

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

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I.

ORIGINS.

LITURGICAL worship, understood in the largest sense the phrase can bear, means divine service rendered in accordance with an established form. Of late years there has been an attempt made among purists to confine the word "liturgy" to the office entitled in the Prayer Book, *The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion*.

This restricted and specialized interpretation of a familiar word may serve the purposes of technical scholarship, for undoubtedly there is much to be said in favor of the narrowed signification as we shall see; but unless English literature can be rewritten, plain people who draw their vocabulary from standard authors will go on calling service-books "liturgies" regardless of the fact that they contain many things other than that one office which is entitled to be named by eminence *the* Liturgy. "This Convention," write the fathers of the American Episcopal Church in the Ratification printed on the fourth page of the Prayer Book, "having in their present session set forth a Book of Common Prayer and other rites and ceremonies of the Church, do hereby establish the said book; and they declare it to be the *Liturgy* of this Church."

For the origin of liturgy thus broadly defined we have to go a long way back; beyond the Prayer Book, beyond the Mass-book, beyond the ancient Sacramentaries, yes, beyond the synagogue worship, beyond the temple worship, beyond the tabernacle worship; in fact I am disposed to think that, logically, we should be unable to stop short until we had reached the very heart of man itself, that dimly discerned groundwork we call human nature, and had discovered there those two instincts, the one of worship and the other of gregariousness, from whence all forms of common prayer have sprung. Where three or two assemble for the purposes of supplication, some form must necessarily be accepted if they are to pray in unison. When the disciples came to Jesus begging him that he would teach them how to pray, he gave them, not twelve several forms, though doubtless James's special needs differed from John's and Simon's from Jude's—he gave them, not twelve, but one. "When ye pray," was his answer, "say Our Father." That was the

beginning of Christian Common Prayer. Because we are men we worship, because we are fellow-men our worship must have form.

But waiving this last analysis of all which carries us across the whole field of history at a leap, it becomes necessary to seek for liturgical beginnings by a more plodding process.

If we take that manual of worship with which as English-speaking Christians we are ourselves the most familiar, the Book of Common Prayer, and allow it to fall naturally apart, as a bunch of flowers would do if the string were cut, we discover that in point of fact we have, as in the case of the Bible, many books in one. We have scarcely turned the title-page, for instance, before we come upon a ritual of daily worship, an order for Morning Prayer and an order for Evening Prayer, consisting in the main of Psalms, Scripture Lessons, Antiphonal Versicles, and Collects. Appended to this we find a Litany or General Supplication and a collection of special prayers.

Mark an interval here, and note that we have completed the first volume of our liturgical library. Next, we have a sacramental ritual, entitled, *The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion*, ingeniously interwoven by a system of appropriate prayers and New Testament readings with the Sundays and holydays of the year. This gives us our second volume. Then follow numerous offices which we shall find it convenient to classify under two heads, namely: those which may be said by a bishop or by a presbyter, and those that may be said by a bishop only. Under the former head come the baptismal offices, the Order for the Burial of the Dead, and the like; under the latter, the services of Ordination and Confirmation and the Form of Consecration of a Church or Chapel.

In the Church of England as it existed before the Reformation, these four volumes, as I have called them, were distinct and recognized realities. Each had its title and each its separate use. The name of the book of daily services was *The Breviary*. The name of the book used in the celebration of the Holy Communion was *The Missal*. The name of the book of Special Offices was *The Ritual*. The name of the book of such offices as could be used by a bishop only was *The Pontifical*. It was one of the greatest of the achievements of the English reformers that they succeeded in condensing, after a practical fashion, these four books, or, to speak more accurately, the first three of them, Breviary, Missal, and Ritual, into one. The Pontifical, or Ordinal, they continued as a separate book, although it soon for the sake of convenience became customary in England, as it has always been customary here, for Prayer Book and Ordinal to be stitched together by the binders into a single volume. Popularly speaking the Prayer Book is the entire volume one purchases under that name from the bookseller, but accurately speaking the Book of Common Prayer ends where *The Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons* begins. "Finis" should be written after the Psalter, as indeed from the Prayer Book's Table of Contents plainly appears. Setting aside now, for the present, that portion of the formularies which corresponds to the Ritual and Pontifical of the medieval Church, I proceed to speak rapidly of the antecedents of Breviary and Missal. Whence came they? And how are we to account for their being sundered so distinctly as they are?

They came, so some of the most thoughtful of liturgical students are agreed, from a source no less remote than the Temple of Solomon, and they are severed, to speak figuratively, by a valley not unlike that which in our thoughts divides the Mount of Beatitudes from the Hill of Calvary.

In that memorable building to which reference was just made, influential over the destinies of our race as no other house of man's making ever was, there went on from day to day these two things, psalmody and sacrifice. Peace-offering, burnt-offering, sin-offering, the morning oblation, and the evening oblation—these with other ceremonies of a like character went to make what we know as the sacrificial ritual of the temple.

But this was not all. It would appear that there were other services in the temple over and above those that could strictly be called sacrificial. The Hebrew Psalter, the hymn-book of that early day, contains much that was evidently intended by the writers for temple use, and even more that could be easily adapted to such use. And although there is no direct evidence that in Solomon's time forms of prayer other than those associated with sacrificial rites were in use, yet when we find mention in the New Testament of people going up to the temple of those later days "at the hour of prayer," it seems reasonable to infer that the custom was an ancient one, and that from the beginning of the temple's history forms of worship not strictly speaking sacrificial had been a stated feature of the ritual. But whether in the temple or not, certainly in the synagogues, which after the return from the captivity sprang up all over the Jewish world, services composed of prayers, of psalms, and of readings from the law and the prophets were of continual occurrence. Therefore we may safely say that with these two forms of divine service, the sacrificial and the simply devotional and didactic, the apostles, the founders of the Christian Church, had been familiar from their childhood. They were at home in both synagogue and temple. They knew by sight the ritual of the altar, and by ear the ritual of the choir. They were accustomed to the spectacle of the priest offering the victim; they were used to hearing the singers chant the psalms.

We see thus why it is that the public worship of the Church should have come down to us in two great lines, why there should be a tradition of eucharistic worship and, parallel to this, a tradition of daily prayer; for as the one usage links itself, in a sense, to the sacrificial system of God's ancient people and has in it a suggestion of the temple worship, so the other seems to show a continuity with what went on in those less pretentious sanctuaries which had place in all the cities and villages of Judea, and indeed wherever, throughout the Roman world, Jewish colonists were to be found. The earliest Christian disciples having been themselves Hebrews, nothing could have been more natural than their moulding the worship of the new Church in general accordance with the models that had stood before their eyes from childhood in the old. The Psalms were sung in the synagogues according to a settled principle. We cannot wonder, then, that the Psalter should have continued to be what in fact it had always been, the hymn-book of the Church. Moreover, they had in the synagogue besides their psalmody a system of Bible readings, confined, of course, to the Old Testament Scriptures. This is noted in the observation that fell from Simon Peter, at the first Council of the Church, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day." Scripture lessons, therefore, would be no novelty.

We gather also from the New Testament, not to speak of other authorities, that in the apostolic days people were familiar with what were known as "hours of prayer." There were particular times in the day, that is to say, which were held to be especially appropriate for worship. "Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour, of prayer, being the ninth hour." Again, at Joppa, we find the former of these two apostles going up upon the house-top to pray at "the sixth hour." Long before this David had mentioned morning and evening and noon as fitting hours of prayer, and one psalmist, in his enthusiasm, had even gone so far as to declare *seven* times a day to be not too often for giving God thanks. There was also the precedent of Daniel opening his windows toward Jerusalem three times a day. As the love for order and system grew year by year stronger in the Christian Church, the laws that govern ritual would be likely to become more stringent, and so very probably it came to pass. For aught we know to the contrary, the observance of fixed hours of prayer was a matter of voluntary action with the Christians of the first age. There was, as we say, no "shall" about it. But when the founders of the monastic orders came upon the scene a fixed rule took the place of simple custom, and what had been optional became mandatory. By the time we reach the mediæval period evolution has had its perfect work, and we find in existence a scheme of daily service curiously and painfully elaborate. The mediæval theologians were very fond of classifying things by sevens. In the symbolism of Holy Scripture seven appears as the number of perfection, it being the aggregate of three, the number of Deity, and four, the number of the earth. Accordingly we find in the theology of those times seven sacraments, seven deadly sins, seven contrary virtues, seven works of mercy, and also seven hours of prayer. These seven hours were known as Matins, Prime, Tierce, Sext, Nones, Vespers, and Compline. The theory of the hours of prayer was that at each one of them a special office of devotion was to be said. Beginning before sunrise with matins there was to be daily a round of services at stated intervals culminating at bedtime in that which, as its name indicated, filled out the series, Compline. To what extent this ideal scheme of devotion was ever carried out in practice it is difficult positively to say.

