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COMPENSATIONS OF SORROW.

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THE best part of our experience is not enjoyment but suffering. Our highest happiness comes not with laughter, but through tears. There are those who live only on the surface of life, whose hearts strike no roots deeper than the thin surface-soil which every passing storm washes or drives away, and leaves an unfruitful earthy clay beneath; and such persons, who live to eat and drink and be merry, may have no knowledge, and may desire no knowledge, of what we are now saying. To them the house of mourning is the house of mourning and nothing else. They shun it as a pestilence, and have nothing to learn there which their selfish and worldly nature is capable of learning. Pleasure and happiness are to them words of the same meaning; suffering and evil are but the same idea. It is not for them, nor to them, that we speak. We speak to those who have gone down into the depth of sorrow, but even there have been able to cry out unto the living God. We speak to those who are at

least prepared to understand that the baptism of tears may be that which fits us for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We ask, therefore, appealing to our own experience and to theirs, whether we cannot distinctly trace a great part of what is noblest and best to what we have suffered. Has it been the prosperity or the adversity of life which has ministered most truly to our manliness of thought, to our love of virtue, to our capacity of real enjoyment? Let us take this question with us in the retrospect of the last ten years, for example, and try the good and evil of life by this practical test. Out of that experience could we now best afford to lose the working of our joys or of our sorrows? Has pleasure or pain done the most for us? Has the house of mourning or the house of feasting taught us the most? From what source have our noblest thoughts come? How have the purest affections been cultivated? If we are conscious that our love of virtue is stronger than it was, and that we are learning to live more habitually in the divine presence, have we learned it in the time of vigorous health, or upon the bed of sickness? Has God ever seemed so near to us as in the chamber of death? Has eternity ever been so real as when we have returned from standing at the open grave? Could we have known how much we loved those whom God had given, unless He had taken them away? Could we love those who are left with the same disinterested, prayerful, religious affection that we now feel, if we had not been taught to love them for eternity as well as for the present world?

We think that these questions lead us to a true answer. Our hearts may struggle against it, because of their weakness; but our profoundest experience teaches its truth. There is almost no really valuable experience, almost no

enduring and real good, which does not come through the ministry of pain and suffering. The cross which we bear is that which raises us to heaven.

We have seen a family dwelling under the light of unclouded prosperity, where the radiance of Christian love has also been found. They have rejoiced together in the enjoyment of God's gifts, without forgetting to thank Him as the giver. They have understood, as far as possible, the greatness of their blessings in remaining together a whole family, and a part of their daily prayer has been that they might always be spared the pain of bereavement. It would seem that they did not need the hand of chastisement, or the discipline of suffering, either to confirm their mutual love, or to bring them nearer to God. And yet even in a Christian family like this, when death has entered there, and some one of the dear household has been taken, it has proved to be a new revelation of God, and of their Saviour, and of their own hearts, to themselves. In all their religion they had not known before how completely man depends upon God. They had not known how absolutely essential to the human soul is the thought of the divine presence. They had not understood either the words or the character of Jesus. They had not known the depth of their own souls, nor the strength of their own affections. That one new experience has made all things new. The spiritual nature, although before recognized, now first appears in its true dignity, and for the first time they thoroughly understand that the real use of the present world is to educate the soul for heaven. They loved each other before, but new tenderness is now added to their love. Their kindness becomes more thoughtful, their affection more disinterested. They feel their de-

pendence upon each other more deeply, and watch over each other with silent, inexpressible love.

The fond union of youthful hearts seem very close, and causes them to dwell in an elysium of joy; but the husband and wife seldom know how much they love each other until they mourn together, weeping for their children because they are not.

How quickly are the little dissensions and variances of life stilled by the presence of death! How sternly is selfishness rebuked, and with what yearning of the heart towards Heaven is the resolution made to become more tender, more affectionate, more gentle, and more faithful in the whole conduct of life!

Such is the natural influence of sorrow shared in common. Hearts which rejoice cannot come so near to each other as hearts which grieve. Tears mingle more perfectly than smiles, and the chain of family love on earth becomes much stronger when some one of its links are in heaven.

If this be true, the house of mourning may be better than the house of feasting, and they who sow in tears may reap in joy. Not only as a preparation for the future, but even in this world, our sum of happiness may be increased by sorrow. We do not speak ignorantly nor coldly, nor as those who never felt the agony of bereavement. We know what it is to look upon the dying child, and to watch over the parent's failing strength. We know how deep the grave seems when open to receive those whom we love. But we also know that in the severest grief we bear, if we hold to our Christian faith and continue in the performance of our duty, we are coming nearer to God, nearer to him who suffered on the cross, nearer to those

who live, nearer to those who die. Except the grain of corn fall into the ground and die, it cannot spring forth into life. And until these poor human hearts have been buried under grief, their best affections cannot be developed in their divinest strength.

