

"I will pray with the spirit," says St. Paul, "and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Cor. xiv. 15.)

The very persons who appear so adverse to forms of prayer, do not hesitate, as has often been observed, to use forms of praise, in their psalms and hymns. Why may not the spirit of devotion, especially in public worship, where order is more positively requisite, be equally promoted by a form of prayer and supplication and thanksgiving, as by singing from set words and music to the praise and glory of God?

We allow that in private, and on various other occasions, extempore prayers may be most suitable, as prompted by the particular circumstances of the case. Such indeed we find offered up by holy men, in many instances in the Old Testament, and by our Lord and his apostles in the New. The child of God should be held in no bondage in his approaches to his heavenly Father. In this matter let us not be children, but men. But we are now speaking of the case of congregations of Christians assembled in churches, and meeting Sabbath after Sabbath, for public devotion and edification. Is not a Liturgy, drawn up like our Book of Common Prayer, from the most approved sources, and by the most holy and learned Bishops and divines, a great advantage to the united worshippers who meet in the Lord's house from time to time, for combined devotion, to know His holy name and His word, to seek His grace at one common fountain, and to speak His praises with one accord? Where can these proper purposes of congregational worship and edification be so fully and faithfully carried out, as where it is understood by all beforehand "what things they shall pray for;" where it is agreed touching those things they shall ask and seek; and where both ministers and people may cordially offer up, without embarrassment or distraction of mind, the stated and well-known prayers and praises, intercessions and thanksgivings, of the United Church?

The "one accord"—the "common supplication"—the individual as well as united devotion—to which is attached our Saviour's special presence and blessing (Matt. xviii. 19, 20), appears more surely attainable by a form of Liturgical service, well-known and understood by all, than by the delivery of extemporaneous prayers, unknown to the congregation before, and modified greatly by the minister's frame of mind and form of sentiment.

With respect to the peculiar excellence of our English Liturgy, and its suitability to all purposes of public devotion, even one [Robert Hall, of Leicester] who did not conform to it, remarked, that "the majestic simplicity of its language, the Evangelical purity of its sentiments, and the chastened fervour of its devotion, combine to place it in the very first rank of uninspired writings."

Feeling then, the privilege of belonging to a Church

whose Liturgy is so valuable for aiding devotion, and for edifying the body of Christ, let us "hold fast this form of sound words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." In the use of the form, let us see that we neglect not the spirit of devotion. "It is the spirit that quickeneth." The form is nothing without it. But it undoubtedly offers the best human aid, derived from the treasury of God's truth and grace, for cultivating and cherishing the spirit of sound religion:—

"O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer thyself hast trod,—
Lord, teach us how to pray."

RULES FOR MAINTAINING A PEACEFUL AND UNRUFFLED MIND.

1. When harrassed and discomposed by worldly troubles, remember the throne of grace is ever open to you, and help may always be sought and found there.
2. Be thankful for every thing which leads you there; perhaps these trials may serve to keep alive the spirit of devotion in your heart.
3. Never forget that your Almighty Lord can turn the hearts of men, and rule every event of life for the benefit of his beloved children.
4. Receive injuries and affronts from others as permitted by God, and for the benefit of some grace in which you are deficient. Has he not promised all things shall work together for good to those who love Him?
5. Remember Him who for your sake suffered "greater things than these," and be silent.
6. Always be encouraged by the sweet remembrance of the exceeding love of God towards you. Think of what he is preparing for you. Glance by faith at the invisible world. Try and imagine for a moment the blissfulness of that land into which no sorrow or trouble shall ever enter. Think how the glories of one hour spent there will exceed in immensity all the sorrows of the longest life below.
7. Finally, be cheered by the consciousness that God is ever present with you, and seek by faith to realize that presence more and more. His gentle Spirit will not dwell in the heart that harbours uncharitable and unkindly feelings. Therefore, would you retain that heavenly Guest, pray and fight against them.

FAITH ILLUSTRATED.

Several years since, at a small seaport in Massachusetts, one of those easterly storms came on which so often prove fatal to vessels and their crews on that coast. The wind had blown strongly from the north-east for a day or two; and as it increased to a gale, fears were entertained for the safety of a fine ship, which had been from the commencement of the north-easter lying off and on in the bay, apparently without any decision on the part of her officers

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