Probably in the monastic and conventual life of the severer orders there was an approximation to a punctual observance of the hours as they successively arrived. Possibly the modern mind fails to do full justice to the conception of worship on which this system was based. Those principles of devotion of which the rosary is the visible symbol do not easily commend themselves to us. They have about them a suggestion of mechanism. They remind us of the Buddhist praying wheel, and seem to put the Church in the attitude of expecting to be heard for her "much speaking."

Doubtless many a pure, courageous spirit fought the good fight of faith successfully in spite of all this weight of outward observances; but in the judgment of the wiser heads among English churchmen, the time had come, by the middle of the sixteenth century, when this complicated armor must either be greatly lightened or else run the risk of being cast aside altogether. Let Cranmer tell his own story. This is what he says in the Preface to the First Book of Edward VI. as to the ritual grievances of the times. The passage is worth listening to if only for the quaintness of its strong and wholesome English:

"There was never anything by the wit of man so well devised or so surely established which, in continuance of time, hath not been corrupted, as, among other things, it may

plainly appear by the common prayer, in the Church, commonly called divine service. The first original and ground whereof, if a man would search out by the ancient fathers, he shall find that the same was not ordained but of a good purpose, and for a great advancement of godliness, for they so ordered the matter that all the whole Bible, or the greatest part thereof, should be read over once in the year. . . . But these many years past this godly and decent order of the ancient fathers hath been so altered, broken, and neglected by planting in uncertain stories, legends, responds, verses, vain repetitions, commemorations, and synodals that commonly, when any book of the Bible was begun, before three or four chapters were read out all the rest were unread. And in this sort the Book of Esaie was begun in Advent, and the Book of Genesis in Septuagesima, but they were only begun and never read through. . . . And moreover, whereas St. Paul would have such language spoken to the people in the Church as they might understand and have profit by hearing the same, the service in this Church of England (these many years) hath been read in Latin to the people, which they understood not, so that they have heard with their ears only, and their hearts, spirit, and mind have not been edified thereby. . . . Moreover, the number and hardness of the rules called the Pie, and the manifold changings of the service was the cause that to turn the Book only was so hard and intricate a matter that many times there was more business to find out what should be read than it was to read it when it was found out. These inconveniences therefore considered, here is set forth such an order whereby the same shall be redressed.”

As an illustration of what Cranmer meant by his curious phrase, “planting in uncertain stories,” take the following Lessons quoted by Dr. Neale in his *Essays on Liturgiology*:

“Besides the commemoration of saints,” writes this distinguished antiquarian, “there are in certain local calendars notices of national events connected with the well-being of the Church. Thus, in the *Parisian Breviary*, we have on the eighteenth of August a commemoration of the victory of Philip the Fair in Flanders, A. D. 1304.” Here is the fourth of the appointed lessons : “Philip the Fair, King of the French, in the year 1304, about the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, having set forth with his brothers Charles and Louis and a large army into Flanders, pitched his tent near Mons, where was a camp of the rebel Flemings. But when, on the eighteenth of August, which was the Tuesday after the Assumption of St. Mary, the French had from morning till evening stood on the defence, and were resting themselves at nightfall, the enemy, by a sudden attack, rushed on the camp with such fury that the body-guard had scarce time to defend him.

“*Response*. Come from Lebanon, my spouse; come, and thou shalt be crowned. The odor of thy sweet ointments is above all perfumes. *Versicle*. The righteous judge shall give a crown of righteousness.”

Then, after this short interlude of snatches from Holy Scripture, there follows the Fifth Lesson : “At the beginning of the fight the life of the king was in great danger, but shortly after, his troops crowding together from all quarters to his tent, where the battle was sharpest, obtained an illustrious victory over the enemy “—and more of this sort until all of a sudden we come upon the Song of Solomon again. “V. Thou art all fair, my love; come from Lebanon. R. They that have not defiled their garments, they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.”

Is not Cranmer's contemptuous mention of these uncertain legends and vain repetitions amply justified? And can we be too thankful to the sturdy champions of the Reformation, who in the face of no little opposition and by efforts scarcely appreciated to-day, cut us loose from all responsibility for such solemn nonsense?

There are some who feel aggrieved that chapters from the Apocrypha should have found admission to our new lectionary, and there are even those who think that of the canonical Scriptures, passages more edifying than certain of those appointed to be read might have been chosen, but what would they think if they were compelled to hear the minister at the lectern say : "Here beginneth the first chapter of the Adventures of Philip the Fair"?

But the reformers, happily, were not discouraged by the portentous front of wood, hay, and stubble which the liturgical edifice of their day presented to the eye. They felt convinced that there were also to be found mixed in with the building material gold, silver, and precious stones, and for these they determined to make diligent search, resolved most of all that the foundation laid should be Jesus Christ. This system of canonical hours, they argued, this seven-fold office of daily prayer is all very beautiful in theory, but it never can be made what in fact it never in the past has been, a practicable thing. Let us be content if we can do so much as win people to their devotions at morning and at night. With this object in view Cranmer and his associates subjected the services of the hours to a process of combination and condensation. The Offices for the first three hours they compressed into *An Order for Daily Morning Prayer*, or, as it was called in Edward's first Book, *An Order for Matins*, and the Offices for the last two hours, namely, Vespers and Compline, they made over into *An Order for Daily Evening Prayer*, or, as it was named in Edward's first Book, *An Order for Evensong*.

These two formularies, the *Order for Matins* and the *Order for Evensong*, make the core and substance of our present daily offices. But the tradition of daily prayer is only one of the two great devotional heritages of the Church. With the destruction of the temple by the Roman soldiery, the sacrificial ritual of the Jewish Church came to a sudden end; but it was not God's purpose that the memory of sacrifice should fade out of men's minds or that the thought of sacrifice should be banished from the field of worship. Years before the day when the legionaries of Titus marched amid flame and smoke, into the falling sanctuary of an out-worn faith, one who was presently to die upon a cross had taken bread, had blessed it and broken it, and giving it to certain followers gathered about him, had said, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." Likewise also he had taken the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you."

Certainly there must be a relation of cause and effect between this scene and the fact, which is a fact, that the most ancient fragments of primitive Christian worship now discoverable are forms for the due commemoration of the sacrifice of the death of Christ.

These venerable monuments seem to exclaim as we decipher them : "Even so, Lord, it is done as thou didst say." "Thy name, O Lord, endureth forever and so doth thy memorial from generation to generation." Of the references to Christian worship discoverable in documents later than the New Testament Scriptures there are three that stand out with peculiar prominence, namely, the lately discovered *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*,

placed by some authorities as early as the first half of the second century; the famous letter of Pliny to the Emperor Trajan, a writing of the same period; and the Apology or Defence addressed by Justin Martyr to Antoninus Pius about the year 140 after Christ. The noteworthy fact in connection with these passages is that of the three, two certainly, and probably the third also, refer directly to the Holy Communion. In the *Teaching* we have a distinct sketch of a eucharistic service with three of the prescribed prayers apparently given in full. In Justin Martyr's account, the evidence of a definitely established liturgical form is perhaps less plain, but nothing that he says would appear to be irreconcilable with the existence of a more or less elastic ritual order. Whether he does or does not intend to describe extemporaneous prayer as forming one feature of the eucharistic worship of the Christians of his time depends upon the translation we give to a single word in his narrative. Later on in the life of the Church, though by just how much later is a difficult point of scholarship, we are brought in contact with a number of formularies, all of them framed for the uses of eucharistical worship, all of them, that is to say, designed to perpetuate the commandment, "This do in remembrance of me," and all of them preserving, no matter in what part of the world they may be found, a certain structural uniformity. These are the primitive liturgies, as they are called, the study of which has in late years attained almost to the dignity of a science.

As to the exact measure of antiquity that ought to be accorded to these venerable documents the authorities differ and probably will always differ. Dr. Neale's enthusiasm carried him so far that he was persuaded and sought to persuade others of the existence of liturgical quotations in the writings of St. Paul. This hypothesis is at the present time generally rejected by sober-minded scholars. Perhaps "the personal equation" enters equally into the conclusions of those who assign a very late origin to the liturgies, pushing them along as far as the sixth or seventh century. If one happens to have a rooted dislike for prescribed forms of worship, and believes them in his heart to be both unscriptural and unspiritual, it will be the most natural thing in the world for him to disparage whatever evidence makes in favor of the early origin of liturgies. Hammond is sensible when he says in the Preface to his valuable work entitled *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, "I have assumed an intermediate position between the views of those on the one hand who hold that the liturgies had assumed a recognized and fixed form so early as to be quoted in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Hebrews . . . and of those, on the other, who because there are some palpable interpolations and marks of comparatively late date in some of the texts, assert broadly that they are *all* untrustworthy and valueless as evidence. This view I venture to think," he adds, "equally uncritical and groundless with the former."

To sum up, the argument in behalf of an apostolic origin for the Christian Liturgy may be compactly stated thus : The very earliest monuments of Christian worship that we possess are rituals of thanksgiving, having direct reference to the sacrifice of the death of Christ. Going back from these to the New Testament we find there the narrative of the institution of the Holy Communion by Christ himself, and in connection with it the command, "This do in remembrance of me." It is, I submit, a reasonable inference that the liturgies in the main fairly represent what it was in the mind of the apostle to recognize and establish as proper Christian worship. I do not call it demonstration, I call it reasonable inference. There is a striking parallelism between the argument for liturgical worship and the

argument for episcopacy. In both cases we take the ground that continuity existed between the life of the Church as we find it a hundred years after the last of the apostles had gone to his rest and the life of the Church as it is pictured in the New Testament.

That there were many changes during the interval must no doubt be granted, but we say that if those changes were serious ones affecting great principles of belief or order, those who maintain that such a hidden revolution took place are bound to bring positive evidence to the fact. This history of the Church during the second century has been likened with more of ingenuity than of poetical beauty to the passing of a train through a railway tunnel.

We see the train enter, we see it emerge, but its movement while inside the tunnel is concealed from us. Similarly we may say that we see with comparative distinctness the Christian Church of the Apostolic Age, and we see with comparative distinctness the Church of the Age of Cyprian and Origen, but with respect to the interval separating the two periods we are not indeed wholly, but, we are, it must be confessed, very largely ignorant. And yet as in the case of the tunnel we confidently affirm an identity between what we saw go in and what we see coming out, so with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church, the usages of the third century, we argue, are probably in their leading features what the usages of the first century were. If reason to the contrary can be given, well and good; but in the absence of countervailing testimony we abide by our inference, holding it to be sound.

I am far from wishing to maintain that these considerations bind liturgical worship upon the Christian Church as a matter of obligation for all time. It might be argued, and I think with great force, that liturgical worship having been universal throughout the ancient world, heathen as well as Jewish, the apostles and fathers of the Christian Church judged it unwise to make any departure at the outset from a custom so invariable, trusting it to the spirit of the new religion to work out freer and less formal methods of approaching God through Christ in the times to come. This, I confess, strikes me as a perfectly legitimate line of reasoning and one which is strengthened rather than weakened by what we have seen happen in Christendom since the sixteenth century. Great bodies of Christians have for a period of some three hundred years been worshipping Almighty God in non-liturgical ways, and have not been left without witness that their service was acceptable to the Divine Majesty. Moreover, the fact that absolute rigidity in liturgical use never was insisted upon in any age of the Church until the English passed their Act of Uniformity, makes in the same direction. And yet even after these allowances have been made, there remains a considerable amount of solid satisfaction for those who do adhere to the liturgical method, in the thought that they are in the line which is apparently the line of continuity, and that their interpretation of the apostolic purpose with respect to worship is the interpretation that has been generally received in Christendom as far back as we can go.

II.

VICISSITUDES.

CERTAIN of the necromancers of the far East are said to have the power of causing a tree to spring up, spread its branches, blossom, and bear fruit before the eyes of the lookers-on within the space of a few moments.

Modern liturgies have sometimes been brought into being by a process as extemporaneous as this, but not such was the genesis of the Book of Common Prayer.

There are at least eight forms under which the Prayer Book has been from time to time authoritatively set forth—five English, one Scottish, one Irish, and one American; so that, if we would be accurate, we are bound to specify, when we speak of “The Prayer Book,” which of several Prayer Books we have in mind.

The truth is, there exists in connection with everything that grows, whether it be plant, animal, or building, a certain mystery like that which attaches to what, in the case of a man, we call personal identity. Which is the true, the actual Napoleon? Is it the Napoleon of the Directory, or the Napoleon of the Consulate, or the Napoleon of the Empire? At each epoch we discern a different phase of the man’s character, and yet we are compelled to acknowledge, in the face of all the variations, that we have to do with one and the same man.

But just as a ship acquires, as we may say, her personal identity when she is launched and named, even though there may be a great deal yet to be done in the way of finishing and furnishing before she can be pronounced seaworthy, so it is with a book that is destined to undergo repeated revision and reconstruction, it does acquire, on the day when it is first published, and first given a distinctive title, a certain character the losing of which would be the loss of personal identity. There is many an old cathedral that might properly enough be called a reedited book in stone. Norman architecture, Early English, Decorated, and Perpendicular, all are there, and yet one dominant thought pervades the building. Notwithstanding the many times it has been retouched, the fabric still expresses to the eye the original creative purpose of the designer; there is no possibility of our mistaking Salisbury for York or Peterborough for London.

The first Book of Common Prayer was built up of blocks that for the most part had been previously used in other buildings, but the resulting structure exhibited, from the very moment it received a name, such distinct and unmistakable characteristics as have guaranteed it personal identity through more than three hundred years. Hence, while it is in one sense true that there are no fewer than eight Books of Common Prayer, it is in another sense equally true that the Book of Common Prayer is one.

An identity of purpose, of scope, and of spirit shows itself in all its various forms under which the book exists, so that whether we are speaking of the First Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, or of the book adopted by the Church of Ireland after its disestablishment, or of the American Book of Common Prayer, what we have in mind is, in a very real and deep sense, one and the same thing.

Let us proceed now to a rapid survey of the facts connected with the first issue of the Common Prayer.

For a period long anterior to the Reformation there had been in use among the English brief books of devotion known as "primers," written in the language of the people. The fact that the public services of the Church were invariably conducted in the Latin tongue made a resort to such expedients as this necessary, unless religion was to be reserved as the private property of ecclesiastics.

By a curious process of evolution the primer, from having been in mediaval times a book wholly religious and devotional, has come to be in our day a book wholly secular and educational. We associate it with Noah Webster and the Harper Brothers. The New England Primer of the Puritans, with its odd jumble of piety and the three R's, marks a point of transition from the ancient to the modern type.

