

THE
NEW PRAYER BOOK
EXPLAINED

REVISED EDITION

S.P.C.K.

3d. net

THE
NEW PRAYER BOOK
EXPLAINED

LONDON
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

The following notes were written immediately on seeing the Bishops' Provisional Draft Prayer Book, the Literature Committee of the S.P.C.K. having thought that such a pamphlet would be useful. It should not necessarily be taken as representing the Society's standpoint in controverted questions.

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I

THE Book of Common Prayer, so familiar to English Churchmen, is already in its fourth edition. It was first published in 1549, early in the reign of Edward VI, though it was a new book only in the sense of being a new arrangement and simplification, *in the English language*, of the services which had been held for many centuries in our land. Edward VI's reign was a time of rapid changes, and a second and revised edition of the book appeared in 1552. This was put out again in 1559, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, with some slight alterations, thus reaching its third edition. The fourth dates from 1662, shortly after the restoration of the monarchy in the person of Charles II. Since then certain additional services, such as that for November 5th, have been omitted, but otherwise the 1662 book is still in use.

No one can accuse the Church of England of

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undue haste in proceeding to a fifth edition. More than two and a half centuries have passed. The world has changed out of all recognition, new needs have arisen, old prejudices have died down. Most important of all, the desire for uniformity in public worship cherished by our ancestors, largely for political reasons, no longer prevails. But officially we are still bound to a service book which is generally recognised as not satisfying all the needs of the present day. None can deny that there is a good case for a new edition of the old book.

But the very length of time that our present book has held the field makes change difficult. Religion is bound up with memories of the past, our own early associations and the lives of those who have gone before. The immensely strong forces of Conservatism are enlisted in the cause of No Change. "Hands off the Prayer Book" can easily be made a popular cry. The Prayer Book has entered into the marrow of our race. Its stately diction, its association with great national occasions and the crises of individual lives, its manliness and sobriety, have an influence reaching far beyond the circle of practising Churchmen. Before we can convince the mass of thoughtful Englishmen that a change is desirable, we must show them that the proposed book is a new edition, an enrichment and im-

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provement, of the book they hold in honour, and not a new book.

The Church of England is, strictly speaking, a collection of dioceses organised in the two provinces of Canterbury and York. It forms part of the "Anglican Communion," a world-wide federation of Churches in communion with Canterbury and York which look towards it as their mother. (This is true as a broad statement, though the Churches of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland were founded before the Church of the Anglo-Saxon race.) So we should come to no conclusion about important changes in our service book without asking how our action will affect the Churches in communion with us. The answer to our question is clear. The other Churches have either already revised their books, or, feeling the inadequacy of the 1662 book even more keenly than we do, are eagerly awaiting the outcome of the English revision in order that they may either adopt it as it stands or use it to guide them in a revision of their own books. The Scottish Episcopal Church has a Communion Service of its own, besides allowing a number of additions to and variations from the English book elsewhere. A revised Irish Prayer Book was issued in 1877. The American Church has its own book, in which the Communion Service is virtually identical with the Scottish one.

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The Canadian Church has recently published its own book. The South African Church is revising its Prayer Book gradually; the Alternative Form of Holy Communion is in general use, and a revised form of the Occasional Offices has been issued in draft. In the Mission Field various adaptations of the English book are to be found. The example of Japan is instructive. The Anglican Mission in that country is at once English, American, and Canadian, and the Japanese Prayer Book is an independent compilation drawing upon the English and American books.

It will be realised, then, that the English revision is of great importance. The Mother Church can draw upon resources of scholarship such as are found nowhere else in the Anglican Communion. In view of her importance, it was right for her to move slowly; the example she sets will have consequences all over the world.

At this point we must mention the peculiar difficulty of our English problem. Every revision so far, whether of our original 1549 book at home, or of the 1662 book outside England, has entailed comparatively small changes which have commanded general approval, so that the new book has superseded the old. But the draft Prayer Book now being considered by the Home Church is to be an Alternative Book only;

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the present book will remain in use by those who prefer it.

