

and such preparation is of great moment, if we would acquit ourselves suitably. Wise and skilful musicians will always tune their instruments before the concert begins. Forins, also, are better adapted to the spirit of *Light and Intelligence*, by which our devotions should ever be characterized; for prayer is the discourse of an intelligent creature with his God; not the mummery of ignorance, but high converse with the glorious Supreme. And as words are necessary to it, to fix the attention, to excite the zeal, and to interest the imagination and senses in these spiritual sacrifices, so ought the matter and words of the prayer to be thoroughly understood; an advantage which frequently is wanted in extemporaneous prayer, as often not only is the meaning of the person who offers such prayer not perfectly comprehended till his sentence be finished, but sometimes there are things uttered, to which, after due consideration, we could not repeat the cordial Amen. The service which God requires, is 'a reasonable service'—we must pray with 'the *Understanding*' as well as with the heart. The mere novelty or peculiarity of expression frequently so delights the fancy, and awakens the passions, as to afford pleasurable sensations, which if they were duly scrutinized and brought to the unerring test, would prove to be neither more nor less than mere *theatrical emotion*; whilst when this is wanting, the extemporaneous prayer is generally accounted so dull, that it is painfully irksome; its wearisome length is complained of—A sound argument for the employment of a liturgy, may be derived from necessity. The *meanness of talent* possessed by some ministers, renders it needful that such helps should be afforded them for the edification of the church. It is an old proverb, 'Omne genus habet suum vulgum,' (every profession has its little men.) As then there is a great disparity in the endowment of mankind, as in everything few only can excel; so to guard against what is so common in most congregations, the bringing into contempt this most sacred exercise, a prescribed liturgy is rendered necessary.

The ever-varying frames and feelings of men also require it. Since the best, the most learned and talented, sometimes find themselves in an unfit state of mind for such an exercise as extemporaneous prayer; for besides slight bodily ailments and contingencies of human life, there are many circumstances, such as the weight and temperature of the atmosphere, some unaccountable depression of spirits, extreme nervous excitement, together with other causes, which operate to unhinge the mind, as all must acknowledge; indeed those who are reputed to excel most in the gift of prayer, often are the first to admit it; therefore, in such cases, a liturgy must be highly necessary. The *corruptions and depravity* of the human heart no less enforce it. For as the excitement produced by a large assembly sometimes causes the minister to enlarge with great fluency, and produces much fervour of temper; so does this frequently minister no small occasion to temptation—to spiritual pride and display. The pleasure felt by the ingenuity excited in such engagements, is very frequently mistaken for high communion with heaven, when, in fact, it is no other than a carnal pleasure, such as is experienced by the poet or composer, whose 'eye is in a fine phrensy rolling.' This has been lamented as a source of trouble in their self-examination, by the most godly and talented men, they have confessed that it excited doubts in their minds relative to their true standing before God; since they seldom felt equal excitement and enlargement in the private exercises of devotion. The *decencies and order of public worship* requires it. It is acknowledged on all sides, that there are frequently many breaches in decorum, arising from the crudities, to say the best of them, sometimes uttered in extemporaneous prayer, the ridiculous expressions sometimes vented; and with some, the impertinent modes of address to the Deity, and also, attempts at finery of language and display. There are serious persons, not only laymen, to whom an appeal could be made, (who cannot endure a liturgy,) who have often confessed that some *eminently popular preachers* in the present day, excite so much their utter loathing and disgust, with their attempts at saying fine things, and uttering far-fetched words in their prayers, that instead of feeling any thing akin to devotion in listening to such gaudy and meretricious performances, they only sin in going to listen to them at all. In fine, the *unity of the faith* requires it. There is no way in which a man can more easily instruct his auditors in his peculiar tenets than in extemporaneous prayer. Few persons in public possess, or, to say the least, exercise any other talent than what has been termed '*preaching prayer*;' and when heterodox men wish insidiously to instil their sentiments upon religion, it will be found that in such a way they most effectually succeed. The fearful and pestilential heresies, now so widely prevalent, afford ample proof upon this subject. A liturgy prevents such a mode of teaching; it secures the true knowledge of orthodox doctrines; and the man in the pulpit will be afraid to give the lie to the man in the desk. Hence, most of the Reformed Presbyterian Churches have had liturgies compiled for them; although, for the most part, they have sunk into disuse. History informs us of a variety of different liturgies used in various churches from the earliest days of Christianity. Even the French and Dutch Churches had theirs. Calvin used a form of prayer himself, and composed one for the Sunday service, which was afterwards established at Geneva. In