It is true, therefore, that our real happiness may become greater by its seeming diminution. We say it with hesitation, and almost with trembling; yet it is true. It is true, not only as an abstract proposition, but as a practical experience. Not by the number of our blessings, nor by their greatness, but by our capacity of enjoying them, is our daily happiness to be measured. If you would make men contented with their lot, the better plan sometimes is not to increase, but to diminish their store. They are discontented because they have too much. Take away one half, and they will learn to enjoy the rest better than they had ever enjoyed the whole. Cheerfulness of heart is often prompted by lessening the outward sources of delight, and compelling the heart to be the source of cheerfulness to itself. If we were required to name, among all whom we have known, those who have retained the most perfect cheerfulness and sweetness of temper, we should probably name some whose lives have been the continual experience of pain and suffering. Let there be Christian faith as the foundation, and in almost any given case, if our object were to train a human soul to habitual contentment and cheerfulness, and therefore to the enjoyment of life, the better course would be to place it under the discipline, not of unvaried prosperity, but of frequent pain and loss, and sometimes of severe suffering and bereavement. It is one of the sublime mysteries of the soul, that out of weakness we are thus

made strong, that out of darkness springs forth the light. Why, then, should we shrink [from sorrow as if it were calamity? Why should the house of mourning be to us the house of misery and despair? We know that there is an instinctive love of enjoyment and ease. Laughter seems pleasantest, and joy is most attractive. It would be unnatural and hypocritical to say that we desire affliction; and it is right to avoid sorrow and loss whenever we can do so in the strict performance of our duty. To court misfortune, or foolishly to incur loss, would prevent the instruction which should come from the discipline of life. The feeling that we have done our best to avert calamity is needful to the efficacy of the trial. And so it is written of the Saviour himself, that he prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and then added, "If it may not pass from me unless I drink it, thy will, not mine, be done." But, to avoid sorrow by the use of proper and just means, and to pray for our deliverance from it, is a very different thing from that dread of sorrow, that shrinking from it as if it were an absolute evil, which is unchristian distrust in God. However stern affliction may seem in its first coming, it soon wears a reconciling face, and whispers a benediction to the believing heart. We may feel the burden that we bear, and for a time bend under its oppressive weight, but still be daily learning the infinite truth, which changes earth to heaven, that all things work together for the good of those who love God.

Of those who love God. Let these words be observed, for they contain, not only encouragement, but also warning. The discipline of life is not compulsion, but discipline. Only to him who asks shall it be given. Pros-

perity does not always harden, affliction does not always soften, the heart. The sorrow which God sends is intended to make us pure, to exalt, to strengthen, to ennoble us. But we may turn it to the gall of bitterness, and, instead of purifying, it may burn the heart, and harden it in selfish grief. There is no possible discipline under which we can be compelled into goodness. Our work cannot be done for us, and the outward circumstances of life, whether of joy or sorrow, can minister to the soul only according to our willingness, under the grace of God, to be instructed. We need, therefore, in the time of prosperity, and before grief has entered in, to recognise the love of God in the blessings he bestows, in order to understand it in their removal. Thus would our enjoyment be doubly blest, and the severest grief would find its consolation.

The discipline is therefore of God's appointing, but its use, for good or evil, is our own. To-day we dwell in the house of feasting; to-morrow, in the house of mourning. That is not for us, but for God, to determine. But, under God, it is for us to say whether it shall be better for us, according to the Scripture, or not. Sorrow is almost sure to come. We cannot, and hereafter we shall thank God that we cannot avoid it. Receive it as the discipline of parental love, and it will, at the same time, enlarge the happiness of earth, and smooth the way to heaven. The blessing upon those who mourn is a real benediction, and the alleviations of sorrow become a heavenly compensation.

Why, then, art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance and my God,

ANCIENT METHODS OF WORSHIP:

NOTES OF A DISCOURSE,

Preached in the Unitarian Church, Montreal, in April last, by Rev. J. Cordner.

"And all the people said Amen, and praised the Lord."—1 CHRON. xvi. 36.

If we were required to point out, amid the multiplied monuments of human civilization, what it was which most eminently distinguished the human being from all other earthly creatures, should we not at once say it was his temples of worship? A temple of worship is a standing monument of man's faith in a Superior Power, and of his aspiration to serve God. It has a significance peculiarly its own. It is not only an indication of man's desire to seek and serve God, but to do so, not in an isolated way merely, but in company with his fellows.

The earth can present no sublimer spectacle than that of an assembly of people engaged in intelligent and devout worship of God. And if we use the time of our discourse this morning in looking back at some of the ancient methods of worship in the assembly or congregation, we may at once satisfy a legitimate curiosity, and gain some serviceable information. The forms of one age may be quite unfit as forms for another age. A sincere and genuine worship will, from time to time, and as circumstances change and require it, find out the forms most fitting for itself. A sincere and genuine worship will not be tied inevitably and eternally to any formula of outward expression. But we are properly interested in the

past, since the present is the providential outgrowth therefrom. And, moreover, in every expression and development of the past, we must see the working of some prevailing or universal principle, which we are called on to respect now, and at all times.

The particular point to which I would direct attention now is:— that the worship of the assembly or congregation is a *common worship*— that it has been so accepted and understood in time past, and that it still must be so accepted and understood. It was designed for all to unite in, and has been so received and complied with. When the Christians first assembled in congregation, their organization and service were formed on the model of the synagogue. The apostles and first converts were synagogue worshippers. They had prayed with Jesus in the synagogue, and had heard many of his discourses delivered there. See Luke iv. 15, 16, and elsewhere. Now the Jews from the earliest times had recognised the obligation of joining in the common worship of the congregation, and of joining in it audibly. It is a saying among them to this day, that no man should say *Amen* to his own blessing; and by the requirement of his ritual the Jewish minister cannot do so— he is prohibited. This utterance or solemn confirmation of the prayer, being left to the congregation. It is a rule laid down by authority, that if an unworthy person should read the prayers, the congregation should not respond *Amen*— the lack of such response in such a case being a sentence of unworthiness on the person officiating.