What is the explanation of the special difficulties which have led to the adoption of this course?

There have always been two parties in the reformed Church of England. In Elizabeth's reign those who sympathised with the old order of things remained, for the most part, in the National Church; it did not give them all they wanted, but their position was not impossible. The same applied to those who sympathised with Continental Protestantism. As years passed, the two parties developed and took up new positions without ever quite getting out of touch with their original standpoints. In the eighteenth century the Protestant party awoke to new life in the Evangelical Revival, and in the nineteenth century the High Church party became active in the Oxford, now called the Anglo-Catholic, Movement. But these two schools of thought have not been represented outside England in the same proportion. Thus, the Church of Ireland is definitely anti-Roman Catholic, the Canadian Church is predominantly Evangelical or Moderate, the South African Church predominantly Anglo-Catholic. In such cases it has proved comparatively easy to secure a revision of the Prayer Book which all have accepted.

II

The origin of the proposed Alternative Prayer Book is as follows. In August, 1906, as a result of the findings of the Royal Commission on Disorders in the Church, the two Archbishops applied to the Crown for "Letters of Business" which would enable the Convocations to draw up proposals to meet what was generally known as the "Church Crisis." Their petition was granted, and in the following November the Archbishops issued the Letters, which authorised the Convocations to submit proposals for modifications of the rubrics and the laws relating to the conduct of Divine Service and the ornaments used in connection with it. The Prayer Book being annexed to the Act of Uniformity, no change can be made in it without the sanction of Parliament and the Royal Assent. It was the duty of the spiritual bodies, the Convocations, to prepare proposals, but they had no power to carry them into effect.

Progress was slow because the matter had to be debated separately in the Upper and Lower Houses of the Provinces of Canterbury and York (four different bodies), and the War caused inevitable delays. Gradually it became clear that no revision would command general approval, and that the existing Prayer Book must remain

in use by those who preferred it. A new situation arose with the passing of the Enabling Act in 1920, and the setting up of the Church Assembly. Hitherto the discussion had been confined to the Convocations. Now the Assembly was entrusted with the task of preparing legislation which Parliament agreed to accept or reject, forgoing the right of amending. The task of revision was therefore entered upon by the Assembly, which built upon the labours of the Convocations, but introduced many changes into their work. It should be explained that the *personnel* of the Houses of Bishops and Clergy in the Assembly is identical with that of the Upper and Lower Houses of Convocation. The House of Laity took its part in discussing the Prayer Book for the first time at the Assembly stage; the Archbishop of Canterbury had promised at the outset of the Revision-discussions that the Houses of Laymen of the two Provinces, which already existed on a voluntary basis, should be consulted.

When the Report of the Committee of the Church Assembly was published (generally known as N.A. 84), a great deal of interest was aroused, and groups of Churchmen put forward proposals for a more thorough revision. Thus the English Church Union published "The Green Book," and a group associated with the Bishop of

Manchester "The Grey Book." Each contained admirable features, but involved too radical a departure from the Book of Common Prayer to have any chance of general acceptance.

It is worth while reminding the reader that the process of Prayer Book Revision has already begun, in part with legal sanction, in part unofficially. The Table of Lessons in the Preface has been superseded in many Churches by the Revised Lectionary, which received the Royal Assent in August 1922, for alternative use by the side of the existing Lectionary (which dated from 1871) as from the following Advent Sunday. In practice this double system of lessons has produced no great inconvenience and may be considered a happy augury for the more important changes which are to follow. Another part of the Alternative Prayer Book, namely the Select Psalms for Sunday use, is widely used without legal authority. Other parts, such as the Additional Collects, Epistles and Gospels for Holy Days and the new prayers for use at Morning and Evening Prayer after the Third Collect, have become familiar to our congregations. The Bishops generally, without committing themselves to formal approval, have raised no objection to their use.