his letter to the Lord Protector, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, he thus writes:—'For so much as concerns the forms of prayers and ecclesiastical rites, I highly approve that it be determined, so as it may not be lawful for the ministry in their administration to vary from it.'

Here the editor of the Protestant Episcopalian observes, to our liturgy Mr. B. gives the preference above all others; above the English, on account of the improvements we have made in it. His letter on this subject he entitles '*Surpassing Excellence of the American Liturgy*.' And most excellent and most beautiful it is—who, that makes a fair and honest trial of it, does not find it such? elegant, yet grand; sublime, yet plain—fervent, yet chastened—the brightest censer the church has ever had for her fragrant devotions; one voice, yet the voice of multitudes—one sacrifice of prayer and praise, yet the fruit of many lips and many hearts. In this beautiful liturgy all the worshippers take their part; every one is engaged; instead of leaving it to their minister, as their proxy, to offer up for them alone the sacrifice, the meanest, as well as the highest of the assembly, participates therein; the babe who can but lisp the praise of the Most High, as well as the hoary pilgrim whose head has been silvered over by time, all blend their voices in the solemn exercise, and uttering their different parts and alternate responses, feel an equal interest in the same important engagements, presenting an image of that blissful state, when the multitude 'out of every nation, kindred, and tongue' offer their united homage—where, loud as the sound of many waters and the voice of mighty thunders, they tender one song of praise to the Lamb. What sins can we be chargeable with, but in it are confessed! What lusts torment us, but in it are deplored? What evil can we dread, but in it is deprecated? What blessing can we desire, but in it is acknowledged? What hope can we cherish, but in it is uttered? In a word, there is no situation in which we can be placed, no character or relation we can sustain, no difficulty we may encounter, no affliction we may experience, no burden under which we may groan, but we find language therein in which our complaint is vented before God. There is no desire we can cherish, whether for time or eternity—for pardon, for peace, for purity, but is thereby presented before God. There is no pleasurable delight we can experience, whether of temporal prosperity or spiritual joy, but we have language put into our lips suited to our case. It seems as if the wisdom of the best and holiest of men had been concentrated to construct this beautiful liturgy; as if like Solomon of old, who brought from Paros its marble, from Lebanon its cedars, from Ophir its gold, from Egypt its linen, from India its jewels, from Arabia its perfume, from Tyre its purple and its workmen, and indeed from all the world its choicest materials, to construct and embellish a magnificent temple; it seems as if like him, the compilers of this liturgy had searched every clime and country, had examined every case and condition of mankind, and then that from all, and for all, they had constructed this apt, symmetrical, and comprehensive service for the temple of Messiah.

"A sacred fervour pervades the whole, not the wild fire of fanaticism, but of sober, serious piety; it resembles not a fire of straw blazing with fury, and as transient too, but the sacred flame kindled from on high on the altar of the tabernacle, pure, steady, and constant, ascending acceptably unto God."

The concluding remarks of our author are particularly worthy of the reader's attention.—'Fully am I aware that the majority of Presbyterians have never examined impartially both sides of the question. I speak from experience. Never, till my arrival in this country, had I fully done so myself. I have conversed with many of the laity among Presbyterians in this country, who have read the works of the Presbyterian advocates referred to in these letters, and who have told me how triumphantly they refuted their opponents; yet not one of whom, upon seriously questioning them, but admitted to me they had never read a single work on the opposite side. Perhaps I should not err, if I said also, that very many of the clergy, in this respect, closely resemble them. And this I say, not by way of reproach to them, for well I know they consider (as once the writer did,) that it would be time lost to examine the arguments adduced by the opponents of a system which they fully believe to be divinely instituted; they act from the deep convictions of their consciences. Whilst, then, I also most conscientiously withdraw myself from their communion, still will I enshrine their names in my heart,—I will hail them as my fellow Christians,—I will rejoice in their success in winning souls from the common enemy, and directing them to Christ, as alone, the Saviour, I will take as mine the motto of an ancient Bishop:—'In necessariis, unitas; in non necessariis, libertas; in omnibus, charitas.' In things necessary, unity; in things unnecessary, liberty; in all things, charity.

