

THE  
PRAYER BOOK  
PATTERN

*A Consideration*

BY  
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THE EXCHANGES

"All the exchanges of heaven lie open."

Charles Williams

In the beginning GOD . . .

THIS dramatic opening of the Bible is so familiar to us that there is sometimes a danger of assuming a corresponding intimacy of acquaintance with the idea which it conveys. But indeed, there are already two ideas in the four words above quoted, for "beginning" and "God" are descriptive of two different planes of existence. God, as the word is used in Christian theology, has in himself no beginning. The book Genesis opens on the hither side of eternity: God has already, so to say, looked over the edge of eternity, and in that very act began beginning; beginning of time, since we read that there was evening and morning; and beginning of space, since God "saw", and as he saw, we may without irreverence infer that he also looked. This is not a purely academic *jeu d'esprit*, for in eternity vision occurs without looking. To look is an act; to see is an experience. For the one we use the organ, for the other the faculty, of sight; they represent different levels and different contents of consciousness. An act is a manifesting limitation, a limiting display. It is that very limitation which in certain cases causes surprise at something unexpected from previous or ordinary experience, for instance, so-called miracles. Thus God has already limited himself by the external act of looking "at" creation. We may usefully remind ourselves in this connection of the double aspect of all our own activities. They not only *reveal* the entity which lies behind them, but they also *limit* that entity in the same way that an "exact statement isolates a single aspect of fact".<sup>1</sup> If for instance, my fist, travelling outwards with speed and precision, finds itself sharply arrested by my neighbour's eye, my whole being may be suffused with satisfaction at the impact; but though the blow makes an open demonstration of my view of that particular matter, it also limits me to that particular activity. It allows no scope for or expression to my other capacities or predilections. Thus all my actions are imperfect in the sense that no

<sup>1</sup> Austin Farrer, *A Rebirth of Images*, 1949, p. 19.

single one contains the complete expression of all the possibilities of my nature. Similarly we may speak of God's "acts" as limitations of his Being. The midday hymn which addresses God as "Thyself unmoved, all motion's source" expresses the difference between eternal and contingent existence with admirable felicity. In eternity there is no "movement", not because God is static or motionless, but because he is that plenitude of life in which every movement is the complete exhibition and satisfaction of every part of his Being, and therefore, unlike partial movement, causes no displacement. In him there is no time-space limitation because every impulse is the perfection of infinite completeness.

Within this limitless satisfaction of Being, God-in-eternity conceived the splendour of a panorama of powers of his own nature, in separately-subsisting yet mutually interdependent beauty. By an act of his will he issued in creation, for creation is, in fact, God-in-action. It is still God: God limited by the isolation of certain of his own attributes in such a way that they no longer express the totality of his Being. Perhaps it bears resemblance to a scientific experiment, when, for instance, a botanist dismantles a flower in order to appreciate more fully the individual properties of the constituent parts. His action, indeed, results in death to the subject of the experiment, whereas the former was wholly destined to the framing of fresh forms of life. In the event contingency resulted: time-space appeared.

And God saw that it was good—as how could it well be otherwise? seeing that it was part of his own nature. William Law says:<sup>1</sup>

"Time was in eternity before it became days and years . . . time is neither a part of eternity nor broken off from it, nor come out of it.

"The essences of our souls can never cease to be because they never began to be, and nothing can live eternally but that which hath lived from all Eternity."