III

We must now look at the proposals in detail, so far as the limits of a short pamphlet will allow. Perhaps the most useful way of treating the subject will be to take the different services and ministrations of the Church to which the layman is accustomed and see what alterations will be made.

1. *The Church's Year*.—The Calendar is enriched by the addition of various names which Christians ought always to hold in grateful remembrance, such as St. Patrick on March 17, and St. Francis of Assisi on October 4. A few unimportant names are omitted. St. Mary Magdalene on July 22 and the Transfiguration on August 6 are raised to the rank of "Red Letter Days"—they have already been provided with special lessons in the Revised Lectionary. The list of saints to be commemorated has not reached its final form.

Considerable addition is made to the Collects, Epistles and Gospels. The habit of frequent Communion has increased of late, and many churches have daily celebrations. Obviously a choice of Collects, etc., which satisfies those who communicate once a week is inadequate for those who communicate, or attend the

Eucharist, daily, and naturally desire more variety in their devotions. Their needs are met by the provision of admirably selected Epistles and Gospels for certain "Black Letter Days," such as the Name of Jesus (August 7) and Holy Cross Day (September 14); for occasions like the Feast of Consecration of a Church or Thanksgiving for Harvest; and for Ember Days and Saints' Days which have no special services of their own. The accompanying Collects are often very beautiful and enrich our store of devotion appreciably.

The Collect for the Commemoration of All Souls, an addition (November 2) to the Calendar, deserves special notice, because it is a feature of the book to which some may object. "O Lord" (it runs), "the maker and redeemer of all believers, grant to the faithful departed all the unsearchable benefits of thy Son's passion; that in the day of his appearing they may be manifested as thy true children." Prayers for the Dead, it may be argued, are excluded from the public services of the Reformed Church of England, or at most merely hinted at in ambiguous language; in thus sanctioning them the new book upsets the existing doctrinal balance. The best answer is that a revised Prayer Book must to a large extent register the changes which have gradually taken place in religious practice. Prayers for the

Departed—this is a better phrase, because we pray not for the *dead* but for those who are alive in God—are now used so widely by Churchmen of all schools of thought that a book intended for Churchmen must recognise them. No one could maintain that they are wrong; the most that can be said is that we have no ground for believing them to have any effect. That is to say, while many believe them to be an indispensable, or at least a highly desirable, part of Christian devotion, some consider them unnecessary, but harmless. Clearly the reasons for their inclusion are very strong.

2. *The Sunday Morning Service.*—Immediately before Morning Prayer a rubric is inserted which is important as throwing light on the principles of revision. It allows "hymns and anthems agreeable to Holy Scripture and to the doctrine and purpose of this Book" to be sung. If the rubrics of the present book are interpreted to mean that what is not mentioned is forbidden, then hymns are illegal. But by common consent they are used. So in this, as in many other instances, the provisions of the Alternative Book are intended to legalise what already has the sanction of custom.

Another rubric introduces the reader to the outstanding feature of the new book. It is not,

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strictly speaking, so much an Alternative Book as a "Composite Book." It gives the whole of the present book as well as the alternatives. The purpose of this is to provide churchmen with a complete book containing everything that can be used in church. The drawbacks are obvious. The new book is much longer than the old, and will be necessarily more expensive. Further, the complications introduced by alternative services will make it perplexing to simple people. But presumably it is intended to issue simplified editions of the new book, as is already the practice in regard to the present book.

A third new rubric speaks for itself. "Inasmuch as it is to be desired that changes sanctioned by this Book in the customary arrangement and conduct of the services should not be made arbitrarily or without the good will of the people, as represented in the Parochial Church Council" differences of opinion as between minister and people are to be referred to the Bishop, whose decision shall be final.