The writings of the Old Testament—both the Law and the Psalms— show us how ancient the custom is. See Deut. xxvii 15, etc., Psalm cvi. 48, and elsewhere. A

reference to the Psalms will show us, also, a responsive element in their songs of praise. We find some of the Psalms constructed on the plan of a repeating hemistich, — that is, where the verses are each divided into two parts, and the latter made to repeat the former, as in Psalm xxiv. and elsewhere. We find some constructed also with what seems to be a common chorus alternating, as in Psalm cviii. and elsewhere.

Competent and reliable scholars affirm that a “regular formula of prayer for the Jewish nation must be dated from the Babylonian captivity and the time of Ezra.” It is also affirmed by competent scholars, Hebrew and Christian, that certain formulas still included in the Jewish Liturgies of the present day were in use during the time of the second Temple. “They are all composed in the plural number, and use general expressions as being intended chiefly for joint worship.” In these Liturgies, then, are prayers to which, possibly, our Saviour and his apostles once said *Amen* in the Synagogues of Judea and Galilee.

From the “Church- and House-Book of the Ancient Christians,” which has been brought tolerably clearly to light by the patient and laborious industry of modern scholars, we are furnished with a picture of the congregational worship of the early believers. Here it is:—

FIRST PART.

PREPARATORY SERVICE, OR SERVICE OF THE CATECHUMENS.

Accessible also to the Hearers, who are learning the Word, but have not yet taken the sacred Pledge, and therefore do not belong to the Communion of the Believers.

A Psalm of the Old (or New ?) Testament sung in the antiphonic Manner of the Hebrew poetry, according to Hemistichs.

Or also an Act of Humiliation and Confession.

The Doxology, or the Praise, at the end of a Psalm :

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Or,

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Or,

Glory be to the Father in (or through) the Son, and through the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Canticle of the Old Testament.

Or a Christian Hymn or Sacred Song.

Lesson from the Old Testament.

Lesson from the New Testament.

Homily, or Explanation of Scripture, especially of the Gospel, and Exhortation to Christian Faith and Life.

Dismissal of the Catechumens or Hearers, with Blessing.

SECOND PART.

THE SERVICE OF THE BELIEVERS, OR SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING.

(*Eucharist.*)

The Oblation, or Placing of Bread and Wine (and First-fruits) on the Communion Table.

Generally a Word of *Admonition* premised, as :

No Profane !

Wisdom !

The mutual *Salutation* of Bishop (or Presbyters) and People :

The Lord be with you :

And with thy Spirit.

The *Preface*, or Introduction to the Thanksgiving for the Gifts of God and for Christ's Redemption :

Lift up your Hearts :

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord :

It is meet and right so to do.

The *Prayer of Thanksgiving* : either only

The Lord's Prayer,

to which, for that purpose, the following Doxology or concluding Praise was added, with the usual Response :

**For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory,
for ever and ever.**

[Or,

For Thine is the Power for ever and ever.]

Amen.

Or, besides, a free Prayer of the Bishop or Elder, praising God's Benefits from the Creation of the World, and asking his Blessing for the Communicants.

(The Words of the Institution formed no necessary part of this Prayer of consecration, but may have been historically recited.)

The Communion of all the Believers present, taken both in the Bread and in the Cup.

Antiphonic Verses used before the Communion, according to the Custom of the Church.

The *Cherubic Hymn*, or *Trisagion*, from Isaiah :

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord the God of Sabaoth.

Heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory.

After this Verse, or perhaps originally instead of it, was sung :

The Hymn of Thanksgiving, or the Morning Hymn.

Other Antiphonic Verses used before the Communion.

Hosanna to the Son of David :

Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

Or,

God is the Lord :

Who was made manifest to us in the Flesh.

Or, Exhortations and Admonitions to the Congregation :

He who is Holy, let him draw near :

If he is not, let him become so through Penitence.

Or,

This is Maranatha ! (the Lord cometh.)

After the Communion.

Prayer of Thanksgiving, for the Benefit and Grace received (sometimes the Lord's Prayer with Doxology used at this place.)

The Dismissal of the Congregation with the Blessing.*

Justin Martyr [2nd century] gives this account of the worship of his time:—

On the day of the Sun, as it is called, (Sunday) there is a meeting together in one place of all who dwell in the cities or in the country, and the Memoirs by the Apostles, or writings of the Prophets, are read for a sufficient time. Then, when the reader has finished, the person presiding makes an address, exhorting to an imitation of those good things. Afterwards we all rise together, and pray. Then prayer being ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and in like manner the president offers prayer and thanks, according to his ability, and the people express their assent by saying *Amen*.

