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The Book of Common Prayer,

The Book of Common Prayer, not an utterance of our devotions merely, but the moulding power of our characters and lives, is the noblest possible expression of the religion of Jesus Christ. It stands beside the Holy Scripture in the Authorized Version, resonant with the same stirring "English undiluted" that marks the vast superiority of the King James Bible over all other efforts at translation. It holds up before all men in its creed its catechism, and its sacramental offices, the roundness and completeness of the Catholic Faith. It is almost like a great cathedral echoing with the songs of centuries. The old Psalter that made up the worship in which the Blessed Lord united with the Church of the older dispensation; the hymn, perhaps at least, of Ambrose, which we call *Te Deum*; the inspired song which broke from the full heart of the blessed mother of the Son of God and of the father of His forerunner; the prayers of the "golden mouthed" Bishop, and the thrice holy hymn of the angels—these make it almost true to say that it is a temple, richly decked with the carvings in stone, and the figures radiant with sunlight through the windows, of martyrs, and Prophets, and Apostles, and angels, and the saints of the Holy Church throughout all the world. It finds its way, by frequent and familiar use, into the heart and conscience of the child; and as its "heavenly notes" fix their sweet harmonies upon the memory of childhood, they make the indelible impression of their truth upon the whole life afterwards. It is the password of that fellowship among English-speaking people which makes us akin with all the wide-spread families of this great conquering race, and at home everywhere in the old fatherland across the sea, and in the new lands which own the sovereignty of England or the sweep of our American civilization. It is the silent preacher, the silent teacher—sent of God, as we believe—in the copies multiplied by millions through the restless energy of the press, thick as the leaves of Vallombrosa. It gathers and keeps all sacred memories of separate souls. It is the heritage and heirloom of an ancestry which carries us back to the upper room in Jerusalem, and to the underground churches where the dead slept, while the living sang hymns of victory over death

And it lifts us up and links us in with the worded glory, the articulate praise of the worship of the Paradise of God.

"Surely, it is in the hearts and minds of all to thank God for the inestimable privilege of a share in the perfect possession, and preservation of that which so procures reverence in the worship of God and promulgates the truths of the Gospel to mankind in the clearest, plainest, most affecting and majestic manner," to the glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

—Bishop W. C. Doane.

Blind Clergyman

The appointment of the Rev. Herbert J. R. Marston to the vicarage of Belgrave Church, Mayfair has drawn attention to the fact that there are more clergymen who, like Mr. Marston, have the misfortune to be totally blind, than the general public have any idea of. Mr. Marston himself has, since 1883, up to his recent appointment in London, been rector of a Gloucestershire village, and has been chaplain to the workhouse at Stow-on-the-Wold.

With his late parishioners this blind rector was universally popular, and he both "reads" and preaches without seeming in the least encumbered by his encumbent. Marston enjoys the reputation of being a preacher far above the average; and it is said that his sermons show deep thought and judgment, as well as being delivered in a style that many clergymen, more favored, might envy.

The Rev. N. F. McNeile, who is, the writer believes, a son of a former Dean of Ripon, is totally blind. Mr. McNeile is at present the Vicar of Brafferton, near Helterby, in Yorkshire. He was educated at the Blind School, Worcester, where he proved very successful, taking his M. A. degree at Dublin University, with third-class honours in both logic and ethics. Mr. McNeile is known throughout the north as an earnest, thoughtful preacher, and has often addressed large audiences in many parts of the great Yorkshire towns, where his services have been much appreciated.

Devonshire has a blind clergyman in the rectory of Morchard Bishop, Rev. T. B. Dowdeswell, B. A.

Mr. Dowdeswell, who is an Oxford man, by the by, distinguished

himself very highly at the University, excelling many of his more favored comrades. He took his degree in the History School, and came out in the "Honours" list.

One of the Worcester Blind Schools' most famous pupils was the present rector of Sedgeborough, Evesham, who at Durham University, carried off several scholarships and prizes. The Rev. F. T. Marsh took his B. A. degree after keeping his terms at the Northern University, in the course of which he not only won the Theological Scholarship, but also was successful in coming out first for the further prize of "Theological Exhibitioner." Mr. Marsh's parishioners think very highly of him, both as a preacher and a clergyman, and he is extremely popular in the district round Evesham.

Chatham claims a blind vicar in the person of the Rev. W. H. Robins, who holds the living of Gillingham. Mr. Robins is a graduate of Dublin, where after taking his B. A. degree, he proceeded to the highest degree of M. A.

Well known too, in the neighbourhood of Southern Essex is the blind rector of Pelden, Colchester, the Rev. D. L. Johnson. Mr. Johnson, like most blind clergymen, went through the course of study at the Worcester Blind College, and then proceeded to the University. In his case he chose Oxford, and after the usual course of lectures and examinations there he came out with a good B. A. degree, which he has now developed

into M. A.

Altogether there are nearly a dozen clergymen up and down the country who are quite, or nearly quite, blind.

—Selected.

The Message of the Tombstone

A beautiful little story was told not long ago by a young missionary, who is just leaving the country, as to how he was influenced to become a missionary.

When a child he used constantly to walk through a certain churchyard, and one of the gravesones, which he passed close by, erected to the memory of a little boy eight years of age, bore the following strange inscription:

"Mother, when I grow to be a man I should like to be a missionary. But if I should die when I am still a little boy, will you put it on my tomb, so that someone passing by may read it and go instead of me?"

Through reading this inscription so often there grew up in his mind this thought:

"I must go in the place of that little boy." And so he has been trained for the work, and will soon commence it. It was only a little boy's wish that influenced him and led him to become a missionary. Now, if a wish can do so much what may not a word and deed do?

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