But this by the way. The primer we are now concerned with is the devotional primer of the times just previous to the Reformation. This, as a rule, contained prayers, the Belief, the Ave Maria, a litany of some sort, the Ten Commandments, and whatever else there might be that in the mind of the compiler came under the head of "things which a Christian ought to know." There were three of these primers set forth during the reign of Henry the Eighth, one in 1535, one in 1539, and one in 1545. During the space that intervened between the publication of the second and that of the third of these primers, appeared "The Litany and Suffrages," a formulary compiled, as is generally believed, by Cranmer, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, and in substance identical with the Litany we use to-day. This Litany of 1544 has been properly described as "the precursor and first instalment of the English Book of Common Prayer." It was the nucleus or centre of crystallization about which the other constituent portions of our manual of worship were destined to be grouped. A quaint exhortation was prefixed to this Litany, in which it was said to have been set forth "because the not understanding the prayers and suffrages formerly used caused that the people came but slackly to the processions." Besides the primers and the Litany, there were printed in Henry's reign various editions of a book of Epistles and Gospels in English. There was also published a Psalter in Latin and English.

All this looked rather to the edification of individual Christians in their private devotional life than to the public worship of the Church, but we are not to suppose that meanwhile the larger interests of the whole body were forgotten. So early as in the year 1542, Convocation, which according to the Anglican theory stands toward the Church in the same attitude that Parliament holds to the State, appointed a Committee of Eight to review and correct the existing service-books. We know very little as to the proceedings of this committee, but that something was done, and a real impulse given to liturgical revision, is evidenced by the fact that at a meeting of Convocation held soon after King Henry's death a resolution prevailed "That the books of the Bishops and others who by the command of the Convocation have labored in examining, reforming, and publishing the divine Service, may be produced and laid before the examination of this house." The next important step in the process we are studying was the publication by authority in the early spring of 1548, of an Order of the Communion, as it was called, a formulary prepared by Cranmer to enable the priest, after having consecrated the elements in the usual manner, to distribute them to the people with the sentences of delivery spoken in English. The priest, that is to say, was to proceed with the service of the Mass as usual in

the Latin tongue, but after he had himself received the bread and the wine, he was to proceed to a service of Communion for the people in a speech they could understand.

Almost everything in this tentative document, as we may call it, was subsequently incorporated in the Office of the Holy Communion as we are using it to-day.

We have, then, as an abiding result of the liturgical experiments made in anticipation of the actual setting forth of an authoritative Prayer Book, the Litany and this Order of the Communion.

The time was now ripe for something better and more complete; a new king was upon the throne, and one whose counsellors were better disposed toward change than ever Henry had been. The great movement we know under the name of the Reformation touched the life of the Christian Church in every one of its three great departments—doctrine, discipline, and worship. In Henry's mind, however, the question appears to have been almost exclusively one of discipline or polity. His quarrel was not with the accepted theological errors of his day, for as Defender of the Faith he covered some of the worst of them with his shield. Neither was he ill-disposed toward the methods and usages of public worship so far as we can judge. His quarrel first, last, and always was with a certain rival claimant of power, whose pretended authority he was determined to drive out of the realm, to wit, the Pope. But while it was thus with Henry, it was far otherwise with many of the more thoughtful and devout among his theologians, and when the restraint that had been laid on them was removed by the king's death, they welcomed the opportunity to apply to doctrine and worship the same reforming touch that had already remoulded polity.

An enlarged Committee of Convocation sat at Windsor in the summer of 1548, and as a result there was finally set forth, and ordered to be put into use on Whit-sunday, 1549, what has become known in history as the "First Prayer Book of Edward VI."

To dwell on those features of the First Book that have remained unaltered to the present day would be superfluous; I shall therefore, in speaking of it, confine myself to the distinctive and characteristic points in which it differs from the Prayer Books that have succeeded it.

It is worthy of note that in the title page of the First Book there is a clear distinction drawn between the Church Universal, or what we call in the *Te Deum* "the holy Church throughout all the world," and that particular Church to which King Edward's subjects, in virtue of their being Englishmen, belonged. The book is said to be "the Book of the Common Prayer and administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of THE CHURCH, after the use of the Church of England." "THE CHURCH" is recognized as being a larger and, perhaps, older thing than the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, while at the same time it is intimated that only through such *use* of these same prayers and sacraments as the English Church ordains and authorizes can English folk come into communion with the great family of believers spread over the whole earth.

The Preface is a singularly racy piece of English, in which with the utmost plainness of speech the compilers give their reasons for having dealt with the old services as they have

done. This reappears in the English Prayer Book of the present day under the title “Concerning the Service of the Church,” and so described is placed after the Preface written in 1662 by the Revisers of the Restoration.

The Order for Daily Morning Prayer, as we name it, is called in Edward’s First Book “An Order for Matins daily through the year.” Similarly, what we call the Order for Daily Evening Prayer was styled “An Order for Evensong.” These beautiful names, “Matins” and “Evensong,” which it is a great pity to have lost, for surely there is nothing superstitious about them, disappeared from the book as subsequently revised, and save in the Lectionary of the Church of England have no present recognition. One of them, however, Evensong, seems to be coming very generally into colloquial use. The Order for Matins began with the Lord’s Prayer. Then, after the familiar versicles still in use, including two that have no place in our American book, “O God, make speed to save me. O Lord, make haste to help me,” there followed in full the 95th Psalm, a portion of which is known to us as the *Venite*. From this point the service proceeded, as in the English Prayer Book of to-day, through the Collect for Grace, where it came to an end. The structure of Evensong was similar, beginning with the Lord’s Prayer and ending, as our shortened Evening Prayer now does, with the Collect for Aid against Perils. Then followed the Athanasian Creed, and immediately afterward came the Introits, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels.

These Introits, so-called, were psalms appointed to be sung when the priest was about to begin the Holy Communion. They had been an ancient feature of divine service, but were dropped from the subsequent books as a required feature of the Church’s worship.

The title of the Communion Service in Edward’s First Book is as follows: “The Supper of the Lord and the Holy Communion commonly called the Mass.” Immediately after the Prayer for Purity—*i. e.*, in the place where we have the Ten Commandments, comes the *Gloria in Ececelsis*. The Service then proceeds very much as with us, except that the Prayer for the Church Militant and the Consecration Prayer are welded into one, and the Prayer of Humble Access given a place immediately before the reception of the elements. I note, in passing, certain phrases and sentences that are peculiar to the Communion Office of the First Book, as, for instance, this from the Prayer for the whole state of Christ’s Church: “And here we do give unto thee most high praise and hearty thanks for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all thy saints from the beginning of the world, and chiefly in the most glorious and blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord and God, and in the holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, whose examples, O Lord, and steadfastness in thy faith and keeping thy holy commandments grant us to follow. We commend unto thy mercy, O Lord, all other thy servants which are departed hence from us with the sign of faith and do now rest in the sleep of peace. Grant unto them, we beseech thee, thy mercy and everlasting peace, and that at the day of the general resurrection we and all they which be of the mystical body of thy Son may altogether be set on his right hand.”

And this from the closing portion of the Consecration: “Yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, and command these our prayers and supplications by the ministry of thy holy angels to be brought up into thy holy tabernacle before the sight of thy divine majesty.”

Following close upon the Communion Service came the Litany, differing very little from what we have to-day, save in the memorable petition, "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, good Lord deliver us."

The Baptismal Offices of the First Book contain certain unique features. The sign of the cross is ordered to be made on the child's breast as well as on his forehead. There is a form of exorcism said over the infant in which the unclean spirit is commanded to come out and to depart. There is also the giving of the "Crisome" or white vesture as a symbol of innocence. "Take this white vesture for a token of the innocency which by God's grace in this holy sacrament of Baptism is given unto thee, and for a sign whereby thou art admonished, so long as thou livest, to give thyself to innocency of living, that after this transitory life thou mayest be partaker of the life everlasting."

The Catechism in Edward VI. First Book, as in the subsequent books down to 1662, is made a part of the Confirmation Office, although it does not clearly appear that the children were expected to say it as a preliminary to the service.

The Office for the Visitation of the Sick contains provision for private confession and absolution, and also directs that the priest shall anoint the sick man with oil if he be desired to do so.

The Office for the Communion of the Sick allows the practice of what is called the reservation of the elements, but contains also, be it observed, that rubric which has held its place through all the changes the Prayer Book has undergone, where we are taught that if the sick man by any "just impediment fail to receive the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, the curate shall instruct him that if he do truly repent him of his sins and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the cross for him . . . he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, profitably to his soul's health although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth."

The Burial Office contains a recognition of prayer for the dead, but except in the matter of the arrangement of the parts differs but little from the service still in use. A special Introit, Collect, Epistle, and Gospel are appointed "for the Celebration of the Holy Communion when there is a Burial of the Dead."

A Communion Office for Ash-Wednesday, substantially identical with that still in use in the Church of England, concludes the book.

The First Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, memorable as it was destined to become, proved, so far as actual use was concerned, but short-lived. It became operative, as we have seen, on Whitsunday, 1549, but it was soon evident that while the new services went too far in the direction of reform to please the friends of the ancient order of things, they did not go far enough to meet the wishes of the reforming party.

Before the year was out no fewer than three translations of the Liturgy into Latin had been undertaken with a view to informing the Protestant divines of the Continent as to what their English colleagues were doing. "There was already within the Church" (of England), writes Cardwell, in his comparison of Edward's two books, "a party, though probably not numerous, which espoused the peculiar sentiments of Calvin; there were

others, and Cranmer, it appears, had recently been one of them, adhering strictly to the opinions of Luther; there were many, and those among the most active and the most learned, who adopted the views of Bullinger and the theologians of Zurich; there was a still larger body anxious to combine all classes of Protestants under one general confession, and all these, though with distinct objects and different degrees of impatience, looked forward to a revision of the Liturgy, to bring it more completely into accordance with their own sentiments.”

As a result of the agitation thus vividly pictured by Cardwell, there came forth in 1552 the book known as the Second Prayer Book of King Edward VI, a work of the very greatest interest, for the reason that it was destined to become the basis of all future revisions. Whitsunday, 1549, was the day when the First Book began to be used. The Feast of All Saints, 1552, was the date officially appointed for the introduction of the Second Book. Presently King Edward died, and by an act of Mary passed in October, 1553, the use of his Book became illegal on and after December 20th of that year. It thus appears that the First Book was in use for two years and about four months, and the Second Book one year and about two months. A memorable three years and a half for the English-speaking peoples of all time to come, for it is not too much to say that while the language of Tyndale and of Cranmer continues to be heard on earth, the devotions then put into form will keep on moulding the religious thought and firing the spiritual imagination of this race.

The points in which the second of King Edward's two books differs from the first are of such serious moment and the general complexion of the later work has in it such an access of Protestant coloring, that high Anglican writers have been in the habit of attributing the main features of the revision to the interference of the Continental Reformers. "If it had not been for the impertinent meddling," they have been accustomed to say, "of such foreigners as Bucer, Peter Martyr, and John a-Lasco, we might have been enjoying at the present day the admirable and truly Catholic devotions set forth in the fresh morning of the Reformation, before the earth-born vapors of theological controversy and ecclesiastical partisanship had beclouded an otherwise fair sky." But it does not appear that there is any solid foundation in fact for these complaints.

The natural spread of the spirit of reform among the people of the realm, taken in connection with the changes of opinion which the swift movement of the times necessarily engendered in the minds of the leading divines, are of themselves quite sufficient to account for what took place. Certainly, if the English of that day were at all like their descendants in our time, it is in the highest degree unlikely that they would have allowed a handful of learned refugees to force upon them changes which their own sober judgment did not approve.

The truth is, very little is certainly known as to the details of what was done in the making of Edward's Second Book. Even the names of the members of the committee intrusted with the revision are matter of conjecture, and of the proceedings of that body no authentic record survives. What we do possess and are in a position to criticise is the book itself, and to a brief review of the points in which it differs from its predecessor we will now pass.

Upon taking up the Second Book after laying down the First, one is struck immediately with the changed look of Morning Prayer. This is no longer called Matins, and no longer begins as before with the Lord's Prayer. An Introduction has been prefixed to the office consisting of a collection of sentences from Holy Scripture, all of them of a penitential character, and besides these of an Exhortation, a Confession, and an Absolution. There can be little doubt that this opportunity for making public acknowledgment of sin and hearing the declaration of God's willingness to forgive, was meant to counterbalance the removal from the book of all reference, save in one instance, to private confession and absolution. The Church of England has always retained in her Visitation Office a permission to the priest to pronounce absolution privately to the sick man. This was a feature of the First Book that was not disturbed in the Second. But wherever else they found anything that seemed to look toward the continuance of the system familiarly known to us under the name of "the Confessional," they expunged it. Between the Exhortation and the Confession there is, in point of literary merit, a noticeable contrast, and it is scarcely to be believed that both formularies can have proceeded from one and the same pen. Another step in the Protestant direction was the prohibition of certain vestments that in the First Book had been allowed, as the alb and cope. The Introit Psalms were taken away. The word "table" was everywhere substituted for the word "altar." The changes in the Office of the Holy Communion were numerous and significant. The Ten Commandments, for instance, were inserted in the place where we now have them. The *Gloria in Excelsis* was transferred from the beginning of the service to the end. The Exhortations were rewritten. The supplication for the dead was taken out of the Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church, and the words "militant here on earth" were added to the title with a view to confining the scope of the intercession to the circle of people still alive. The Confession, Absolution, Comfortable Words, and Prayer of Humble Access were placed before the Consecration instead of after it. Most important of all was the change of the words appointed to be said in delivering the elements to the communicants. In the First Book these had been, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life," and in the case of the cup, "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." For these were now substituted in the one instance the words, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving," and in the other, "Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful."

From the Office for the Communion of the Sick the direction to reserve the elements was omitted, as was also the permission to anoint the sick man with oil. The Service of Baptism was no longer suffered to retain the exorcism of the evil spirit, or the white vesture, or the unction; and there were other items of less important change. Those mentioned reveal plainly enough what was the animus of the revisers. Most evidently the intention was to produce a liturgy more thoroughly reformed, more in harmony with the new tone and temper which the religious thought of the times was taking on.

We come to the Third Book of Common Prayer. Bloody Mary was dead, and Elizabeth had succeeded to the throne.

During the Roman reaction proclamation had been made that all the Reformed service-books should be given up to the ecclesiastical authorities within fifteen days to be burned. This is doubtless the reason why copies of the liturgical books of Edward's reign are now so exceedingly rare. Reprints of them abound, but the originals exist only as costly curiosities.

Soon after Elizabeth's accession a committee of divines assembled under her authority for the purpose of again revising the formularies.

The queen was personally a High-Churchwoman, and her own judgment is said to have been favorable to taking the first of Edward's two books as the basis of the revision, but a contrary preference swayed the committee, and the lines followed were those of 1552 and not those of 1549.

The new features distinctive of the Prayer Book of Elizabeth, otherwise known as the Prayer Book of 1559, are not numerous. A table of Proper Lessons for Sundays was introduced. The old vestments recognized in the earlier part of King Edward's reign were again legalized. The petition for deliverance from the tyranny of the Pope was struck out of the Litany, and by a compromise peculiarly English in its character, and, as experience has shown, exceedingly well judged, the two forms of words that had been used in the delivery of the elements in the Holy Communion were welded together into the shape in which we have them still.

Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book continued in use for five-and-forty years. Nothing was more natural than that when she died there should come with the accession of a new dynasty a demand for fresh revision. King James, who was not afflicted with any want of confidence in his own judgment, invited certain representatives of the disaffected party to meet, under his presidency, the Churchmen in council with a view to the settlement of differences. The Puritans had been gaining in strength during Elizabeth's reign, and they felt that they were now in position to demand a larger measure of liturgical reform than that monarch and her advisers had been willing to concede to them.

King James convened his conference at Hampton Court, near London, and he himself was good enough to preside. Very little came of the debate. The Puritans had demanded the discontinuance of the Sign of the cross in Baptism, of bowing at the name of Jesus, of the ring in marriage, and of the rite of confirmation. The words "priest" and "absolution" they sought to have expunged from the Prayer Book, and they desired that the wearing of the surplice should be made optional.

Almost nothing was conceded to them. The words "or Remission of Sins" were added to the title of the Absolution, certain Prayers and Thanksgivings were introduced, and that portion of the Catechism which deals with the Sacraments was for the first time set forth. And thus the English Prayer Book started out upon its fourth lease of life destined in this form to endure unchanged, though by no means unassailed, for more than half a century.

A stirring half century it was. The Puritan defeat at Hampton Court was redressed at Naseby. With the coming in of the Long Parliament the Book of Common Prayer went out, and to all appearances the triumph of the Commonwealth meant the final extinction

of the usage of liturgical worship on English soil. The book, under its various forms, had lasted just a hundred years when he who

Nothing common did or mean

Upon that memorable scene suffered at

Whitehall.

They buried him in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and no single word of the Prayer Book he had loved and for which he had fought was said over his grave.

On January 3, 1645, Parliament repealed the statutes of Edward VI. and of Elizabeth that had enjoined the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and took order that thereafter only such divine service should be lawful as accorded with what was called the *Directory*, a manual of suggestions with respect to public worship adopted by the Presbyterian party as a substitute for the ancient liturgy.

With the restoration of the Stuarts in 1660 came naturally the restoration of the Prayer Book, and with equal naturalness a revision of it. But of what sort should the revision be, and under whose auspices conducted? This was an anxious question for the advisers, civil and ecclesiastical, of the restored king. Should the second Charles take up the book just as it had fallen from the hands of the first Charles, unchanged in line or letter, or should he seek by judicious alterations and timely concessions to win back for the national Church the good-will and loyalty of those who, eighteen years before, had broken down her hedge? The situation may be described as triangular.

The king's secret and personal sympathies were probably all along with the Roman Church; his official allegiance was plainly due to the Church of England; and yet, at the same time, he owed much to the forbearance of the men who had been dominant under the Commonwealth. The mind of the nation had, indeed, reacted toward monarchy, but not with such an absolute and hardy renunciation of the doctrines of popular sovereignty as to make it safe for the returning king to do precisely as he chose. The glorious Revolution that was destined so soon to follow upon the heels of the gracious Restoration gave evidence, when it came, that there were some things the people of England prized even more highly than an hereditary throne. Misgivings as to the amount there might still be of this sort of electricity in the atmosphere suggested to the king and his counsellors the expediency of holding a conference, at which the leaders on either side might bring forward their strong reasons in favor of this or that method of dealing with the ecclesiastical question in general, and more especially with the vexed problem of worship.

Accordingly, early in the spring of 1661 the King issued a royal warrant summoning to meet at the Savoy Palace in the Strand an equal number of representatives of both parties—namely, one-and-twenty Churchmen and one-and-twenty Presbyterians.

The Episcopal deputation consisted of twelve bishops and nine other divines called coadjutors. The Presbyterians had also their twelve principal men and their nine coadjutors.

Conspicuous among the Episcopalians for weight of learning were Bishops Sanderson, Cosin, and Walton, and Doctors Pearson, Sparrow, and Heylin. Baxter, Reynolds, Calamy, and Liglitfoot were the most notable of the Presbyterians.

The conference, which has ever since been known from its place of meeting (an old palace of the Piedmontese Ambassadors) as the Savoy Conference, convened on April 15, 1661. For various reasons, it was evident from the outset that the Churchmen were in a position of great advantage. In the first place, signs and tokens of a renewed confidence in monarchy and of a revived attachment to the reigning House were becoming daily more numerous.

Before he had had a chance to test the strength of the existing political parties and to know how things really stood, Charles had borne himself very discreetly toward the Presbyterians, and had held out hopes to them which, as the event proved, were destined never to be realized. In a declaration put forth in the autumn of 1660, after he had been for some months on English soil, he had even gone so far as to say: "When we were in Holland we were attended by many grave and learned ministers from hence, who were looked upon as the most able and principal asserters of the Presbyterian opinions; with whom we had as much conference as the multitude of affairs which were then upon us would permit us to have, and to our great satisfaction and comfort found them persons full of affection to us, of zeal for the peace of the Church and State, and neither enemies, as they have been given out to be, to episcopacy or liturgy, but modestly to desire such alterations in either, as without shaking foundations might best allay the present distempers."

By the time the conference met it had become evident, from votes taken in Parliament and otherwise, that the Churchmen could sustain toward their opponents a somewhat stiffer attitude than this without imperilling their cause. Another great advantage enjoyed by the Episcopalians grew out of the fact that they were the party in possession. They had only to profess themselves satisfied with the Prayer Book as it stood, in order to throw the Presbyterians into the position of assailants, and defense is always easier than attack. Sheldon, the Bishop of London, was not slow to perceive this. At the very first meeting of the conference, he is reported to have said that "as the Non-conformists, and not the bishops, had sought for the conference, nothing could be done till the former had delivered their exceptions in writing, together with the additional forms and alterations which they desired." Upon which Bishop Burnet in his *History of his own Times* remarks: "Sheldon saw well what the effect would be of putting them to make all their demands at once. The number of them raised a mighty outcry against them, as people that could never be satisfied."

The Presbyterians, however, took up the challenge, set to work at formulating their objections, and appointed Richard Baxter, the most famous of their number, to show what could be done in the way of making a better manual of worship than the Book of Common Prayer.

Baxter, a truly great man and wise in a way, though scarcely in the liturgical way, was guilty of the incredible folly of undertaking to construct a Prayer Book within a fortnight.

Of this liturgy it is probably safe to say that no denomination of Christians, however anti-prelatical or eccentric, would for a moment dream of adopting it, if, indeed, there be a single local congregation anywhere that could be persuaded to employ it. The characteristic of the devotions is lengthiness. The opening sentence of the prayer with which the book begins contains by actual count eighty-three words. It is probable that Baxter by his rash act did more to injure the cause of intelligent and reverential liturgical revision than any ten men have done before or since. In every discussion of the subject he is almost sure to be brought forward as "the awful example."

A document much more to the point than Baxter's Liturgy was the formal catalogue of faults and blemishes alleged against the Prayer Book, which the Puritan members of the conference in due time brought in. This indictment, for it may fairly be called such, since it was drawn up in separate counts, is very interesting reading. Of the "exceptions against the Book of Common Prayer," as the Puritans named their list of liturgical grievances, some must strike almost any reader of the present day as trivial and unworthy. Others again there are that draw a sympathetic *Amen* from many quarters to-day. To an American Episcopalian the catalogue is chiefly interesting as showing how ready and even eager were our colonial ancestors of a hundred years ago to remove out of the way such known rocks of offence as they could. An attentive student of the American Prayer Book cannot fail to be struck with the number of instances in which the text gives evidence of the influence exerted over the minds of our revisers by what had been urged, more than a hundred years before, by the Puritan members of the Savoy Conference. The defeat of 1661 was, in a measure at least, avenged in 1789. It is encouraging to those who cast their bread upon liturgical waters to notice after how many days the return may come. But the conference, to all outward seeming, was a failure. Baxter's unhappy Prayer Book was its own sufficient refutation, and as for the list of special grievances it was met by the bishops with an "Answer" that was full of hard raps and conceded almost nothing.

A few detached paragraphs may serve to illustrate the general tone of this reply. Here, for instance, is the comment of the bishops upon the request of the Puritans to be allowed occasionally to substitute extemporaneous for liturgical devotions. "The gift or rather spirit of prayer consists in the inward graces of the spirit, not in extempore expressions which any man of natural parts having a voluble tongue and audacity may attain to without any special gift." Nothing very conciliatory in that. To the complaint that the Collects are too short, the bishops reply that they cannot for that reason be accounted faulty, being like those "short but prevalent prayers in Scripture, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Lord, increase our faith." The Puritans had objected to the antiphonal element in the Prayer-Book services, and desired to have nothing of a responsive character allowed beyond the single word *Amen*. "But," rejoin the bishops, "they directly practise the contrary in one of their principal parts of worship, singing of psalms, where the people bear as great a part as the minister. If this way be done in Hopkin's why not in David's Psalms; if in metre, why not in prose; if in a psalm, why not in a litany?" Sharp, but not winning.