And as creation did not issue out of nothing but out of God, so neither was it devoid of purpose. Father Benson begins a series of addresses with the contemplation of the Word in the bosom of the Father in the hidden mystery of the Triune Life; issuing thence as the Word manifest in creation for the express purpose of his own glory. It is good to remind ourselves of this primary purpose, and to remember that the Incarnation was foreordained before time began. In creation God first separated some of his inherent qualities, and finally breathed into man his own life so that the creature is "nothing else but a limited

<sup>1</sup> *The Pocket William Law*, 1950, pp. 78, 75, 74.

participation of the nature of the Creator".<sup>1</sup> And it was in order that through this creature of Divine Afflatus he might have, as it were, a point of attachment for the supreme climax of the creative act whereby the Godhead itself, by a self-limitation beyond our powers of conception, should be enabled, in the Person of the Word, to enter into creation in such a way as to reassume it into himself. The whole process is an issuing procession of glory whereby an ascending scale of Divine values is spread out for admiration and for responsive adoration till they are all caught up together into Very God himself, that they may in him re-enter the Eternity whence they came. Their whole being, from the least to the greatest, is absorbed in a continual ecstasy of worship; as how should they be otherwise? seeing that they are, in their degree, "powers of his own nature".<sup>2</sup>

This wonderful reciprocity of glory, God delighting in his act, creation responding in paeans of rapturous praise, is the background against which we have to consider the fact of the Fall. In the primal state the whole cosmos was in direct communication with God, acting under the impulse of his Will as the fingers of the trained typist will find their way about the keyboard without the intervention of conscious volition. It was "God" in essence and in response to the movements of his Being. We have not been told what may be the form or manner whereby the "incarnational" process reunites the rest of creation with eternity, but we do know that in the case of the angels and of man free choice, or free will, was the essential basis of co-operation in the Divine act; and that the terrestrial Incarnation-in-joy has become a Redemption-through-sorrow on account of the defection of man. The Fall describes the catastrophic change which occurred when man chose to ignore the stimuli reaching him from eternity and preferred to act on his own initiative. The typist's finger that persistently finds "c" instead of "r", that crosses the line from "h" to "g", affords a crude illustration of the nature of man's defiance. He was asserting an individualism which damaged his relationships both with God and with God-in-creation. He was not only falsifying the message received, but was also disfiguring the paper upon which he made the lying record. The resulting anarchy led not only to separation from God-in-eternity but also to distortion of his image in creation.

We sometimes forget the implications of the expulsion from Eden and the repelling angel with the flaming sword. Paradisial earth as God created it no longer exists in unregenerate man's experience; and

<sup>1</sup> Law, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

even when we make a serious effort we do not find it easy to visualize the cohesive solidarity of Eden. Man and beast were vegetarian; and of all sentient life man was given quasi-creative responsibility, for to "name" a thing is equivalent to giving it being. The relationship between man and God and between man and creation is not a double one by nature. In Eden man had direct approach to God as representative and subject-controller of all lesser forms of life; but duality, with all its involved complexities, was introduced when man betrayed his trust. Adam asserted his independence by misappropriation of a product of which he had been appointed guardian, and then proceeded further to abuse his relationship with God-in-creation by hiding behind a tree. But the shame which he inflicted on the tree by hiding behind it had to be expiated later by the second Adam displayed upon it. The tree was created neither to be a hiding-place nor a gibbet. Both uses were a violation of its primary life-giving functions. Thus Adam, by defiant insistence upon what he intended to be his own individualist advantage, made himself an obstacle both to the Creator and to the whole of creation, in the latter case bringing ruin where he had in a true sense been appointed coadjutor. Henceforth wherever he goes he finds thorns and thistles, *not* from God, nor created by God, but the product of his own misdirected creative capacity.

The most hideous disease to which man's body is prone is the cancer which is the leering external reproduction of that which every man has made, and makes, himself internally. The single cell becomes a group of cells, which exert their intrinsic reproductive capacity on their own initiative, disobeying the body's controlling impulses of restraint and thereby disfiguring instead of perfecting the organism of which they are a part; thence they continue until they have invaded not only contiguous tissues but distant regions; and this is an exact replica in method and result of the "original" sin of individualism. It is this "self"-will which was, and still is, man's own choice; his desire and determination to be separate, unique, privileged, different from others for his own advantage. Charles Williams in a nobly illuminating phrase says that "all the exchanges of heaven lie open".<sup>1</sup> It is imperative to grasp this intercommunication of the life of heaven, and of original and of regenerate earth. Heavenly intercourse depends upon mutual interchange to such a degree that our very virtues do not avail so much for ourselves as for others,<sup>2</sup> and our only hope of arrival

