

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 ready 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 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." In Holy Communion, her voice to each Communicant is: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life."

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: