

8. And, although such impressions might appear to originate in various learned speculations in theological and physical science, yet they are in a great measure derived immediately from the popular literature of the day, and therefore no sustained argument can reach the mass of those affected by them, even if it were true (which it is not) that the tribunal of human reason, to which such argument must be submitted, had jurisdiction and competency to deliver judgment on the authority of the Holy Bible.

4. It is, moreover, evident that the effects of these speculations survive and accumulate, to the general lowering of the popular estimation of the Holy Bible, though individual speculations may have but a transitory influence, or even be utterly refuted on their own ground.

5. The Synods of the Church have not yet spoken with authority to guide us in matters of such grave importance; but it cannot be right in the sight of God that where His honour is so directly assailed, and the salvation of His people so seriously hindered, the whole matter should be allowed to drift, and that only isolated voices should be raised here and there in the Church in defence of the truth of God's Word.

6. Under these circumstances we, the undersigned, messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord, who have received the Holy Spirit to be faithful dispensers of the Word of God, being sorely distressed at these things, and deeply feeling the burden and shame of sitting still, can no longer forbear (a) to deliver our joint testimony herein before God, and (b) to attempt, by the only united action in our power, to settle the minds of those to whom our testimony may seem to be of value, in a good and comfortable reliance on the absolute truth of the Holy Scriptures.

7. We therefore solemnly profess and declare our unfeigned belief in all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as handed down to us by the undivided Church in the original languages. We believe that they are inspired by the Holy Ghost, that they are what they profess to be, that they mean what they say, and that they declare uncontrovertibly the actual historical truth in all records, both of past events and of the delivery of predictions to be thereafter fulfilled.

8. We believe these Scriptures because they have the authority of Divine revelation, and wholly independently of our own, or of any human, approval of the probability or possibility of their subject-matter, and wholly independently of our own, or of any human and finite, comprehension thereof.

9. And we believe that any judgment, either for or against them, formed on the ground of such approval or comprehension, or of the want thereof, is inapplicable to matter of Divine revelation.

10. And we believe the Holy Scriptures to have this Divine authority, on the testimony of the Universal Church, the spouse and body of Christ, the Witness and Keeper of Holy Writ. So that no opinion of the fact or form of Divine revelation, grounded on literary criticism of the Scriptures themselves, can be admitted to interfere with the traditional testimony of the Church, when that has been once ascertained and verified by appeal to antiquity.

11. It is far from our purpose to undervalue or deprecate the employment of the highest powers of the human intellect, when sanctified through prayer, in diligent and reverent searching the Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, provided that the object be the meaning of the living oracles, and not their genuineness or their authenticity. And, while we believe that the seal of the Spirit of Truth is set to all the Canonical Scriptures as the truth of the Living God, we especially repudiate and abhor all suggestions of fallibility in the person of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, in respect of His own use of the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

12. We earnestly pray that the clergy and laity of the Church of England may never acquiesce in rejecting any portions of the one volume of God's revelation as hard sayings, causing stumbling; but on the contrary, may hold fast their confidence in the faithfulness of God, who will not suffer us to be deceived in humbly believing that to which He hath set His seal; and may wait

patiently, knowing only in part, for the time when we shall know even as we are known, and shall be filled unto all the fulness of God.

Edward Meyrick Goulburn, D.D., D.C.L., sometime Dean of Norwich.

George Anthony Denison, Archdeacon of Taunton. Berdmore Compton, formerly Vicar of All Saints', Margaret Street.

M. F. Sadler, Prebendary of Wells.

T. T. Carter, Hon. Canon of Christ Church.

J. L. Reading, Bishop-suffragan.

Hinds-Howell, Rector of Drayton, Rural Dean, Hon. Canon of Norwich, and Proctor in Convocation.

Robert Gregory, Dean of St. Paul's.

Canon William Cooke.

R. W. Randall, Vicar of All Saints', Clifton; Hon. Canon of Bristol.

T. L. Claughton, late Bishop of St. Albans.

R. Payne-Smith, Dean of Canterbury.

F. H. Leicester, Suffragan of Peterborough.

William Ralph Churton, Canon of St. Albans.

H. W. Webb-Peploe, Vicar of St. Paul's, Onslow Square, London.

Ernauld Lane, Archdeacon of Stoke-upon-Trent.

William Butler, Dean of Lincoln.

H. Donald W. Spence, Dean of Gloucester.

Thomas E. Espin, D.D., Prolocutor of the Northern Convocation, Chancellor of the dioceses of Chester and Liverpool, Rector of Wolsingham.

Benjamin J. Clarke, Archdeacon of Liverpool.

B. M. Cowie, Dean of Exeter.

Arthur Douglas Wagner, Vicar of St. Paul's, Brighton.

Henry R. Nevill, Archdeacon of Norfolk, Rector of Norwich.

Frederick Meyrick, Non-residentiary Canon of Lincoln.

J. W. Marshall, Vicar of St. John's, Blackheath.

Richard T. West, Vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, Paddington.

W. H. Hutchings, Rector of Kirby, Misperton, and Rural Dean of Malton.

George Prevost, Rector of Stinchcombe, late Archdeacon of Gloucester.

Edward Miller, late Rector of Bucknill.

Joseph H. Stevenson, Prebendary and Treasurer of Wells.

Richard C. Kirkpatrick, Vicar of St. Augustine, Kilburn.

W. Clavell Ingram, Hon. Canon of Peterborough.

Charles Stephen Grueber, Vicar of Hambridge.