<sup>1</sup> *He Came Down from Heaven*, 1950, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 22. 30 (P.B.V.), "No man hath quickened his own soul".

in Heaven is in delighted complement with our pet aversion, whatever it (or they) may be; Protestant arms Catholic, fundamentalist the *demier cri*, as they press their happy way through Paradise. Our need of our antipathies is in direct proportion to the intensity of our distaste.

Separateness, of whatever kind, is an impossibility because there is no such thing in God himself. Not only is there no individualism in him, there is not so much as an I-Thou relationship—the very phrase betrays itself: first I, then God—for between the Father and the Son, as between the Son and the Father, there exists co-equally not a Principle but a Personality. And since in God there is no closed I-Thou, neither can there be such in God-in-creation, for God cannot create that which is at variance with his own essence. The unmediated approach to God is without Scriptural foundation. What, indeed, could be its purpose or outcome? An isolated unit, attached to God by his own efforts for himself as an end, is as impossible as is a complete physical isolationism. One could as soon imagine a myriad of separate cells in nervous contact with the brain but not integrated in the body. Their functional use would be non-existent and their support as discrete entities superfluous. Yet so precious in itself is every individual, so indispensable the deliberate choice and contribution of each, that the perfection of all awaits the ingathering of the very last.

There came a day when the Eden guardian lowered his flaming sword to the passage of the new Adam, who, entering of triumphal right, partook of the Tree of Life, which was thus restored to its original function. Thenceforward the way stands open to those who, entering into organic union with God-in-Incarnate-re-creation, pass inwards in the power of his new-imparted Life, as in the person of their original forefather they were driven out.

The reason for the possibility of this re-creation in the case of man, though not in the case of Lucifer, is suggested to us by the Scriptural accounts of the two Falls. In Revelation 12 we read that there was war in Heaven, that is, in the very presence of God himself. Lucifer's fall—by self-exaltation—was final, for he flaunted himself deliberately, open-eyed. His defiance was so complete and determined that he had to be removed by force. He was cast down to earth, which in some sort lies in his power; whence his ability to tempt man. Of the relationship between angels and men in the scheme of creation we possess few details, but their intercommunications are made evident; and Satan's jurisdiction on earth, even in his fallen state, was not controverted by our Lord. Here, indeed, lies a possible explanation at the

pictorial level of the problem raised for some minds by the undoubted presence of suffering in the world many ages before the appearance of *homo sapiens*. It may be that there was a redemptive element in the vocation even of the first Adam; that when God "put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it"<sup>1</sup> he was given the opportunity of releasing it from Satan's power. The creative "naming" of every creature may have deep significance. The destined closeness of intercourse between angels and men is plainly indicated both in the Old and New Testaments; and we may even feel that the instinctive craving of fallen man for sensible communion with the spirit world, through such forms of necromancy as are available to any given generation, is in itself a witness to the reality which is still sufficiently attested in the experience of holy persons throughout the ages.

The story of man's temptation is provided for us in the third chapter of Genesis; and we find that Satan was not so successful in his influence over man as he seems to have been in the case of some of his fellow-angels. Man, indeed, yielded to his solicitations, but he did so only half-heartedly: he was ashamed of himself, and, so far from munching his apple with jaunty bravado before God's eyes, when he heard the Lord God coming to receive the accustomed report of his day's stewardship, he ran away and hid. It was that very shame which became his glory, for it rendered him capable of regeneration: that act of contrition in running to the tree which spoke more loudly than words, "Here, here, have I sinned", was the earnest of his capacity for recovery, though many bitter ages were to pass before he was able to learn his utter *incapacity* to redeem himself.