The Puritans had objected to the people's kneeling while the Commandments were read on the score that ignorant worshippers might mistake the Decalogue for a form of prayer. With some asperity the bishops reply that "why Christian people should not upon their

knees ask their pardon for their life forfeited for the breach of every commandment and pray for grace to keep them for the time to come they must be more than 'ignorant' that can scruple."

The time during which the conference at the Savoy should continue its sessions had been limited to four months. This period expired on July 24, 1661, and the apparently fruitless disputation was at an end. Meanwhile, however, Convocation, the recognized legislature of the Church of England, had begun to sit, and the bishops had undertaken a revision of the Prayer Book after their own mind, and with slight regard to what they had been hearing from their critics at the Savoy. The bulk of their work, which included, it is said, more than six hundred alterations, most of them of a verbal character and of no great importance, was accomplished within the compass of a single month. It is consoling to those who within our own memory have been charged with indecent haste for seeking to effect a revision of the American Book of Common Prayer within a period of nine years, to find this precedent in ecclesiastical history for their so great rashness. Since Charles the Second's day there has been no formal revision of the Prayer Book of the Church of England by the Church of England.

Some slight relaxations of liturgical use on Sundays have been made legal by Act of Parliament, but in all important respects the Prayer Book of Victoria is identical with the book set forth by Convocation and sanctioned by Parliament shortly after the collapse of the Savoy Conference. Under no previous lease of life did the book enjoy anything like so long a period of continued existence. Elizabeth's book was the longest lived of all that preceded the Restoration, but that only continued in use five-and-forty years. But the Prayer Book of 1661 has now held its own in England for two centuries and a quarter. When, therefore, we are asked to accept the first Edwardian Book as the only just exponent of the religious mind of England, it is open to us to reply, "Why should we, seeing that the Caroline Book has served as the vehicle of English devotion for a period seventy-five times as long?" The most voluminous of the additions made to the Prayer Book, in 1661, were the Office for the Baptism of Adults and the Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea. The wide diffusion, under the Commonwealth, of what were then called Anabaptist opinions, had brought it to pass that throughout the kingdom there were thousands of men and women who had grown up unbaptized. At the time of the Reformation such a thing as an unchristened Christendom seems not to have been thought possible. At any rate no provision was made for the contingency. But upon the spread of liberty of religious thought there followed, logically enough, the spread of liberty of religious action, and it was not strange that after a whole generation had spent its life in controversy of the warmest sort over this very point of Baptism, there were found to be in England multitudes of the unbaptized.

Another reason assigned in the Preface of the English Prayer Book for the addition of this office was that it might be used for the baptizing of "natives in the plantations and other converts." This is the first hint of any awakening of the conscience of the English Church to a sense of duty toward those strangers and foreigners who in the "Greater Britain" of these later days fill so large a place. The composition of the office, which differs very little, perhaps scarcely enough, from that appointed for the Baptism of Infants, is attributed to Griffith, the Bishop of St. Asaph. The compiler of the Forms of Prayer to be

used at Sea was Bishop Sanderson, famous among English theologians as an authority on casuistry. He must have found it rather a nice case of conscience to decide whether a Stuart divine in preparing forms of prayer for a navy that had been the creation of Oliver Cromwell ought wholly to omit an acknowledgment of the nation's obligation to that stout-hearted, if non-Episcopal Christian. Other additions of importance made at this revision were the General Thanksgiving, in all probability the work of Reynolds, a conforming Presbyterian divine, the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, the Prayer for Parliament, upon the lines of which our own Prayer for Congress was afterward modelled, and the Prayer for All Sorts and Conditions of Men. In the Litany the words "rebellion" and "schism" were introduced into one of the suffrages, becoming tide-marks of the havoc wrought in Church and State by what the revisers, doubtless, looked back upon as "the flood of the ungodly." The words "Bishops, Priests, and Deacons" were substituted for "Bishops, Pastors, and Ministers of the Church." New Collects were appointed for the Third Sunday in Advent and for St. Stephen's Day. Both of these are distinct gains, albeit had the opinion then prevailed that to introduce into the Prayer Book "What imports it how large a gate you open, if there be always left a number who place a pride and a merit in refusing to enter?" was a fair question, and fatal to any dream of unity. And yet one may be pardoned for believing that had a little of the oil of brotherly kindness been poured upon those troubled waters we whom the waves still buffet might to-day be sailing a smoother sea.

As stated above, the Convocation of 1662 gave to the Prayer Book of the Church of England the form it has ever since retained. But it must not be supposed that no efforts have been made meanwhile to bring changes to pass. The books written upon the subject form a literature by themselves. The one really serious attempt to reconstruct the Liturgy in post-Caroline times was that which grew naturally enough out of the Revolution of 1688. In every previous crisis of political change, the Prayer Book had felt the tremor along with the statute-book.

Church and State, like heart and brain, are sympathetically responsive to one another; revisions of rubrics go naturally along with revisions of codes. It was only what might have been anticipated, therefore, that when William and Mary came to the throne a Commission should issue for a new review. If Elizabeth had found it necessary to revise the book, if James had found it necessary, if Charles had found it necessary, why should not the strong hand of William of Orange be laid upon the pages? But this time the rule was destined to find its exception. The work of review was, indeed, undertaken by a Royal Commission, including among its members the great names of Stillingfleet, Tillotson, and Beveridge, but nothing came of their work. Convocation again showed itself unfriendly to anything like concessive measures, and so complete was the obscurity into which the doings of the Commission fell, that even as late as 1849, Cardwell, in the third edition of his *History of Conferences*, speaks as if he knew nothing of the whereabouts of the record. In 1854 the manuscript minutes of the Commission's proceedings were discovered in the Library of Lambeth Palace, and by order of Parliament printed as a Blue-book, The same document has also been published in a more readable form by Bagster. One rises from the perusal of this Broad Church Prayer Book—for such, perhaps, Tillotson's attempt may not unfairly be called—profoundly thankful that the promoters of it were not suffered to succeed. The Preface to our

American Book of Common Prayer refers to this attempted review of 1689 “as a great and good work.” But the greatness and the goodness must have lain in the motive, for one fails to discern them either in the matter or in the manner of what was recommended.

Even Macaulay, Whig that he is, fails not to put on record his condemnation of the literary violence which the Prayer Book so narrowly escaped at the hands of the Royal Commission of 1689. Terseness was not the special excellency of Macaulay’s own style, yet even he resented Bishop Patrick’s notion that the Collects could be improved by amplification. One of the few really good suggestions made by the Commissioners was that of using the Beatitudes in the Office of the Holy Communion as an alternate for the Decalogue. There are certain festivals of the Christian year when such a substitution would be most timely and refreshing.

We make a leap now of just a hundred years. From 1689 we pass to 1789, and find ourselves in the city of Philadelphia, at a convention assembled for the purpose of framing a constitution and setting forth a liturgy for a body of Christians destined to be known as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. During the interval between the issue of the Declaration of Independence and the Ratification of the Constitution of the United States, the people in this country who had been brought up in the communion of the Church of England found themselves ecclesiastically in a very delicate position indeed. As colonists they had been canonically under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, a somewhat remote diocesan. But with this Episcopal bond broken and no new one formed, they seemed to be in a peculiar sense adrift. It does not fall to me to narrate the steps that led to the final establishment of the episcopacy upon a sure foundation, nor yet to trace the process through which the Church’s legislative system came gradually to its completion. Our interest is a liturgical one, and our subject matter the evolution of the Prayer Book. I say nothing, therefore, of other matters that were debated in the Convention of 1789, but shall propose instead that we confine ourselves to what was said and done about the Prayer Book. In order, however, fully to appreciate the situation we must go back a little. In a half-formal and halfinformal fashion there had come into existence, four years before this Convention of 1789 assembled, an American Liturgy now known by the name of *The Proposed Book*. It had been compiled on the basis of the English Prayer Book by a Committee of three eminent clergymen, Dr. White of Pennsylvania, Dr. William Smith of Maryland, and Dr. Wharton of Delaware. Precisely what measure of acceptance this book enjoyed, or to what extent it came actually into use, are difficult, perhaps hopeless questions.