The simple Liturgies of these early Christians became in the course of time very much complicated and grossly corrupted, and mainly through this, says an eminent Christian scholar, that the service "was changed from a congregational act in which the people took an integral part, into a clerical one with low prayers and mumblings." So grossly were the Liturgies corrupted, and so far was their primitive force and meaning destroyed, and such was the intolerance resorted to in enforcing them, that, after the reformation, a large section of the Protestants were led in course of time to set aside the use of fixed forms altogether, and throw themselves entirely on the spontaneous and unaided utterance of the individual minister, so far as the expression of prayer is concerned. The most important Liturgy after the Reformation was that of

* See "The Liturgy, or General Order of the Service," Book III. of "Church- and House-Book of the Ancient Christians," printed in third volume of Bunsen's *Hippolytus and his Age*.

the Church of England, with which we are all more or less acquainted. It still preserves for modern Protestant worship some of the richest devotional language of the ancient church, but it also preserves many of the corruptions of the Christian doctrine. Its compilation was a matter of compromise. The English Church and nation being at the time but imperfectly protestantised, much was conceded to the papal notions and prepossessions of a large portion both of clergy and people. Hence the widely differing parties now in the Anglican Church — some so close to the papacy that they require little more than a formal recognition of the Pope to render it complete ; and some, again, so thoroughly protestant as to resist the authority of both their rubric and their bishop. The length and rigidity of the Anglican ritual caused much offence in England, and it brought forth much suffering there to multitudes eminent for their piety and learning. Its universal imposition in its entire strictness drove large numbers of the most worthy ministers from their parishes and people, and created a feeling of hostility to the national church, which has not wholly been got rid of to this day. Notwithstanding its many faults, it is undeniably a compilation of great and signal excellence, and it is the deservedly valued Church- and House-Book of several millions of Protestant Christians.

The Anglican Liturgy aims to include the whole congregation in the public act of worship — permitting and requiring them to participate in the audible expression and confirmation of the prayer. The fatal objection to it, taken as a whole, is its rigidity — allowing no free and spontaneous expression. The Church in Scotland, after the death of John Knox, permitted his Liturgy to fall

into disuse, and the General Assembly, about the middle of the seventeenth century, accepted the Formulary drawn up by the Westminster Divines, called "the Directory for the Public Worship of God." This it required to be printed, and a copy "provided and kept for use in every kirk in the kingdom." This Formulary, which is still in authority in the Scottish Church, prescribes the mode of the congregation's assembling, the manner and matter of reading, the matter and method of prayer, the method and substance of preaching, the manner and kind of singing, and the mode of administering the ordinances and other services, such as marriage, visiting the sick, and burial of the dead. The Scottish Formulary has an advantage over the English one in not binding the minister constantly to the use of its precise form of words. It aims rather at giving him a framework which he may fill up with words of his own, as he is moved, and according to his gifts. The only part of it which appears to include all the people in any audible expression is that which relates to the singing of the Psalms. Here it prescribes that where the congregation cannot read, the Psalm is to be given out line by line, so that all may be enabled to join in it.

I have now glanced at some of the ancient and modern forms of the public worship of God. In those which we have noticed we have seen that the act of worship was formally recognised and confessed by some audible expression as the common act of all the people present. There is danger to be apprehended in receding totally from this ground, as the lack of seemly order in some places testifies. So obviously has this shown itself in some quarters, that suggestions for liturgical services have been made by

some even among the Congregationalists and Baptists of the United States. I do not think it desirable to fix rigid formularies of prayer on any congregation of people. In such a case, where a devoted and faithful man serves, I am sure much devout and helpful utterance of the free spirit is checked. For my own part, I do not think I could minister to my own satisfaction under such restrictions. At the same time I think that both pulpit and pews would be aided, the general services rendered more impressive, and the worship of the assembled congregation brought into closer correspondence at once with ancient usage, and with its own fundamental idea, if there were some audible participation on the part of the people in the act—some such participation, for instance, as would be involved in the alternate reading by minister and congregation of some of the beautiful Psalms of the Bible, the occasional expression together of some well ordered form of general supplication, or of the brief and comprehensive formula given by our Lord, and the audible response by the people, in every completed expression of prayer from the pulpit, of the time-honored *Amen* of the Hebrew and the Christian.

I offer this thought as the result of some reflection on the matter. There is nothing more valuable to me, or more highly to be esteemed, than the public worship of of the congregation. This is a day divine. This is a place divine.

“Blest day of God! most calm, most bright!
The first and best of days;
The laborer's rest, the saint's delight,
The day of prayer and praise.”

And we should spare no thought—we should regard no effort too great, by which we might render the services of

the sanctuary more impressive, more edifying, and more true to their fundamental idea as an act of common worship. The baptism of the Spirit ever comes to the devout and waiting heart, and every Christian meeting may become a season of Pentecost.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON LITURGICAL FORMS.

THE term Liturgy signifies a public service. Primarily, in the Greek (*Leitourgia*) it signified a public service of any sort, but more especially one pertaining to the duties or privileges of citizenship. Secondly, in the usage of the Church it came to denote the public service of divine worship, and more especially that of the Eucharist. The first ages of the Church were not ages of printing, nor of writing even, considered as a general attainment. The early Christian teaching was necessarily oral, and among the mass of believers the Lord's Prayer, and primitive Symbols, Doxologies, and the like, would be thus learnt, and committed to memory. No particular mode of worship for the congregation is prescribed in the New Testament writings, and though we may fairly suppose there was a general uniformity among the early worshipping societies, it is equally reasonable to suppose that there were differences in detail. Each Church would naturally fall into the form most fitting for itself which would gradually become fixed. For the sake of convenience the order of service would be written down as a general guide for persons officiating, just as is commonly done at the present day in Congregationalist and Presbyterian Churches. It will be observed that the ancient Liturgy cited in the foregoing discourse is little more than this.

