The 1549 Book of Common Prayer,

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THE
book of the common
prayer and administra-
tion of
the
Sacramentes, and other
rites and ceremonies of
the Churche: after the
use of the Churche
of England.

LONDON: IN OFFICINA
Edwards Whitechurch,

Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.

ANNO DO. 1549. M. c. e.
Martis.
THE CON-

i. A preface.

ii. A table and Kalendar for Psalms and Lessons, with necessary rules perteynyng to thesame.

iii. The ordre for Matins and Euensong, throughout the yeare.

iv. The Introites, Collectes, Epistles and Gospels, to be used at the celebracion of the Lordes Supper and holy Communion through the yere, with proper Psalms and Lessons, for diverse feastes & dayes.

v. The Supper of the Lord and holy Communion, commonly called the Passe.

vi. Of Baptisme, bothe publique and privite.

vii. Of Confirmacion, where also is a Catechisme for children.

viii. Of Patrimonie.

ix. Of visitacion of the sicke, and Communion of the same.

x. Of Buriall.

xi. The purificacion of women.

xii. A declaracion of scripture, with certein prayers to bee use the firste daye of Lent, commonly called Ash-wednesdaie.

xiii. Of Ceremonies omitted or retyned.

xiv. Certein notes for the more plain explicacion and decent ministracion of thinges conteined in this boke.
Here was never any thing by the wit of man so well

denied, or so surely established, which (in continuance

de time) hath not been corrupted: as (among other

things) it may plainly appear by the common pray-
ers in the Church, commonly called divine service:

the first originall and grounde whereof, if a manne

woulde searche out by the auncient fathers, he shall

finde that the same was not qudned, 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 parte thereof) should be read

over once in the yeare, intending thereby, that the Clergie, and specially

suche as were Ministers of the congregation, should (by often reading and

meditation of Gods worde) be stirred up to godlinesse themselves, and be more

able also to exhort othe by wholesome doctrine, and to confute them that were

aduersaries to the trueth. And further, that the people (by daily hearyng of

holy scripture read in the Church) should continually profite more and

more in the knowledge of God, and bee the more inflamed with the loue of his

true religion. But these many yeares past this Godly and decent order of

the auncient fathers, hath bee so altered, broken, and neglected, by planting in

uncertaine stories, Legendes, Respondes, Verses, vain repetitions, Com-

memorations, and Synodales, that commonly when any boke of the Bible

was began before three or foure Chapters were read out, all the rest were

unread. And in this sorte the boke of Ezechiel was began in Advent, and the boke

of Genesis in Septuagesima: but they were only began, and never read

through. After a like sorte were other bookes of holy scripture used. And more-

over, whereas s. Paul would have suche language spoken to the people in the

church, as they mighte understande and have profite by hearyng the same;

the seruice in this Church of England (these many yeares) hath been read in

Latin to the people, which they understood not: So that they have heard with

their eares only: their hartes, spirite, and minde, have not been edified

thereby. And furthermore, notwithstanding that the auncient fathers had

divided the psalms into seuen pascions, wherof every one was called a

nocturne, now of late tyme a fewe of them have been dailye sayd (and ofte

repeated) and the rest utterly omitted. Moreover the number and hardnes of the

rules called the pie, and the manifolde changinges of the seruice, was the

cause, yt to turne the boke onylpe, was so hard and intricate a matter, that

many times, there was more busines to fynd out what should be read, then to

read it when it was founde out.

These inconueniences thersfor considered: here is set furth suche an order,

whereby the same shall be redresed. And for a readiness in this matter, here is

drawn out a kalender for that purpose, which is plain and easy to be

understanded, wherin (so muche as may be) the reading of holy scripture is

so set furthe, that all thynges shall be done in order, without breaking one

piece thereof from another. For this cause be cut of Anthemes, Respondes,

Innitationes, and suche like thynges, as did breake the continuall course of the
readyng of the scripture. Yet because there is no remedy, but that of necessitie there must be some rules: thence certain rules are here set furrth, whiche as they be fewe in nombre, so they be plain and eazy to be understood. So yt here you have an ordre for prayere (as touching the readyng of holy scripture) muche agreeable to the mynde & purpose of the olde fathers, and a greate deale more profitable and commodious, then that whiche of late was used. It is more profitable, because here are left out many thinges, whereof some be untrue, some uncertain, some vain and superstitious: and is owesnyned nothing to be read, but the very pure wyde of God, the holy scriptures, or that whiche is evidently grounded upon the same; and that in suche a language & ordre, as is moste easie & plain for the understanding, both of the readers and hearers. It is also more commodious, both for the shortnes thereof, & for the plaines of the ordre, & for that the rules be fewe & easie. Furthermore by this ordre, the curates shal neede none other booke for their publique service, but this boke and the Bible: by the meanes whereof, the people shall not be at so great charge for bookes, as in tymne past they have been.

And where heretofore, there hath been great diuerstite in saying and sunging in churches within this realme: some folowyng Salisburie use, some Herford use, some the use of Bangor, some of Poacre, some of Lincaline: Now from hencefurth, all the whole realme shall have but one use. And if any would judge this waye more painfull, because that all thinges must be read upon the boke, where as before, by the reason of so often repetition, they could saye many thinges by heart: if those men will waye their laboure, with the profite in knowlege, whiche daeply they shal obtaine by readyng upon the boke, they will not refuse the payn, in consideration of the greate profite that shal ensue thereof.

And的房子 as nothing can, almoste, be so plainly set furth, but doubts maie rise in the use and practising of the same: to appease all suche diuerstite (if any arise), and for the resolution of all doubts, concerning the maner how to understande, do, and execute the thynge conteygned in this booke: the parties that do doubt, or diuerfly take any thing, shal alwaye referre to the Bishop of the Diocese, who by his discretion shal take orde for the quietyng and appeasing of the same: so that the same orde be not contrary to any thing conteygned in this boke.

Though it be appointed in the afoye written preface, that all thinges halbe read and sung in the churche, in the English tongue, to thende yt the congregacion maie be thereby edified: yet it is not meant, but when men saye Matins and Even-Enginge privetelye, they maye saie the same in any language that they themselues do understande. Neither that anye man shalle bound to the saying of them, but suche as from tymne to tymne, in Cathedrall and Collegiate Churches, Pariise Churches, and Chapelles to the same annexed, shall ferue the congregacion.