It will be seen that the Scotist view is here adopted, that the Incarnation is the culminating point of the original creative act, and not a necessity superimposed by the catastrophe of sin. This seems to be both more rational and more in keeping with the dignity and majesty of God's purpose in the act of creation than the view more commonly held, which has a dangerously human ring about it. When the very Incarnation itself is held to be the result of sin it becomes so closely assimilated to the process of Redemption as to lead to the virtual identification of the two. One can well understand why this view is—and will remain—the more popular, for it is far more satisfying to the vanity and self-importance of sin-stained humanity. Where the Incarnation has no other purpose than redemption man remains the centre of the stage. However much he may smother it in crape, he is

<sup>1</sup> Gen. 2. 15.

still fondling Marmion's doll of self-love<sup>1</sup> by succumbing to the temptation of making redemption and salvation an end in themselves. Yet in fact when redemption has accomplished its purpose and has restored us to the perfection with which we were endowed in Adam, we have only come to the beginning of our course. Only now is our true function apparent and capable of being exercised. Only now can the Incarnation sweep us upwards in that climax of worship for which we were created.

Against this background of the purpose of our existence we turn to the Book of Common Prayer to see how far it provides us with worship suitable both at the Incarnational and Redemptive levels: pure praise, that is, of God for his own self alone; and also humbler, less exacting forms suited to raise and sustain the frailty of fallen man in his passage towards this supreme vocation.

<sup>1</sup> "Self-love is a doll which one nurses. When it is proud one dresses it up finely; when it is sad one dresses it in black, but fondles it all the more." Thibaut's *Life of Dom Marmion*, p. 8.



## THE CYCLE OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

THERE are many to-day unfamiliar with the Book of Common Prayer who find its arrangement complicated and confusing. The key to the full understanding of the edifice of prayer which it contains is to realize that the centre of the book is also the focal point of its worship. In the middle, as a jewel in its setting, we find the Order of the Holy Communion, the Offering, and all the other Offices are grouped round it. This word is a convenient and accurate term to use instead of the somewhat ponderous title employed in the Prayer Book, for in fact the Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, is an Offering whichever way we look at it; whether as an Offering to God from us of the perpetual memorial of Christ's death and of ourselves in him, or as an Offering from God to us of his own self in Christ. From either aspect our Lord is the meeting-point. The other Offices do not stand alone, nor do they attain their fullness of meaning without this central act; and the various dislocations which do, in practice, occur have served very greatly to obscure the unity and coherence of the whole scheme, so that where sense has been lost, confusion of thought and incomprehension have supervened.

If, then, we start from the Offering as the centre, we shall find that the other Offices are associated with it in three easily-defined groups.

### (1). *The Daily Cycle of Public Prayer and Thanksgiving*

The full daily Cycle consists of Mattins (Morning Prayer), Litany, HOLY COMMUNION, and Evensong (Evening Prayer). Schematically it may be shown as follows:

		<i>Thanksgiving and anticipatory Preparation</i>		
<i>Preparation</i>	<i>Offering</i>			
Mattins	→ Litany	→ HOLY COMMUNION	← Evensong	→

The Evening Service looks in both directions. It is a thanksgiving for the Offering of the day now past; yet although a point of rest with regard to that which has been accomplished, it is not a full stop (for God's praises never cease), but is also a point of departure for the

day that is to come. It is the "second" Evensong for to-day and the "first" Evensong for to-morrow. In Jewry the day begins at sundown, as we read in Genesis 1, "there was evening and morning" one day, not "morning and evening". Thus it is that the "Church unsleeping, While earth rolls onward into light", both rests and rises in her Evening Prayer.