It is difficult to fix the time when the order of service came to be written out for wider distribution. But it is easy to suppose that as new Churches were multiplied the simple order of the older Churches would be adopted, either with or without modifications in detail. There was no authority or constraint in the matter farther than that, which came from the bond of faith and spirit as felt by each congregation. There are upwards of sixty ancient Liturgies of the East extant. This shows the freedom of the separate churches in the early times. As the ages advance the formularies become less pure and simple—more complicate and corrupt. Through love of domination, the more powerful Churches, by stratagem or force, interfered with the freedom of the less powerful; and the various Liturgies of the East were in course of time suppressed by the Byzantine Church, and those of the West by the Roman Church. The Byzantine, or Greek Church, moulded the Churches of the East to its own order of service; and the Roman, or Latin Church moulded the Churches of the West.

When the Reformation came the Roman Liturgy was so complicated and corrupt that the Reformers abjured it and set about constructing a reformed order of service. Luther framed a Liturgy for the help and guidance of the Churches that followed him in the Reformation, but he did not intend, he said, that the whole of Germany should comply with the Wittemburg Order. Other German Churches drew up Liturgies for themselves. Calvin drew up a Liturgy for Geneva, which was followed more or less closely by the churches that received the Reformation through him—those of Holland and France. The Church of England adopted its own order of service

very much as we have it in the Book of Common Prayer, and the Church of Scotland adopted the Liturgy of John Knox.

A Liturgy, as we have already said, in its simple sense signifies a public service ; but when the order of the public service of the Church came to be written down, as it was natural it should, the term was, as naturally, transferred to the written and fixed formulary. And this is the common acceptance of the word in our language. But where the knowledge of Liturgies is not extensive — limited to some local experience of a single Church, or so — there is room for misapprehension and confusion of thought in the use of the term. The Anglican Liturgy, for instance, is perfectly rigid — wholly fixed, *i. e.* entirely Liturgical in the common acceptance — every prayer, form, and movement being printed and made obligatory. But all this is not by any means essential to the idea of a Liturgy. There may be a Liturgy wherein it is made a portion of the fixed order of service that there is to be a part free, *i. e.* non-liturgical, the form not being given in the Liturgy. Such Liturgies have been, in fact, and still are. It will be observed that the ancient Liturgy printed in the foregoing notes recognises and gives place to free prayer. So far as we can discover this was always the case in the most ancient times, the only liturgical formula of prayer then universally adopted being the Lord's Prayer.

The Church of Scotland is the only National Church which has not a Liturgy in the commonly accepted sense of the word. It has, however, the Westminster Directory of Public Worship. This Directory, says Neal, (Hist. Puritans) " passed the assembly with great unanimity ;

those who were for set forms of prayer resolving to confine themselves to the very words of the Directory, while others made use of them only as heads for their enlargement." The blind intolerance of Anglicanism caused its Liturgy to be hated in Scotland, with a hate which has not yet died out. Jenny Geddes still lives among the Presbyterians there, and doubtless her stool could be found again should there be occasion to use it. Among the English Puritans the same intolerant enforcement of the whole Liturgy without any latitude or permitted freedom caused it be rejected and condemned. It came to be hated by them, too, on account of the persecutions associated with it, with a hate which has not yet died out, but which still likewise lives in deeply fixed prejudices. The Puritans did not object to Liturgical forms, but only to the obligatory enforcement of the whole Liturgy as it then stood. Concerning the Puritans of Elizabeth's time, Neal writes that they set forth, *fifthly*, "though they did not dispute the lawfulness of set forms of prayer, provided a due liberty was allowed for prayers of their own before and after sermon, yet they disliked some things in the public Liturgy," etc., etc. Among protestant Dissenters in England the order of service is generally free *i. e.* left to the discretion and special gifts of the officiating minister, controlled only by the prevailing and understood usage of the place. Liturgies, or printed orders of service, however, are used to some extent among the Methodists and Unitarians, and probably among some others. The use of John Wesley's Liturgy is not made obligatory among his people, himself ordering by the 22nd article therein, that "every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things

be done to edification." Among the Unitarians, of course, there can be no authority, and every congregation that uses a Liturgy selects one to suit itself. They are all—Wesley's, Clarke's, Lindsey's, and all—revisions and abridgements of the Anglican Book of common Prayer. Among the English Unitarians, where printed Liturgies are not in use, written forms of prayer are commonly used, which is the case, also, to some extent among the non-subscribing Presbyterians in Ireland. Among the Unitarian Churches of America there are several printed orders of service—that of King's Chapel, Boston, being the oldest. This Church was the first in that city which became Unitarian, and having been Episcopal before its change of sentiment it retained the book of Common Prayer, revising and reforming it, after the manner of Lindsey and Clarke in England, whose corrections were frequently adopted.

