen's temporal prosperity, but of her spiritual joy, her inner life; and that even follow her across the dark valley, beseeching that 'after this life she may attain everlasting joy and felicity.'

Has any parent or sister a dearly loved son or brother entering upon the holy work of the Priesthood? Then that mother and sister have a loving prayer to meet their earnest need. 'And to those which shall be ordained to any holy function give thy grace and heavenly benediction: that by their life and doctrine they may set forth Thy Glory and set forward the salvation of all men.'

And all this is no matter of chance; for not one member of the English Church can use the

book of Common Prayer without finding a fixed and certain help. Each one knows where to look for it, knows where to listen for it; it is an unchangeable privilege.

Every member of the Church knows that his prayer is meeting the prayers of all the members of the common Church throughout the wide world, that for him there can be no loneliness, no want of sympathy, but rather a bond of brotherhood: for is he not daily taught 'the Communion of Saints,' and does he not know that the very words he uses are being used by brothers and sisters in the far off wilds of Australia, and in the dusky shades of Africa and India, as well as in the sunny Islands of the Southern Seas, in the Highlands of Scotland and the bays of Ireland; thus is there continually being offered up to God, the daily Incense of Prayer and Praise.

The individual teaching and guiding of the Book of Common Prayer is not the least of its many rare qualifications. Our Mother, the Church, deals with each child apart, and not in the mass. At Baptism she says, 'Mercifully look upon this child,' 'Give Thy Holy Spirit to this Infant,' 'We call upon Thee for this Infant.' And in the Catechism, wherewith she nourishes her children's early years, she teaches each to say: 'My Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the Child of God.' 'My Godfathers and Godmothers did promise and vow three things in my name,' etc.

And in Confirmation it is still an individual care she has, as we see in the words: 'Defend O Lord this Thy servant with Thy heavenly grace.' In the Marriage Service, whereby two lives are blended in one, our Church yet prays: 'Send Thy blessing upon these Thy servants, this man and this woman.' 'Look O Lord mercifully upon them from Heaven and bless them.'

Of the tender beauty of the 'Service for the Visitation of the Sick,' we can scarcely speak here, or of the Commendatory Prayer that goes with the dying Christian to the very threshold of eternity. When the earthly life is over, the Church does not forget her child, forgets not her motherly care, but meets his dead body, once 'the Temple of the Holy Ghost,' meets it as it is brought to God's acre with those words of love spoken by her own Lord: 'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.' Our Book of Common Prayer teaches that in the sight of God, and in all matters of the Christian life, every member of the Church is equal.

She singeth the same for mighty Kings

And the veriest babe on her breast;

And the Bishop goes down to his narrow bed,
As the ploughman's child is laid.

And alike she blesseth the dark-browed serf,
And the Chief in his robes arrayed.

She sprinkles the drops of the bright new birth
Alike on the low and high;

Oh! the poor man's friend is the Church of
Christ

From birth to his funeral day;

She makes him the Lord's in her surpliced arms
And singeth his burial-lay.

For this matchless Book of Common Prayer let us give thanks. 'Common,' because it is open to all, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, the joyous and the sorrowful; 'Common,' because all the memories of childhood pass into it, and all the associations of youth lie hidden amidst its pages; 'Common,' because always ready for every need; 'Common,' because it hath sustenance for every day. Most *uncommon* in its surpassing beauty of diction, its holiness of thought, its loving words coming straight from our Mother's heart.

Yes, most *uncommon*, inasmuch as it is unequalled.

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