

PRAYERS

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Prayers by Theodore Parker

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THEODORE PARKER

PRAYERS

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BY

THEODORE PARKER.

WHITFIELD: STRAND, LONDON.

MATTHEWS: BENNETT'S HILL, BIRMINGHAM.

1862.

100. n. 146.



TO

THE WIFE OF THEODORE PARKER

THIS VOLUME OF PRAYERS

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY THE EDITORS.

PREFACE.

SINCE the death of our minister, many of his friends have expressed an earnest desire for the publication of some of his prayers, copies of which were secured during the whole period of his ministry at the Music Hall, and the latter half of that at the Melodeon,—caught in the air as they fell from the lips of the speaker, and faithfully daguerretyped by friendly hands, and now choicely treasured. From these accumulations of so many years the forty prayers which are included in this volume have been selected, the one at the close being the last that Mr. Parker delivered in public.

A greater variety might have been given to the character of this volume by the insertion of other prayers, to the exclusion of some that it now contains; but it is thought that those here given best represent the earnest devotion and the highest aspirations of him who uttered them, presenting, as they do, those themes upon which he most loved to dwell, in sermon or in prayer; and while there is not a very wide range of topics included in the selection, it will be

observed that there is much variety in the expression of ideas on the same topics.

The only alterations that have been made in the prayers as originally delivered are, the omission, here and there, of phrases often repeated, the introduction of a few passages from other prayers, and the correction of such slight errors of expression as are incidental to extemporaneous speaking.

It is believed that this little book will be dearly welcomed, not only by those at whose instance it has been prepared, but by thousands of others who have been "lifted up and strengthened" by these lofty utterances of a great and noble soul.

R. L.

M. G.

Boston, September 26, 1861.

PRAYERS.

I.

MARCH 17, 1850.

O THOU Infinite Spirit, who needest no words for man to hold his converse with thee, we would enter into thy presence, we would reverence thy power, we would worship thy wisdom, we would adore thy justice, we would be gladdened by thy love, and blessed by our communion with thee. We know that thou needest no sacrifice at our hands, nor any offering at our lips; yet we live in thy world, we taste thy bounty, we breathe thine air, and thy power sustains us, thy justice guides, thy goodness preserves, and thy love blesses us for ever and ever. O Lord, we cannot fail to praise thee, though we cannot praise thee as we would. We bow our faces down before thee with humble hearts, and in thy presence would warm our spirits for a while, that the better we may be prepared for the duties of life, to endure its trials, to bear its crosses, and to triumph in its lasting joys.

We thank thee for the world that is about us, now serene, enlightened by the radiance of day, now covered