In England the demand has been long made for a revision of the National Liturgy. But such changes are not readily made in that country. Occasionally there are vague rumors of Committees of some sort to look into the matter. We have heard recently, however, of strange liberties taken by private persons—sons of the Church of England—even to the production of a "modified Prayer-book" and a "Free Church" Anglican, and of a man of a Sir Culling Eardley's mark writing himself "a non-conforming member of the Church of England." The National Church of Scotland, too, has had its attention turned to the question of Liturgical forms by one of its most conspicuous clergymen—Dr. Cumming of London, aided by one of its most eminent laymen—the Duke of Argyll. The former has edited and revised Knox's

Liturgy, which, he says, has not been rescinded by the Scottish Church, and he states his opinion that its resumption in its revised form by authority of the Church Courts would be highly beneficial. The Duke of Argyll writes that the partial use of Liturgical forms, which, he says, the legislative institutions of Presbytery entitle it to adopt at any moment, would be of great value in engaging the affections of its members. And Dr. Cumming farther states his belief that such a combination of fixed and free prayer as his revised Liturgy presents would be generally acceptable to the Scottish Clergy.

Every Church that has a stated order of service may be said to have a Liturgy. The order of service may include free spoken prayer and praise — it may recognise no other sort of spoken prayer or praise — but in its Psalms and Hymns it will have printed and rhythmical forms, which are adapted to music, and sung. And whatever Psalm or Hymn books are used, may be properly styled Liturgical forms. Thus in Greenwood's Hymn Book, which is used in the Unitarian Church, Montreal, we have a fine form of Invocation in Hymn 59, of Adoration in 79, of Thanksgiving in 140, of Confession in 349, and in Hymn 357 we have a form of Supplication — a Litany for divine help. We point out these examples as almost the first our eye rested on in turning over the leaves of the book. Hymn 83, is Patrick's paraphrase of the noble *Te Deum*, and 374 is Montgomery's paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer. All these are intended for joint singing. The paraphrases are not equal to the originals, yet we can conceive of cases where they would be used, and the original *Te Deum* objected to as a hymn of the sanctuary,

and the original Lord's Prayer objected to as a joint spoken utterance of the whole congregation.

In our modern churches of all denominations there is a great falling off from the practice of joint singing. The result of this is that there is no audible participation whatever on the part of the people in the act of worship. It was with the view of remedying this defect that the suggestion at the close of the foregoing discourse was offered. It was thought that by making some simple addition to the Liturgical element already existing in our churches, and putting it in power of every one who could read or speak, to join audibly in some part of the service some general benefit might be obtained. All such matters, however, are merely secondary, and should still be regarded as such. No change should be attempted through a will of the majority where the minority are dissatisfied. Indeed our own view is, that in such a case the feelings of every separate individual ought to be tenderly respected, and nothing done to hurt the weak, or mar Christian harmony. The simple changes suggested, if candidly considered, universally accepted, sincerely carried out, and devoutly regarded, would in our opinion, be useful to many minds, and helpful to many hearts. But if they cannot be so accepted and regarded, we can easily see how they might become hindrances rather than helps. Better far than any self-willed seeking "to please ourselves" in such a matter, is the generous and gracious spirit which readily prompts "every one of us to please his neighbour for his good to edification."

CUDWORTH ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

*From his Sermon before the British House of Commons,
March, 1647.**

CHRIST came not into the world to fill our heads with mere speculations, to kindle a fire of wrangling and contentious dispute amongst us, and to warm our spirits against one another with nothing but angry and peevish debates, whilst in the mean time our hearts remain all ice within towards God, and have not the least spark of true heavenly fire to melt and thaw them. Christ came not to possess our brains only with some cold opinions, that send down nothing but a freezing and benumbing influence upon our hearts. Christ was *Vita Magister*, not *Scholæ*: and he is the best Christian whose heart beats with the truest pulse towards heaven; not he whose head spinneth out the finest cobwebs.

He that endeavours really to mortify his lusts, and to comply with that truth in his life which his conscience is convinced of, is nearer a Christian, though he never heard of Christ, than he that believes all the vulgar articles of the Christian faith, and plainly denieth Christ in his life.

Surely the way to heaven, that Christ hath taught us, is plain and easy, if we have but honest hearts: we need not many criticisms, many school-distinctions, to come to a right understanding of it. Surely Christ came not to ensnare us and entangle us with captious niceties, or to puzzle our heads with deep speculations, and lead us through hard and craggy notions into the kingdom of

* In the votes of the House it is styled "a pains-taking and heart-searching sermon."

heaven. I persuade myself, that no man shall ever be kept out of heaven for not comprehending mysteries that were beyond the reach of his shallow understanding, if he had but an honest and good heart, that was ready to comply with Christ's commandments. Say not in thine heart, "Who shall ascend into heaven?" that is, with high speculations to bring down Christ from thence; or, "who shall descend into the abyss beneath?" that is, with deep searching thoughts to fetch up Christ from thence: "but lo, the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart."

But I wish it were not the distemper of our times, to scare and fright men only with opinions, and make them only solicitous about the entertaining of this and that speculation, which will not render them any thing the better in their lives, or the liker unto God; whilst in the mean time there is no such care taken about keeping of Christ's commandments, and being renewed in our minds according to the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. We say, Lo, here is Christ, and, Lo, there is Christ, in these and these opinions; whereas in truth Christ is neither here, nor there, nor anywhere, but where the spirit of Christ, where the life of Christ is.

