

is the ceremony of initiation into the Church of Christ.

*"After the last Lesson at Morning Prayer, or after the last Lesson at Evening Prayer."*—This fixes the time in the Service. The custom of baptizing at a Sunday-School Service, though common, has no authority.

The first Address is an exhortation to Prayer for the Child. The reasons assigned are "that all men are conceived and born in sin," (Ps. li. 5,) and liable to condemnation, (Rom. v. 12,) and "that none can enter into the Kingdom of God except he be regenerate and born anew of Water and of the Holy Ghost." "The Kingdom of God" is the Church. "Regenerate" means new-born. "To be born of water" means to be baptized with water. "To be born of the Holy Ghost" means to be sanctified or made holy by the influences of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is a new birth, to distinguish it from the former birth. So the people are called on to ask God for certain blessings,—the blessings of the covenant, the baptism of Water and the Holy Spirit, reception into the Church

Then follow two Prayers. In the first, there are three parts. 1. The encouragements to the foregoing request, drawn from the case of Noah, the passing through the Red Sea, the Baptism of Jesus Christ. 2. The request itself. The mercy of God to the child, and the washing by the Holy Spirit; the living water. 3. The end for which we make it,—Initiation into the Church, and everlasting life. To "sanctify" water means to change it from common to sacred purposes.

In the second Prayer, we ask that

the child may be pardoned, adopted, and accepted by Almighty God.

*"Remission of his sins."*—Original Sin, and those actual sins which shall be forgiven if he continues in his duty.

*"Spiritual Regeneration."*—Spiritual new-birth, as opposed to natural birth into the world. It is not repentance, or conversion, or renovation, but that change of state or relationship by which the child of wrath is born the child of grace, and is transferred from a natural to a spiritual state. The blessings of pardon, grace and glory are sealed in the covenant, on condition that repentance, faith and obedience are exercised when the child comes to years of discretion.

(To be continued.)

## THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

In compiling the Book of Common Prayer it was not the object of the reformers to introduce innovations, but to exclude errors and corruptions; and to this end they retained those portions of the ancient formularies which were sanctioned by the Scriptures and by primitive usage, rejecting only what savoured of ignorance and superstition, and had originated in the doctrines and practices of the Romish Church. It was by a strict adherence to these principles, during its progress through several intermediate stages, that it still retains that primitive form and character which enabled Cranmer to pronounce it the same in effect that had been for 1500 years in the Church of Christ and Jewel to assert its undeviating conformity with the