F. B. Portman, late Rector of Staple Fitzpaine.

W. H. Ashwith, D.D., Vicar of St. Mary's, Taunton.

Edmund Field, Fellow and Senior Chaplain of St. Nicholas College.

E. Eardley Wilmot, Prebendary of Wells.

W. F. Hobson.

Michael Rosenthal.

16th December, 1891.

"PRAYERS OUT OF A BOOK."

BY THE REV. A. W. SNYDER.

There are those who have a strong traditional prejudice against the Book of Common Prayer. They think that "prayers out of a book cannot come from the heart." They forget that half the hymns they sing are in fact prayers—"prayers out of a book," thus:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.
Jesus, Saviour of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly.

These are prayers, "printed prayers in verse and set to music and sung," "prayers out of a book." But are they any the less "from the heart?" Of course not.

It is a well-known fact that a liturgical Service has been in use, in the worship of God, always in His Church, both under the Old Dispensation and the New. It was such a Service in which our Lord Himself was wont to join when, "as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." It is a well-known fact that a liturgical, or Prayer Book, Service prevailed everywhere in the Christian Church for centuries, and prevails to this day in every branch of the historic Church. Only in comparatively recent times have denominations arisen which have discarded the use of a Prayer Book. But their best men have regretted it. Their best men still regret it. In a recent article in the *Presbyterian Review* the Rev. Dr. Hopkins, a professor in their Theological Seminary at Auburn, N.Y., begs earnestly for the

adoption of a Prayer Book by his denomination. He says: "That there is anything in the use of a book of prayer essentially unfavourable to spirituality of worship is a mere prejudice growing out of a want of experience. Christian people who use a book do not find it so." "The number of Presbyterian ministers who openly advocate the use of some form of prayer is large, and the number of those who hope and anxiously wait for it, much larger." "It is by no means uncommon for Presbyterian ministers to use the Episcopal marriage service from preference." "The same thing appears from their disposition to borrow scraps and phrases from the Prayer Book, which too often have the effect of *purpure panni* sewn on the somewhat threadbare garment of the Presbyterian Prayer. An improvement sometimes made upon this, is the recitation of a whole collect, for example, the well-known prayer of St. Chrysostom, at the end of the morning Service. This sort of thing is hardly of the highest order of ecclesiastical integrity. We boast our conscientious preference for a plain diet of bread and water. We shall never consent, oh, no! to allow French dishes on our board. But we are quite willing to 'convey' scraps and even whole pieces from the better furnished tables of our neighbours." Speaking of their Services, Prof. Hopkins says: "The Creed is never recited. No voice responds, 'Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this law.' No loud acclaim resounds—'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.' With a close imitation of the *Romish* method, the choir and the priest have performed the whole audible part of the public worship. It certainly ought not to surprise us, under such conditions, that a very large number of the children of Presbyterian families, and many of the most cultivated and tasteful of our members, have sought a more cheerful, more varied, more sympathetic Service in another communion. There is not a Presbyterian pastor in the land but can testify to such losses. The Episcopal Church has been largely recruited from our ranks." Prof. Hopkins claims that it is largely due to the superior attractiveness of its Prayer Book Service, that (to use his very words) "of all the sects in the United States, the Episcopal is growing the most rapidly at the present time. It is forming new congregations and organizing new dioceses with extraordinary rapidity. On the other hand, the Presbyterian Church is almost stationary. It requires a close calculation to show that she is even holding her own."

Again, Prof. Hopkins says: "A popular form of objection to the use of a Service of prayer is that the great business of the Christian minister is to preach the Gospel; and that the people are to attend Church to hear, and not chiefly for the worship of God." "To make the preaching of the Gospel consist exclusively in the delivery of sermons, is the fatal mistake of Presbyterianism. All appropriate worship of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is the preaching of the Gospel. Devotional singing is the setting forth the praises of Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King. The Apostle's and Nicene Creeds are full of the Gospel. In the Lord's Supper Christ is set forth evidently crucified for us. There is more of Christ in the *Te Deum* and the *Litany* alone than is commonly found in two Presbyterian Services. All these Services, confession, supplication and thanksgiving, creed, psalm and sacrament, are preaching the Gospel; and to ears attuned to them, and hearts in sympathy, are preaching it with a tenderness, a pathos, a power which is not so often found in the elaborate Sunday morning's sermon."

Churchmen frequently meet with those who object to our manner of public worship because it is according to a fixed and established order. They urge, and perhaps with some force, all that can be said in favor of what is called extemporaneous prayer is an argument against a fixed form and order in the public worship of the Lord's House. A man may, with good reason, claim a place for extemporaneous prayer. But more manifold yet are the reasons for a fixed order of prayer in the public worship of God. Such an order alone makes common prayer possible at all. But it is said that we have particular needs for which no prayer book or manual of devotion can possibly provide. No doubt we have. And yet particular needs are not general needs. Extemporaneous prayer has its own place, a rightful and important place. Still that place is not in public worship. Every earnest soul, no doubt, knows personal sins and necessities of which nothing is said in any book of prayer. No, nor need be said. The closet is the place for that. Let the soul bring all its needs to God. Let the Christian pour out his heart to a listening Lord. He may do it in mental prayer—prayer without words, or extemporaneous prayer, prayer that takes any words that express the soul's need. Every man has his own environment, his own needs and hopes and fears. What therefore is commonly called extemporaneous prayer has its legitimate and very necessary place. But that place is the closet, where alone with himself and his Maker, the Christian kneels before the

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