Provision is made for shortening the service and avoiding repetitions when the Communion follows immediately after Matins. The whole of the service up to "O Lord, open thou our lips" is printed separately as an Introduction, and can be omitted when another service follows. In any case the exhortation "Dearly beloved

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brethren . . ." may be omitted, except on the first Sundays in Advent and Lent, when this part of Matins must always be said in the familiar form. A shortened form of Confession and Absolution is provided. A new feature is introduced by the provision of short sentences before and after the Venite, to mark the teaching of the Season. Thus in Advent: "Our King and Saviour draweth nigh: O come, let us adore him." The last four verses of the Venite are omitted. The 51st Psalm is provided as an alternative to the Te Deum.

The *Athanasian Creed* appears in a new and more accurate translation, beginning "Whosoever would be saved: needeth before all things to hold fast the Catholic Faith," and is prescribed for optional use on Trinity Sunday, the Sunday after Christmas, and the Annunciation.

The *Litany* has some slight modifications and is shortened by the omission of the part beginning "O Lord, deal not with us after our sins," which follows later as a separate devotion for use in time of trouble or at penitential seasons—for which purpose it is specially adapted.

The *Prayers and Thanksgivings* which follow the Litany are enriched considerably. One prayer commemorates the faithful departed and asks that "encouraged by their examples, and strengthened by their fellowship, we also may

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be found meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light." The Reformed Church of England has never admitted into public worship the Invocation of Saints, that is the direct asking for their prayers. But this prayer teaches that the Communion of Saints is a reality, and that we may believe them to be interested in the Church Militant and in some way able to help it by their prayers. A rubric at the end of this section permits extempore prayer, under safeguards, outside the liturgical service.

So far we have found nothing likely to upset the conservatively-minded worshipper. The same minister, dressed in the same robes, conducts a service which has the same structure as now, and indeed differs hardly at all from what Churchmen are already familiar with, to so large an extent has Prayer Book revision been already anticipated in practice during recent years.

When we reach the *Holy Communion Service* greater alteration is found. This needs lengthier treatment. There is reason to think that, if the familiar service had been put into the new book without change, the new book would be generally accepted by all parties so that it would be unnecessary to continue circulating the 1662 book. This solution is, however, impossible. An important section of the Church, though content to continue with the 1662 book for the present,

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insists that if changes are made the Communion Service shall be brought more into line with the historic liturgies of Christendom. This party has in its ranks many learned scholars, who are agreed that our present liturgy, though adequate, is susceptible of improvement, and that the opportunity of improving it should not be allowed to pass.

The revised service follows the familiar service, as "an alternative order." Prefixed to the services is a rubric which says that "the Priest, in celebrating the Holy Communion, shall wear either a surplice with stole or with scarf and hood, or a white alb plain with a vestment or cope." The purpose of the rubric is to end the long controversy about vestments by legalising the different usages which at present exist. This seems the only possible solution. One side is convinced that the "Ornaments Rubric," printed before Morning Prayer in the 1662 book, by prescribing the ornaments and vestures used in the second year of Edward VI. made the Eucharistic vestments legal. The other side holds that subsequent action nullified such authorisation and that their disuse until the middle of the nineteenth century proves that such was the case. Long discussion has not produced agreement, and consequently the divergence must be recognised.

Another important rubric applicable to both

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services runs thus: "The Order here provided shall not be supplemented by additional prayers, save so far as is herein permitted; nor shall the private devotions of the Minister be such as to hinder, interrupt, or alter the course of the service." The first part of this direction allows for additional services on national occasions such as were common during the War. The second part gives a ruling the reasonableness of which, it is hoped, will appeal to every priest.

The Ten Commandments appear in a shortened form. Thus in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, the actual Commands are given, without the familiar reasons and explanations. The Commandments of the Second Table, 5 to 10, are given in their New Testament form—for example, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," "Thou shalt not covet." The Commandments are ordered to be recited at least each month on a Sunday. In their place may be said at other times our Lord's summary of the Law—or else "Lord, have mercy. *Christ, have mercy.* Lord, have mercy." The Collects for the King are omitted, because the subject is adequately represented in the Prayer for the Church. Passing, here as elsewhere, over minor alterations, we come to the second rubric after the Offertory Sentences, in which occur the words: "It is an ancient tradition of the Church to mingle a little water with the wine." There

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can be no doubt that the "mixed chalice" was the custom of the primitive Church if only because it was almost an unknown thing in Mediterranean lands to drink wine undiluted. In the Prayer for the Church the faithful departed are prayed for explicitly, and a new paragraph gives thanks for the lives of the saints.

Shortened forms of Invitation, Confession and Absolution are provided for weekdays. After the "Comfortable Words" comes the first of those rearrangements of the central part of the service which arouse the dislike of some people. The "Prayer of Humble Access" ("We do not presume," etc.) is brought forward to this place. It is followed by the priest's saying: "The Lord be with you," the people's response, and then the *Sursum Corda* ("Lift up your hearts").

The explanation of this change is that the central part of the liturgy goes back to the primitive Church. It is called the Canon, that is, the part which by fixed rule was invariable. The Church of England has always appealed to the Early Church, and there are objections to interrupting this invariable part with a comparatively modern prayer.

The same motive which led to the provision of additional Collects, Epistles and Gospels, has dictated the additional Proper Prefaces which follow at this place in the service. On approxi-

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mately one hundred days in the year a Proper Preface will now be said.

The Consecration Prayer is altered. Once more the intention is to return to the arrangements which were in force in the primitive Church.

After the Sanctus ("Holy, holy, holy . . .") the priest begins: "All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death . . ." and continues as in the present book to the words "coming again." The next section is omitted, being represented later. Then comes the section "Who, in the same night" to the end of the prayer in the 1662 book. After this a new section begins:

"Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy humble servants, having in remembrance the precious death and passion of thy dear Son, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, according to his holy institution, do celebrate, and set forth before thy Divine Majesty with these thy holy gifts, the memorial which he hath willed us to make, rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits which he hath procured unto us.

"Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and with thy Holy and Life-giving Spirit vouchsafe to bless and sanctify both us and these thy gifts of Bread and Wine,

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that they may be to us the Body and Blood of thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to the end that we, receiving the same, may be strengthened and refreshed both in body and soul.

"And we entirely desire thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . ." (The rest is as in the Prayer of Oblation.)

It will be noted that two prayers in our present book—the Prayer of Consecration and that of Oblation—are combined to make one long prayer, with a new section to connect them. It is followed by the Lord's Prayer.

The principle is that observed in the first edition of our Prayer Book (1549), in the Scottish Liturgy, the American, and the South African Alternative Use.* The bearing of the English revision upon the daughter Churches overseas has already been explained. Clearly we must be guided in our turn to some extent by their experience. The result of the legalising of the Alternative Liturgy would be that, whereas elsewhere, for the most part, one or other type of liturgy would be used exclusively, in the Mother Church of England both types would find a home. Those Churches in communion with us which have reverted to the older type have not

* No attempt is made here to deal with the theological question of the Invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the elements.

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found in practice that it encourages views of the Eucharist specially associated with the Middle Ages. The example of the American Church is especially instructive. In many of its dioceses the prevailing type of Churchmanship is Low or Moderate, and this has been found to be perfectly compatible with the long consecration prayer now proposed for alternative use in England.

The Words of Administration present a problem, when one priest has to communicate large numbers, especially at great festivals. The problem is solved by legalising some of the various methods at present in use. A general invitation is said once, and then either the first or the second half may be said to the individual communicants.

As the Prayer of Oblation has been included in the Consecration Prayer, the Prayer of Thanksgiving now stands alone, and is to be said invariably.

Such is the Alternative Order of Holy Communion, briefly sketched. Its general effect may be compared to that of the Scottish Rite, familiar to those who visit Scotland. As in Scotland it is usual to provide alternative services, so it may be expected that, in churches where the new book is adopted, the old Rite will be continued so long as it is demanded by the laity.