This pattern, however, of Mattins, Holy Communion, Evensong, has been considerably blurred by the widespread introduction of the "Early Service", whereby it often happens that Mattins is left alone as a service complete in itself in the middle of the morning, its anticipatory character no longer apparent. Yet whatever the local problems may be, the fundamental rhythm needs to be kept clearly in mind. This daily cycle is the Christian culmination of the Jewish synagogue and Temple worship, the blending of the new and old according to Dominical injunction; therefore to be jealously guarded from innovations which destroy its character. True, the Litany and Holy Communion are not ordered to be said daily, but this does not alter the essential pattern. It merely emphasizes the primary Godward aspect of the whole cycle, that it is in its entirety a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; since Mattins and Evensong, that minimum which is in practice possible everywhere, are never to be omitted, be there any congregation or not;<sup>1</sup> and we have to be alive to the temptation of

<sup>1</sup> Mortimer, however, says as follows: "To take part in the Church's worship is the layman's highest privilege and duty. That worship is the work of the clergy and people together, each in their own role. In no sense is it the work of the clergy only. The presence and participation of the laity are an essential element. Without them, the worship offered by the clergyman alone is no more than his own private devotions—linked indeed to the worship of the Church, but not itself the worship of the Church. If the laity be not there, or no other clergyman to take their place and play their part, there has been no worship of that local church offered." R. C. Mortimer, *The Duties of a Churchman*, 1951, p. 31.

This suggests that the Daily Office, ordered by the Prayer Book to be said in church, after due ringing of the bell, could be equally well said by the clergyman in his study or bedroom if no one responds to the bell's summons. Yet there are innumerable parish priests who have supposed themselves to be set free from earning their living in secular employments for the express purpose of offering the Church's worship to God on weekdays on behalf of, and in spirit with, their parishioners deprived, by their necessary avocations, from coming themselves "bodily" to church. Are we to understand that the offering of the clergyman made in obedience to, and in conformity with, the Church's regulations, is of only private significance till an overslept arrival at the Benedictus (to mention a concrete instance) allows him to offer the *praeces* as the Church's worship in that locality on that day?

It seems incidentally to raise an interesting point in casuistry as to the relative value of virtue and villainy, if faithfulness is unavailing till reinforced by sloth.

adapting the Liturgy to the congregation instead of training the congregation into a fuller understanding of its meaning.

In this connection it is of interest to note that F. E. Brightman<sup>1</sup> gives a description of the Bidding of the Bedes, which, though not in the Book of Common Prayer or recognized by any Act of Uniformity, is traditional and customary, and appertains to the integrity of the English Rite. The suggestion is that where a service of greater flexibility than the liturgical Offices is needed it might be possible to revive the "Prone", "a group of vernacular devotions, instructions and notifications, attached to the sermon" of which the Bidding of the Bedes has usually formed a part. A comprehensive Prone would contain the Lord's Prayer, Creed, Ten Commandments, Biddings, and Sermon, though the order, nature, and number of components are subject to variation. There has never been a fixed form for the Biddings of universal obligation, so that scope is left for individual initiative, and throughout there would be short admonitions and explanations prefixed to the several items. The Prone is thus seen to be in some sense supplementary to the Liturgy, supplying the more homely side of man's needs. The Liturgy is impersonal, with the rather rarefied atmosphere that the concentrated attention on the supernatural tends to produce: the Prone is frankly "pew-centred", and represents that element which Nonconformity has sought to re-establish.

The results on liturgical worship of the suppression of this aspect of public prayer at the Reformation (by the discontinuance of the various ceremonies associated with the different seasons of the Church's year) have not been happy; for such is the craving of humanity for the colour and the warmth of "sensible" devotion, that in practice liturgical Offices have with considerable frequency been converted into services which are liturgical only in name, and the edification of the casual Sunday worshipper has taken precedence of other considerations. A restoration of the balance and dignity of the Liturgy proper would be more easily accomplished if the difference in nature between Liturgy and Prone were more fully realized.

### (2). *Public Occasional Offices*

These Offices are not part of the Daily Cycle in the sense of being in daily use, but their "public" nature is made manifest from their relationship to this cycle when they do occur. They are embedded within its structure.

<sup>1</sup> *The English Rite* (2nd edn. revised, 1921), Vol. II, p. 1037.

