

and asking them to write the meaning in their own words. The answers were instructive. "Will this baby's name make the devil's famous?" "Do you feel tears of bitter sorrow for the devil?" "Did you pray before choosing the child's name, or did the devil suggest it?" "Will you give the child the name of a saint of which the devil is afraid?" "Does the child's name do something to the devil?" And seventeen of them answered simply and truthfully, "I don't know." If the question had been in Latin it could not have been more unintelligible. And, remembering the strong language of the Twenty-fourth Article, the question arises whether we ought not to have a fresh translation of the Prayer-Book into the vulgar tongue for use in poor parishes. I leave on one side the thorny question of changes in doctrine and ritual: I deal simply with the question of language. Our services have been translated into French for the Channel Islands, into Welsh for Wales, into Manx for the Isle of Man, and into Hebrew for the Jews. Why should not those in authority give us yet another translation into the plainest and simplest English for permissive use among uneducated people?

It may be that these suggestions will lead to consideration which may help to bring about a more reverent and seemly use of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.



## The Angel of the Hours.

BY E. H. BLAKENEY, M.A.

I SAW Time throned upon a sea of glass;  
 Round him, with eyes half-veiled, three Seraphs stood,  
 Claspng the Morn about their brows. Their feet  
 Burned as brass burneth in the fire; while lo,  
 Soft as the sigh of Night, a light wind stirred,  
 Rippling that golden harvest of their hair.  
 And each within the circuit of her hand  
 Held one white star; and when I raised mine eyes  
 To mark that starry gleam, I straight divined  
 Names writ, with mystic signature, in scrolls  
 Of lightning-flame—Truth, Holiness, and Love.

Hard by the throne of Time there flowed a stream  
 Whose waves were wrought of music, and whose banks  
 Were tapestried with flowers,—not such as deck  
 Some earthly paradise, but such fair flowers  
 As mightiest poets weave to bind the heads  
 Of women loved and lost. And, all about,  
 Visions of endless beauty shone; the dreams  
 Men conjure up in watches of the night  
 Beneath the Southern Cross; the dreams whose shade  
 Goes wavering ever thro' the temporal world,  
 Unshaped to any radiant end.

And while  
 I marvelled, there arose, beyond the throne  
 Of Time, and blood-red with Redemption's dawn,  
 The semblance of a City, walled with flame.  
 Mystic, ineffable, rose up thro' cloud  
 That spiritual City, dome and tower  
 And gleaming street; while grateful shade of trees  
 Not undispersed amid the crystal brooks  
 Summoned the heavy-laden to find rest.  
 The air, how pure! How magical the dews  
 Falling on banks of amaranth! How sweet  
 The echoes, wafted o'er some fabled lake  
 Thro' avenues of light! A plash of springs  
 Fell on the ear, mixed with auxiliar sounds  
 Of voice and organ; yet no sound was there;  
 But only *that* within the City's self  
 Which touched the listening heart, until there woke,  
 Deep in the spirit's cloistered calm, a noise  
 As of some far-heard Voice, angelical,  
 Singing the songs of Zion.

Secret ways  
 Led upward to the City, where, methought,  
 Stood shapes more vast than human, guarding well  
 The dread approach. In glittering ranks they stood;  
 Each held a little lamp, and in each lamp  
 There burned a silver flame, and in each flame  
 A magic sign was set that no man knew.

Then, suddenly, the Angel of the Hours  
 Stole softly from the City; as a star  
 Moves o'er the twilight mountains, so he moved,—  
 A presence making beautiful the night.  
 Down thro' that shining synod of his peers  
 The angel stepped, a filmy robe thrown loose  
 About him, nor less glorious than the robe  
 That Day might weave of morning mist, what time

He turns his golden shuttle. In such wise  
Stepped that great Angel on the plains of Heaven.

He paused awhile ; then passed to where I stood ;  
And moved, belike, by some compassion, stretched  
His jewelled rod, and touched me. Then all fear  
Forsook me, and I spake my heart's desire :  
“ What mean yon lamps, those silvery-tongued flames,  
That, turning clear at times, anon sink low,  
Shuddering within the socket ? Or that sign,  
Far-shadowed in the secret of the flame,  
The sign that no man knoweth,—canst thou tell ? ”

Then answered thus the Angel of the Hours :  
“ Spirit, the lamps thou seest, these were all  
Life's opportunities. And those whose light  
Lives on with clear unwearable flame,  
Those were the *taken* opportunities ; and those,  
Whose flame seems flickering to a dying fall,  
The *wasted* opportunities. Nowhere  
Within God's House, on lucent sconces set,  
Shall *these* lamps, from the walls of amethyst,  
Flash myriad splendours ; never light the King,  
As toward the throne of Time He takes His way,  
Heralded by all the Companies of Heaven.  
Only those lamps—how all too rare !—whose fire  
Beams pure and constant as the rising sun,  
Survive the shock of Doom, outliving Time,  
Made fit for service in the Master's use.  
The signs within the flame are names of those  
Thou, in thy lifetime, moulded, some to base,  
Some few to noble ends. O spirit, if—there—  
In some poor flickering flame, perchance thou scan  
The secret sign, the symbol no man knows,  
Except—ah ! bitterest knowledge—thine own self,  
Then lift thy heart in prayer and penitence. . . . ”

And lo ! the voice of the Archangel failed  
At the word, or seemed to fail ; the lure, the gleam  
Of that bright City, lost in alien mists,  
Faded ; the vision of the Seraphs three,  
And that hoar Presence by the secular lake,  
Sank ; and the song went out on the night wind.  
And I awoke ; and lo, it was a dream.