Yours &c.

C.

Golden Sentences.—God takes men's hearty wishes and will instead of the deed; when they have not the power to fulfill it; but He never took the bare deed instead of the will.

Only the power that makes a world can make a Christian.

For the Colonial Churchman.

THE HUMBLE PASTOR AND HIS FAITHFUL FLOCK.

Concluded.

Thanks be to God, who giveth evermore
The victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Thus by grace restored

Unto His favour, even from the dust,
Thou shalt be raised again, to join the good and just.

Bernard Barton.

While the rapid and sure progress in civilization and improvement which Oberlin had effected in the once neglected and destitute Steintal, caused general astonishment and admiration, the holy duties of the Parish Priest engrossed his anxious care. He erected a school house in each of the fine villages, principally at his own risk, though his income was limited to but 1000 francs, (£45.) As difficulties increased, he would say—"I have confidence in the goodness of our heavenly Father, and am convinced that if I ask for any thing with faith, and it really is right that it should take place, it will infallibly be granted to prayers." The event fulfilled his hopes, for soon the parishioners afforded ready aid towards the erecting the necessary buildings, and his Strasburg friends provided funds for libraries and prizes. He instructed the teachers, and established the first Infant Schools on record.

In the fifteenth year of his ministry, (1782) the zealous pastor established among his faithful flock, the '*Christian Society*,' which beneficially continued eighteen months. Among the rubrics were the following:—

We are all one in Christ Jesus. Abide in him: Christ is all and in all. Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. Search the Scriptures diligently. Endeavour to promote the happiness of all. Appropriate part of your earnings, at stated intervals, to the public good. The injunction of St. Paul (I Corinth. x. 31)—'Do all to the glory of God,' afforded the grand moving point of his words and actions—although he entirely renounced any merit in himself. May thy virtues, good humble man! stimulate our imitation!

In 1784, death parted the pastor from his faithful Made'ine, after an happy union of 15 years. Seven children mourned with him. He deeply felt this bereavement, though he did not 'refuse to be comforted;' and found, that his God is indeed and in truth, 'the God of consolation.' Frequently was he heard to express the hope, that 'the world in which God would reunite him to his beloved wife, would soon open to him also.

Nor time nor death shall ever part them more!

At length came the awful and turbulent four years of the French Revolution, during which Oberlin, with the rest of the clergy, was deprived of his scanty allowance—so that in the year 1790, the most self-denying efforts of his affectionate people, could raise for him but 400 francs (£18)—but to this 10 or 12 pupils from the cities made some addition. But his treasure was in Heaven, and he shone even 'brighter in affliction's night.' The horrors of the reign of terror 'spread (like the sirocco of the desert) devastation, famine and dismay.' But the Ban de la Roche, with its humble pastor, seemed to be alone a harbour of comparative peace. Although throughout France, every kind of worship was interdicted, and the clergy imprisoned, yet Oberlin was allowed unmolested to minister to his people, and to those who flocked to this remarkable ark of refuge. He was the dove holding forth the olive-branch of peace. The tolerance of this pious worthy was equal to his benevolence,—'This is the dedication that I so much desire every soul,' [thus he wrote] 'in my parish, might join to make even the surrender of himself to Jesus, each one as he is, with all his faults, all his sins, in order to find in Him—pardon, righteousness sanctification and redemption.' Even so, reader! his must be your dedication, if you would be saved.

As a peace-maker too, Oberlin eminently shone, for his exertions quieted a dispute between his people and their Seigneurs which 80 years of litigation had left in doubt. His agricultural skill was acknowledged by the Paris Agricultural Society, which awarded him a golden medal, and he constantly wore the deco-