

**THE LORD'S
PRAYER;
SEVEN HOMILIES**

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The Lord's Prayer; Seven Homilies by Washington Gladden

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WASHINGTON GLADDEN

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By WASHINGTON GLADDEN



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PREFACE.

THE provocation of these homilies was a series of short but incisive letters, written by Mr. John Ruskin to an English clergyman, but published by the writer's consent in the "Contemporary Review," and meant for all the English clergy. I quote some of his questions.

"Can this Gospel of Christ be put into such plain words and short terms that a plain man can understand it? and if so, would it not be, in a quite primal sense, desirable that it should be so?"

And again:—

"I want only to put this sterner question to your council, how this Gospel is to be preached 'everywhere' or 'to all nations,' if first its preachers have not determined quite clearly what it is. And might not

such definition, acceptable to the entire body of the Church of Christ, be arrived at by merely explaining in their completeness and life the terms of the Lord's Prayer — the first words taught to children all over the Christian world ? ”

And again : —

“ My meaning in saying that the Lord's Prayer might be made a foundation of Gospel-teaching was not that it contained all that Christian ministers have to teach ; but that it contains what all Christians are agreed upon as first to be taught ; and that no good parish-working pastor in any part of the world but would be glad to take his part in making it clear and living to his congregation.”

Though I am not a member of the communion for which these letters of Mr. Ruskin were intended, I could not help feeling the force of his suggestions, and this small volume is one fruit of them. Whatever value the reader may discover in these studies, the writer has gained by means of them not

only a better understanding of the Lord's Prayer, but an altogether new sense of the wideness of its range and the fullness of its meaning.

NORTH CHURCH STUDY, *Springfield, Mass.*