Do we not, now-a-days, open and lock up heaven with the private key of this and that opinion of our own, according to our several fancies, as we please? and if any one observe Christ's commandments never so sincerely, and serve God with faith and a pure conscience, that yet haply skills not of some contended-for opinions, some darling notions, he hath not the right shibboleth, he hath not the true watch-word, he must not pass the guards into heaven. Do we not make this and that opinion, this and

that outward form, to be the wedding-garment, and boldly sentence those to outer darkness that are not invested therewith? Whereas every true Christian finds the least dram of hearty affection towards God to be more cordial and sovereign to his soul than all the speculative notions and opinions in the world: and though he study also to inform his understanding aright, and free his mind from all error and misapprehensions, yet it is nothing but the life of Christ deeply rooted in his heart which is the chymical elixir that he feeds upon. Had he "all faith that he could remove mountains," (as St. Paul speaks) had he "all knowledge, all tongues and languages;" yet he prizeth one dram of love beyond them all. He accounteth him that feeds upon mere notions in religion to be but an airy chameleon-like Christian. He findeth himself now otherwise rooted and centred in God, than when he did before merely contemplate and gaze upon him; he tasteth and relisheth God within himself; he hath *quendam saporem Dei*, a certain savour of him; whereas before he did but rove and guess at random at him. He feeleth himself safely anchored in God, and will not be dissuaded from it, though perhaps he skill not many of those subtilties which others make the Alpha and Omega of their religion. Neither is he scared with those childish affrightments with which some would force their private conceits upon him; he is above the superstitious dreading of mere speculative opinions, as well as the superstitious reverence of outward ceremonies: he cares not so much for subtilty, as for soundness and health of mind. And indeed, as it was well spoken by a noble philosopher, that "without purity and virtue God is nothing but an empty name;" so it is as true here, that without obedience to

Christ's commandments, without the life of Christ dwelling in us, whatsoever opinions we entertain of him, Christ is but only named by us, he is not known.

I speak not here against a free and ingenuous enquiry into all truth, according to our several abilities and opportunities; I plead not for the captivating and intralling of our judgments to the dictates of men; I do not disparage the natural improvement of our understanding faculties by true knowledge, which is so noble and gallant a perfection of the mind; but the thing which I aim against is, the dispiriting of the life and vigour of our religion by dry speculations, and making it nothing but a mere dead skeleton of opinions, a few dry bones without any flesh and sinews tied up together, and the misplacing of all our zeal upon an eager prosecution of these, which should be spent to better purpose upon other objects.

Knowledge indeed is a thing far more excellent than riches, outward pleasures, worldly dignities, or any thing else in the world besides holiness, and the conformity of our wills to the will of God: but yet our happiness consisteth not in it, but in a certain divine temper and constitution of a soul which is far above it.

But it is a piece of that corruption that runneth through human nature, that we naturally prize truth more than goodness; knowledge more than holiness. We think it a gallant thing to be fluttering up to heaven with our wings of knowledge and speculation: whereas the highest mystery of a divine life here, and of perfect happiness hereafter, consisteth in nothing but mere obedience to the divine will. Happiness is nothing but that inward sweet delight that will arise from the harmonious agreement between our wills and God's will.

There is nothing contrary to God in the whole world, nothing that fights against him, but self-will. This is the strong castle that we all keep garrisoned against heaven in every one of our hearts, which God continually layeth siege unto: and it must be conquered and demolished, before we can conquer heaven. It was by reason of this self-will that Adam fell in Paradise; that those glorious angels, those morning stars, kept not their first station, but dropt down from heaven like falling stars, and sunk into this condition of bitterness, anxiety, and wretchedness in which now they are. They all entangled themselves with the length of their own wings, they would needs will more and otherwise than God would will in them: and going about to make their wills wider, and to enlarge them into greater amplitude, the more they struggled, they found themselves the faster pinioned, and crowded up into narrowness and servility; insomuch that now they are not able to use any wings at all, but, inheriting the serpent's curse, can only creep with their bellies upon the earth. Now our only way to recover God and happiness again is, not to soar up with our understandings, but to destroy this self-will of ours; and then we shall find our wings to grow again, our plumes fairly spread, and ourselves raised aloft into the free air of perfect liberty, which is perfect happiness.

There is nothing in the whole world able to do us good or hurt but God and our own will; neither riches nor poverty, nor disgrace nor honour, nor life nor death, nor angels nor devils; but willing or not willing as we ought to do. Should hell itself cast all its fiery darts against us, if our will be right, if it be informed by the divine will, they can do us no hurt: we have then (if I may so speak)

an enchanted shield that is impenetrable, and will bear off all. God will not hurt us, and hell cannot hurt us, if we will nothing but what God wills. Nay, then we are acted by God himself, and the whole divinity floweth in upon us; and when we have cashiered this self-will of ours, which did but shackle and confine our souls, our wills shall then become truly free, being widened and enlarged to the extent of God's own will. "Hereby we know that we know Christ indeed," not by our speculative opinions concerning him, but by our keeping of his commandments.

PROPOSED REVISION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

IN the ordinary reports of the British House of Commons in August last, we find the following notice of motion:—

"THE BIBLE.—Mr. Heywood gave notice that next session he would address the Crown, praying that her Majesty will be graciously pleased to appoint a commission to inquire into the state of the authorised version of the Bible, and to prepare a plan for the further revision of that translation."

