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ART. I.—THE IDEA OF THE PARABLE.

THE New Testament parable—*παραβολή*, from *παρα*, to or against, and *βάλλω*, to throw, that is, to throw forward or against, to place one thing by the side of another—consists in bodying forth through language a supernatural truth in a natural fact, either actual or supposable. It is the peculiar union of the infinite and finite. The one is the substance, the other the form; the one is the spiritual meaning, the other the verbal expression. The one is a vast profound deep into which the reason may sink by the power of the Spirit, but which it can not fathom; the other a placid beautiful surface, indicating the mystery beneath by the varied rays of light which it reflects. To get an idea of the parable it is necessary, therefore, to apprehend both spheres of being; to stand in the element of the supernatural and invisible by faith, and at the same time to understand, in some measure at least, the natural and visible by means of reflection and study—to be in living sympathy with the spiritual meaning which it bears in itself on the one hand, and on the other, to know the nature of the outward form which its spiritual meaning assumes. As the outward form, however, is the medium through which the internal spiritual meaning addresses the faith and understanding of the Christian, it becomes in turn the medium through which the Christian may approach the internal spiritual meaning; the medium through which he may come to possess the

ment and of the Scriptures generally, and to introduce the reader to the unity and spirit of the sacred books. In this he has been eminently successful, more so than any modern Commentators, German or English. He has an intuitive power of seizing, as if by a sacred sympathy with the mind of the inspired writer, the true vein of his thought. His work is pervaded by a devout spirit and warm glow of a profoundly pious heart. He introduces the reader into the sanctuary of revelation, and makes him exclaim, Here is holy ground, here is the very gate of heaven.

P. S.

A PRESBYTERIAN LITURGY.

A BOOK OF PUBLIC PRAYER, compiled from the authorized Formularies of Worship of the Presbyterian Church, as prepared by the Reformers Calvin, Knox, Bucer, and others. With supplementary Forms. New York: Published by Charles Scribner, 377 and 379 Broadway. 1857. pp. 360.

Every student of Church History knows that the Christian Church from time immemorial approved and made use of forms of prayer, the principal of which was given by Christ himself; that all the Protestant Churches of the Reformation prepared liturgies for public worship, most of which are in use to this day on the Continent of Europe, and in the Anglican communion; that the *exclusive* system of extemporaneous prayer in the house of God was not heard of till the latter part of the seventeenth century, and that it is to this day confined to a comparatively small portion of Christendom, in Great Britain and the United States. And yet in spite of these facts many a Puritan and Presbyterian clergyman of this country abhors the very idea of a form of prayer as contrary to the nature of devotion and the spirit of the Gospel, and as necessarily tending to dead formalism, without reflecting that this extreme individualism implies a serious censure of all the Reformers and of the classical age of the Protestant Churches. More recently, however, a change has taken place in the minds at least of some prominent divines of various Calvinistic denominations. We cannot speak as yet of a liturgical *movement* in the Congregational or Presbyterian bodies. But we have reason to believe that there is a considerable and growing number of their ministers and laymen, who would greatly prefer at least the optional or occasional use of a good liturgy to the present exclusive system of free prayer which resolves itself, after all, at last, into an endless variety of individual liturgies, and is fully as liable to abuse as the opposite extreme. But where shall we find a collection of forms of prayer which would be likely to satisfy Presbyterian and Puritan congregations?

The above work, from the author of "Eutaxia, or the Presbyterian Liturgies" (1855), a son of the Rev. Dr. Baird, and

minister of the Old School Presbyterian Church, is intended to meet this want, where it may exist. It is gotten up by Mr. Scribner in superior style and most excellent taste. The forms of public devotion here offered are selected mostly from approved liturgies of the Reformed Churches in the sixteenth century, prepared by Martin Bucer, John Calvin, and John Knox. The author entertains no idea of seeking "for this or any other Form of Worship an adoption by ecclesiastical courts, that would impose it upon the Churches for compulsory observance." He bespeaks for them simply a "free consultation and voluntary use." We sincerely wish that they may fully subserve this purpose, and assist at the same time, in forming a liturgical taste which will go far beyond what is here offered and desired.