What we know for certain is that the public opinion of the greater number of Churchmen rejected it as inadequate and unsatisfactory. In the Convention of 1789 *The Proposed Book* does not seem to have been seriously considered in open debate at all, though doubtless there was much talk about it, much controversy over its merits and demerits at Philadelphia dinner-tables and elsewhere while the session was in progress.

The truth is, the changes set forth in *The Proposed Book* were too sweeping to commend themselves to the sober second-thought of men whose blood still showed the tincture of English conservatism. Possibly also some old flames of Tory resentment were rekindled, here and there, by the prominence given in the book to a form of public thanksgiving for the Fourth of July. There were Churchmen doubtless at that day who failed duly to

appreciate what were called in the title of the office, “the inestimable blessings of Religious and Civil Liberty.” Others again may have been offended by the treatment measured out to the Psalter, which was portioned into thirty selections of two parts each, with the *Benedicite* added at the end, to be used, if desired, on the thirty-first day of any month. Another somewhat crude and unliturgical device was the running together without break of the Morning Prayer and the Litany.

I speak of blemishes, but *The Proposed Book* had its excellences also. Just at present it is the fashion in Anglican circles to heap ridicule and contempt on *The Proposed Book* out of all proportion to its real demerits. Somehow it is thought to compromise us with the English by showing up our ecclesiastical ancestors in an unfavorable light as unlearned and ignorant men. It is treated as people will sometimes treat an old family portrait of a forebear, who in his day was under a cloud, mismanaged trust funds, or made money in the slave trade. Thus a grave historiographer by way of speaking comfortably on this score, assures us that the volume “speedily sunk into obscurity,” becoming one of the rarest of the books illustrative of our ecclesiastical annals.

And yet, curiously enough, *The Proposed Book* was in some points more “churchly,” using the word in a sense expressive of liturgical accuracy, than the book finally adopted. In the Morning Prayer it has the *Venite* in full and not abridged. The *Benedictus* it also gives entire. A single form of Absolution is supplied. The versicles following upon the Creed are more numerous than ours. In the Evening Prayer the great Gospel Hymns, the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis*, stand in the places to which we with tardy justice have only just restored them. Again, if we consider those features of *The Proposed Book* that were retained and made part of the Liturgy in 1789, we shall have further reason to refrain from wholesale condemnation of this tentative work. For example, we owe the two opening sentences of Morning Prayer, “The Lord is in his holy temple” and “From the rising of the sun,” to *The Proposed Book*, and also the special form for Thanksgiving Day. And yet, on the whole, the Convention of 1789 acted most wisely in determining that it would make the Prayer Book of the Church of England, rather than *The Proposed Book*, the real basis of revision. It did so, and as a result we have what has served us so well during the first century of our national life—the *Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church according to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America*. The points wherein the American Prayer Book differs from the Prayer Book of the Church of England are too numerous to be catalogued in full. “They will appear,” says the Preface (a composition borrowed, by the way, almost wholly from *The Proposed Book*), “and, it is to be hoped, the reasons of them also, upon a comparison of this with the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England.”

The most important differences are the following: The permissive use of “Selections of Psalms in place of the Psalms appointed for the day of the month.” This was doubtless suggested by the wholesale transformation of the Psalter in *The Proposed Book* into a series of selections.

The permitted shortening of the Litany is an American feature.

A number of the special prayers, as, for example, the prayer for a sick person, that for persons going to sea, the thanksgivings for a recovery and for a safe return, all these are peculiar to the American use. Extensive alterations were made in the Marriage Service and certain greatly needed ones in the Burial Office. The two most noteworthy differences, however, are the omission from our Prayer Book of the so-called Athanasian Creed, and the insertion in it of that part of the Consecration Prayer in the Communion Office known as the Invocation. The engrafting of this latter feature we owe to the influence of Bishop Seabury, who by this addition not only assimilated the language of our liturgy more closely to that of the ancient formularies of the Oriental Church, but also insured our being kept reminded of the truly spiritual character of Holy Communion. "It is the spirit that quickeneth," this Invocation seems to say; "the flesh profiteth nothing." Quite in line with this was the alteration made at the same time in the language of the Catechism. "The Body and Blood of Christ," says the English Book, "which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."

"The Body and Blood of Christ," says the American Book, "which are spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."

Many verbal changes are to be found scattered here and there through the book, some of them for the better, some, perhaps, for the worse. The prevailing purpose seems to have been to expunge all obsolete words and phrases while dealing tenderly with obsolescent ones. In this course, however, the revisers were by no means always and everywhere consistent.

"Prevent," in the sense of "anticipate," is altered in some places but left unchanged in others. In the *Visitation of Prisoners*, an office borrowed from the Irish Prayer Book, the thoroughly obsolete expression, "As you tender," in the sense of "as you value," the salvation of your soul, is retained.

From the Psalter has disappeared in the American Book "Thou tellest my fittings," although why this particular archaism should have been selected for banishment and a hundred others spared, it is not easy to understand.

Perhaps some sudden impatience seized the reviser, like that which moved Bishop Wren, while annotating his Prayer Book, to write on the margin of the calendar for August, "Out with 'dog days' from among the saints."

Considering what a bond of unity the Lord's Prayer appears to be becoming among all English-speaking worshippers, it is, perhaps, to be regretted that our revisers changed the wording of it in two or three places. The excision of "Lighten our darkness" must probably be attributed to the prosaic matter-of-fact temper which had possession of everybody and everything during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

The Ordinal, the Articles, the Consecration of Churches, and the Institution of Ministers made no part of the Prayer Book as it was set forth in 1789; nor do they, even now, strictly speaking, make a part of it, although in the matter of binding force and legal authority they are on the same footing.

The Ordinal and Articles are substantially identical with the English Ordinal and Articles, save in the matter of a reference to the Athanasian Creed and several references to the connection of Church and State. The Consecration of Churches and the Institution of Ministers are offices distinctively American. If I add that the American Book drops out of the Visitation of the Sick a form of private absolution, and greatly modifies the service for Ash-Wednesday, we shall have made our survey of differences tolerably, though by no means exhaustively complete.

And now what is the lesson taught us by the history of the Prayer Book? Homiletical as the question sounds, it is worth asking.

We have reviewed rapidly, but not carelessly, the vicissitudes of the book's wonderful career, and we ought to be in a position to draw some sort of instructive inference from it all. Well, one thing taught us is this, the singular power of survival that lives in gracious words. They wondered at the "gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth," and because they wondered at them they treasured them up.

Kind words, says the child's hymn, can never die; neither can kindly words, and kindly in the deepest sense are many, many of the words of the Common Prayer; they touch that which is most catholic in us, that which strongly links us to our kind. There is that in some of the Collects which as it has lasted since the days when Roman emperors were sitting on their thrones, so will it last while man continues what he is, a praying creature.

Another thing taught us by the Prayer Book's history is the duty of being forever on our guard in the religious life against "the falsehood of extremes."

The emancipated thinkers who account all standards of belief to be no better than dungeon walls, scoff at this feature of the Anglican character with much bitterness. "Your Church is a Church of compromises," they say, "and your boasted *Via media* only a coward's path, the poor refuge of the man who dares not walk in the open." But when we see this Prayer Book condemned for being what it is by Bloody Mary, and then again condemned for being what it is by the Long Parliament, the thought occurs to us that possibly there is enshrined in this much-persecuted volume a truth larger than the Romanist is willing to tolerate, or the Puritan generous enough to apprehend.

A third important lesson is that we are not to confound revision with ruin, or to suppose that because a book is marvellously good it cannot conceivably be bettered. Each accomplished revision of the Book of Common Prayer has been a distinct step in advance. If God in his wise providence suffered an excellent growth of devotion to spring up out of the soil of England in the days of Edward the Sixth, and, after many years, determined that like a vine out of Egypt it should be brought across the sea and given root on these shores, we need not fear that we are about to lose utterly our pleasant plant if we notice that the twigs and leaves are adapting themselves to the climate and the atmosphere of the new dwelling-place. The life within the vine remains what it always was. The growth means health. The power of adaptation is the guarantee of a perpetual youth.