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3. *The Sunday Evening Service.*—One of the drawbacks of the present Prayer Book is that Evensong is so largely a repetition of Matins. The shortening and enrichment already referred to in the account of the Sunday Morning Service mark also the Evening Service. By careful planning the two Services may be made to supplement one another, so that Evensong hardly repeats Matins at all. A new service is given in an appendix, entitled "A Late Evening Service." This is already familiar to many as "Compline," the last service which *completes* the day. It is a real gain to have it in the Prayer Book. It will be possible in large town churches to provide two evening services, Evensong, say at six p.m., with music rendered by the choir and a very short Sermon, and Compline with popular hymns and an instruction or mission sermon at a later hour.

4. *Baptism, Catechism and Confirmation.*—Small changes are made in the Baptismal Office with a view to greater dignity as well as to simplification. In the Service for those of Riper Years it is made clear that the normal administration of the Sacrament shall be at the public services of the Church. The Catechism is unaltered. Obviously the principle of providing alternatives does not apply here. It would be

impossible to have two versions of the faith officially taught to the children of the Church.

The *Confirmation Service* contains a new rubric, providing that no hymn or address shall be introduced into the central part of the service, that is, from the words "Our help is in the name of the Lord" to the laying on of hands by the Bishop. A new preface is provided, giving the Scriptural authority for the rite. In the Bishop's first question the phrase "ratifying and confirming the same," which has often caused confusion, becomes "ratifying and confessing the same."

5. *Other Services*.—The *Solemnisation of Matrimony* is amended by an alteration of certain phrases which are too frank for modern taste. But the truth that the procreation of children is the first purpose of marriage is taught without ambiguity. Old Testament references which have little bearing on Christian marriage are eliminated. The word "obey" in the bride's promise is omitted. The familiar words which follow now read: "With this ring I thee wed; with my body I thee honour; and all my worldly goods with thee I share."

The Order of the Visitation of the Sick.—This section is almost entirely new. Our present Order is not much used, and the new material

offered is of the greatest value. Health is prayed for in clear terms without any concession to modern ideas that sickness is necessarily an evil thing. The Commendatory prayers are exceptionally beautiful.

The Communion of the Sick.—Under this head "An Alternative Order for the Communion of the Sick" is provided—by means of the Reserved Sacrament. It shall be lawful to set apart some of the consecrated Bread and Wine at the open celebration in church for this purpose. The following rubrics deal with matters which are regarded by many as controversial.

"If further provision be needed in order to secure that any sick person in his last hour may not lack the benefit of the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Priest, if licensed by the Bishop so to do, may, to that end, when the Holy Communion is celebrated in the church, reserve so much of the consecrated Bread and Wine as is needed for the purpose. And the Bishop shall grant such license if satisfied of the need, unless in any particular case he see good reason to the contrary.

"The consecrated Bread and Wine set apart under either of the two preceding rubrics shall be reserved only for the Communion of the Sick, shall be administered in both kinds, and shall be

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used for no other purpose whatever. There shall be no service or ceremony in connexion with the Sacrament so reserved, nor shall it be exposed or removed except in order to be received in Communion, or otherwise reverently consumed."

Provision is then made for further regulations to be set forth by Church authority.

The Burial of the Dead.—Few services are more important than this, since sooner or later almost every Englishman attends an Anglican funeral. The present service, impressive as it is, stands in need of change. The most important alterations are: The long lesson is shortened. A further choice is given of psalms and lessons. A prayer for consecration of the grave is provided, in case the cemetery is not consecrated. A service for the burial of a baptised child is given.

Substantial changes are made in the *Communion Service*. *The Psalter* is so printed that certain verses can be omitted if desired. The original purpose of correcting a number of obvious mistranslations and obscurities in the text has been abandoned as impracticable, so the psalters used by choirs will not become obsolete.

The Ordination Services are practically untouched, except for one important alteration.

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In place of the question addressed to those to be ordained deacons, "Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments," which has been a stumbling block to some men wishing to enter the ministry, the following question is put: "Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, as given of God to convey to us in many parts and in divers manners the revelation of himself which is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ?"