For, with all proper regard for these Calvinistic prayers, we must think that their tone and style is upon the whole too didactic to answer the proper idea of a liturgy, and this may be one of the reasons why they have been changed so often, or gone out of use altogether, while the "Common Prayer Book" of the Anglican Communion has maintained itself to this day and exerts its happy influence wherever the English language is spoken. The object of prayer is not to expound doctrine and to oppose error, but to pour out the desires and the gratitude of our hearts in the language of devotion, such as we find in the Psalms of David and in the liturgies of the primitive Church.

Secondly, a simply optional or discretionary liturgy will never answer the true idea of public worship. A liturgy, like the catechism, the constitution, and the hymn book, should have the sanction of ecclesiastical authority, and be the law of the Church which adopts it, so long as it is found to answer its purpose. It is in this way only that that order, dignity and unity of worship can be maintained and promoted, which is one of the chief objects in the adoption and use of a good liturgy. We do not advocate by any means the *exclusive* use of stated forms of prayer, as the high Church Episcopalians. On the contrary, we would leave ample room and liberty, not only in the private, but also in the public devotions, for the exercise of the gift of extemporaneous prayer under the fresh influences of the Holy Spirit and the inspiration of the occasion. It is perfectly practicable to unite both the objective, stationary, and the subjective, free element in every full and regular service. Why should not, for instance, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Te Deum, the Gloria in excelsis, or other sublime forms which are truly catholic in their origin and character and which convey the piety of ages, be heard every Sunday morning, in connection with a free prayer conceived in similar spirit and with special reference to the subject of the sermon.

Thirdly, every sound Liturgy must be based upon the recog-

nitition of the Christian year in its essential features, and provide prayers for the leading festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, which commemorate annually the great deeds of God for the salvation of man. In this respect the author of the book before us seems to be altogether Puritanic in the modern sense, and falls far behind his authorities, even Knox and Calvin, not to speak of his favorite, Bucer. He never even mentions the Church year, while all Reformed Liturgies of the sixteenth century contain services for the celebration of the birth, the passion, the resurrection of the Saviour, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. This is the more surprising as Mr. Baird gives, at the end of the volume, all the Collects of the Episcopal Liturgy, which every body knows are mostly translated from the old Latin Collects and intended for the successive Sundays of the ecclesiastical year. Out of this connection, and separated from the corresponding Scripture lessons, they have no meaning whatever, unless we choose to call a heap of stones a building, or a mass of flesh without bones, a human body.

We might object to many other features in this volume, as the false use of the sectional and denominational term *Presbyterian*, and on the title page and in the introduction, instead of the far more appropriate, original and general appellation "Reformed;" also the heretical note to the Apostles' Creed, on page 41, which resolves Christ's descent into Hades into a mere tautological "continued in the state of the dead," in direct violation of the scriptural and historical meaning of the article.

But we would rather speak kindly of the pious and amiable author and recommend his book to the favorable notice of all those readers who feel an interest in the all important subject of public worship. It is not such a liturgy yet, by any means, as the wants of the Reformed Church seem to demand, but it is one of the helps, which are necessary to prepare the way for it, and which, in the mean time, may answer all the special objects which the author had principally in view, according to the Preface.

P. S.

THE MEMORIAL PAPERS.

MEMORIAL PAPERS. The Memorial: with circular and questions of the Episcopal Commission; report of the commission; contributions of the commissioners; and communications from Episcopal and non-Episcopal divines. With an Introduction by Rt. Rev. ALONZO POTTEE, D. D., one of the Commission. Philadelphia. Butler & Co. 1857. pp. 444.

While some Presbyterian, Congregational and other non-Episcopal ministers are becoming liturgical in their tastes and tendencies, a considerable number of Episcopalians meet them half way, by an attempt to graft upon their liturgical system the