Commenting on this notice, a writer in the London Inquirer says:—

"The present authorised version was made in James's reign, by a body of scholars chosen from the universities, and appointed to their task by a similar commission. That commission, indeed, was not issued at the request of Parliament, but in answer to a petition from a body of clergymen. But, under the altered circumstances of the times, Parliament is the proper body to ask for such a commission, and no member of parliament can so properly move in such a matter as Mr. Heywood, who has been so successful in bringing about a reform of the uni-

versities. We may hope that Mr. Heywood will not find this task so difficult as the last. No vested interests are to be disturbed; no sinecurists will band themselves together to oppose so reasonable a reform. To bring it about, it will be necessary to convince our representatives of what has long been granted by all scholars. The names of Dissenting translators and critics may, perhaps, not carry the weight that they deserve; but clergymen and dignitaries of the Church may be quoted in sufficient number to prove the desirableness of a new public translation. Bishop Newcome, Bishop Lowth, Bishop Pearce, Bishop Marsh, and the celebrated scholar, Dr. Bentley, with many others of equal rank in the Church, may be named as having admitted the faultiness of our present English Bible. Two of our present bishops, Dr. Whately and Dr. Hinds, have given their sanction to a similar move.

Religious errors in a Christian and Protestant country like England, where the Bible is considered the last appeal, are of two classes. One set may be called philosophical errors, and the other textual errors; one set is to be combated by reasoning, and the other by Biblical criticism. And it may be doubted whether any weapon could overthrow so many prejudices as would a new translation of the Bible."

The following remarks on the same very important subject are from the Clerical Journal, a Church of England publication:—

"We have always allowed that our Prayer-book admits of improvements, but have deprecated any change, on account of the state of parties in the Church; and we should adopt the same course in relation to the authorised version of the Scriptures if we thought similar danger was to be apprehended from a revision. But the cases are widely different. While there are sects in England who would probably advocate some little alterations supposed to be favourable to their views, they are too small and unimportant as bodies of men to have any weight against the overwhelming force of the more orthodox parties. The Baptists, for instance, would plead for the word *baptise* to be rendered *dip or immerse*: but we are quite sure that their theology and philology on the subject would be thrown away upon any committee of men likely to be chosen to revise the

English Bible. It so happens that just at this time the great bulk of English Christians are quite disposed to unanimity on all really important matters concerning our translation of the Scriptures, and any labour bestowed upon the subject would be directed to such inaccuracies as are recognised by all, and the correction of which would be a mark of reverence for Divine truth and respectful to the convictions of all thinking men.

Looking at the subject *per se*, it is highly desirable that some alterations should be agreed upon, for the purpose of approximating our version more closely to the inspired originals. Both in this country and in America societies are formed, and in active operation, for the purpose of effecting this object; and it is far better that competent authority should bring the object to pass than that it should be left to a doubtful and perhaps dangerous agitation. At present all parties use the authorised version; but if moderate revision is resisted, it will probably not be long before "improved versions" may be introduced, which would be an evil greatly to be deplored.

In another page we have directed attention to a work by Professor Selwyn, from the preface to which we quote a sentiment which must be re-echoed by all who are competent to form an opinion on the relation of copies and of translations to original documents, especially in the case of the Holy Scriptures:—

There is another cause which has hindered the reception, and in one case even the consideration, of these conjectures; viz., the unwillingness to admit that the received text requires any correction. I need scarcely say, that I consider this as a good principle carried to excess; extending to *copies* made by the hands of man, and therefore liable, like all the works of men, to error and imperfection, that reverence which is due to the authentic Word of God alone. . . . If this be so, the feeling which would lead us to rest contented with an imperfect reading, instead of diligently searching for the true, is rather a too easy confidence than a rational reverence. The analogy of the general Providence of God would lead us to expect, not that the innumerable copies of His Word should by miracle be preserved free from error and blemish, but that the great body of His truth should at all times remain inviolate — containing all things necessary to salvation; yet presenting on its outward surface sufficient traces of human infirmity and error to exercise the dili-

gence and patience of humble inquirers, and to reward them, from time to time, by the removal of such blemishes, and the restoration of the Sacred Text to its original strength and beauty."

BOOK NOTICES.

BEGINNING AND GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, OR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co.

THIS book is published for the Boston Sunday School Society, and, as its title indicates, is designed more especially for those who are interested in Sunday Schools. Its spirit and character are such, however, that it may be profitably read by many others besides — by young persons generally, and by those who are directly interested in the training of the young. It is evidently the production of an intelligent and discerning mind, imbued with the Spirit of the Gospel, convinced of the value of immortal souls, and desirous of guiding them from the beginning in the way of Christ.

The book may be had of Messrs. H. & G. M. Rose, No. 44 Great St. James Street.

THE DISCIPLINE OF SORROW. By Rev. Dr. Eliot of St. Louis. Published by the American Unitarian Association; and for sale in Montreal by H. & G. M. Rose, No. 44 Great St. James Street.

A BRIEF essay in four parts — simple, thoughtful, and thoroughly religious — the flower and fruit of living experience. A child can understand Dr. Eliot's writings, and the full grown man finds in them no lack of solid matter.

EARLY PIETY, OR RECOLLECTIONS OF HARRIET B——. Published by the American Unitarian Association; and sold by H. & G. M. Rose, No. 44 Great St. James Street, Montreal.

A BRIEF and attractive memorial of a thoughtful and conscientious young girl who died at the age of sixteen years. Religion had a deep hold in her heart, yet we do not find in these pages any of those unnatural exaggerations so common in books bearing similar titles.