An Appendix contains an early morning service ("Prime") and one for the late evening ("Compline"); a form of preparation for Holy Communion; special Collects; Epistles and Gospels for optional use, including Epistles and Gospels for each day in Lent, Easter week and Whitsun week; and a special service for Advent and Lent.

The measure accompanying the Prayer Book makes it possible to use parts of the new services, either a whole service or a paragraph from it. Further, the Archbishops and Bishops are empowered to put out supplementary forms for public worship in conformity with the doctrine of the Church of England expressed in the Prayer Book.

This brief sketch is sufficient to show that the Alternative Prayer Book is a considerably revised edition of the present book, not in any

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sense a new book. The advance on 1662 is greater than the advance of 1662 on 1559, but no more in proportion, when it is remembered that two and a half centuries have elapsed since the last revision, instead of 103 years in 1662.

The Bishops' proposals have to be accepted or rejected as a whole by the Church Assembly. If accepted, they will go before Parliament, also for acceptance or rejection as a whole. It may safely be predicted that their fate at the hands of Parliament will depend on their reception by Churchmen. If the Church is practically unanimous in their favour, Parliament is unlikely to interfere. If, on the other hand, they seem likely to cause acute division in the Church, Parliament may well exercise its right of saving the Church from what may appear to it a misguided course of action.

IV

Perhaps the writer of this pamphlet may be allowed a few concluding words of his own in regard to the controversy which will inevitably arise.

The great mass of Churchmen will be disposed to accept the book proposed by the Bishops. The discussions have lasted so many years that no good purpose will be served by prolonging

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them further. But the settlement will be attacked from two sides. On the one hand the new book will be condemned as altering the doctrinal standards of the Church of England as finally settled, after oscillations, in 1662. It is suggested in reply that the present Prayer Book has not prevented the development of much teaching and ceremonial distasteful to the critics. The new book in this respect leaves things as they were before. Now that the Bishops, among whom so many different views are represented, have agreed in recommending changes, convinced in their own minds that the standard of doctrine is not affected, the rank and file of the Church may, and indeed should, follow their lead.

On the other side, there will also be reluctance to accept the new book. Congregations have been for many years accustomed to services and usages which are not sanctioned by the Alternative Book. Priests and laity alike will raise their voices in opposition, not from motives of self-pleasing, but with great unwillingness to lose what has proved devotionally valuable. They will point to the harm done to the Church of England in the past by a mistaken ideal of uniformity, and ask that freedom of deviation and of continuing additional services shall be conceded. It must be acknowledged that some loss

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and unsettlement are inevitable if the new book is accepted, but will not the gain outweigh the loss? It is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs when staunch upholders of Episcopacy are in conflict with their Bishops, and considerable sacrifices are desirable rather than that such a state of things should be perpetuated.

If the Alternative Prayer Book is legalised, a difficult period is in front of us while clergy and congregations are deciding between the two books. But the difficulties need be no greater than those from which we now suffer. God in His Providence has allowed two main types of religious experience to become permanent in the English Church. Can we afford to dispense with either? To give but one example, are not the achievements of the C.M.S. in Uganda and those of the Universities' Mission in the neighbouring territory of Tanganyika equally a glory of the whole Church of England? Loyal Anglicanism, it is suggested, consists not in a *via media* between extremes, but in whole-hearted acceptance of the difficulties and responsibilities, as also of the opportunities, which result from the co-existence of the Evangelical and Catholic types in our Church. If we cannot live together, then Reunion is a dream which will never come true; we should be admitting that the Catholic and Evangelical experiences are for ever incompatible.

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To accept such a conclusion would be faithless. It involves a denial of our One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism. Only with grave misgivings can any group of Churchmen decide against following the lead given by their Fathers in God by accepting the new book with loyalty and with trust in the Spirit's guiding.

NOTE.—Simple explanations of the parts of the Prayer Book most used will be found in *Evensong Explained* and *The Communion Service Explained*, by the present writer (S.P.C.K., 2d. each).

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