### (i) *Baptism*

This Order has a double aspect, personal and corporate. That the latter, the regeneration of the individual and his admission into the supernatural family of the Body of Christ, is the more important is seen from the position occupied by the Order in relation to the Daily Cycle. It is an integral part of Mattins or Evensong, being placed after the second Lesson and before the Creed, i.e., within the specifically "Christian" portion of the Order,<sup>1</sup> though necessarily before the actual declaration of Christian faith. It is the first possible moment at which the unbaptized can "pierce" the Christian cycle of Offering: this once done, the newly-baptized has both the right and the duty to take his part in the complete cycle.

There is no provision in the Book of Common Prayer for the private Baptism of any, whether children or adults, except in case of urgency. Further, the rubrics in the Order for private Baptism require that children should be baptized not "longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth, or other Holy-day falling between, *unless upon a great and reasonable cause, to be approved by the Curate*". If a child so baptized does live, it is to be brought into the Church that "the Congregation may be certified of the true form of Baptism". The public character of the Order is being vindicated. It is the business of the Congregation. Schematically the position of Baptism in the structure of Anglican public worship is seen as follows:

#### *Mattins or Evensong*

Second Lesson—→BAPTISM—→Benedictus or Nunc Dimittis—→Creed

### (ii) *A Communion*

This Order, when it occurs, follows the Litany, and is therefore a part of the preparation for the Offering.

Mattins—→Litany—→Communion—→HOLY COMMUNION

The Communion is not always considered to be an act of charity, so it may be germane to quote some words which throw a helpful light upon its use:

"S. Thomas teaches that 'correctio fratrum', brotherly correction,

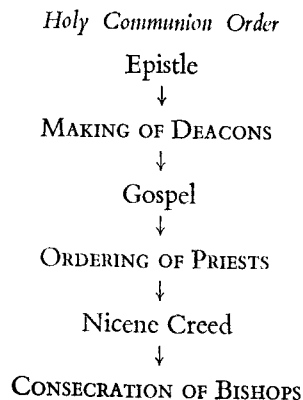
<sup>1</sup> Bearing in mind the fact that everything which precedes the versicle "O God, make speed to save us" is an unbalancing, and mainly unfortunate, addition attached to the primitive Office.

is one of the exercises of charity. In the Communion Service this is practised upon the world by the Prayer Book. Without equivocation, the world's standards are corrected and the sin of the world is judged. Based upon Holy Scripture, there is in this service the most solemn denunciation of such grave sins as dishonesty, injustice, immorality, lack of trust in God, unmercifulness, fornication, adultery, covetousness, idolatry, slander, drunkenness and extortion. Whatever compromise with these sins may have been made by individual Christians, so long as this service is ordered to be used on Ash Wednesday, the Church can never be accused of indifference and indecision towards them. They are stated and condemned."<sup>1</sup>

It is, in fact, the equivalent of a buoy upon a hidden rock, or of a red triangle at a dangerous corner, the omission of which would be the very reverse of charitable. Hence its position in the Liturgy.

(iii) *Making of Deacons, Ordering of Priests, Consecration of Bishops*  
(*Coronation of Sovereign*)

These, like Baptism, are personal but public Offices. As Baptism extends the frontiers of the Church by adding new members, so these set apart certain members to perpetuate its organic functioning. Their dignity and solemnity is such that they are actually within the structure



of the Holy Communion Order itself, forming an integral part of the central rite. The fact that this is indeed the centre of all our public prayer is still further demonstrated by the varying degrees of propin-

<sup>1</sup> H. W. E. Slade, S.S.J.E., "The Book of Common Prayer": *The Cowley Evangelist*, March 1950.

quity which they hold with regard to the climax of the service. The Making of Deacons takes place after the Epistle; the Ordaining of Priests after the Gospel; the Consecration of Bishops after the Nicene Creed. The drama unfolds itself before our eyes.

There are two other Offices in occasional use, though not incorporated in the Book of Common Prayer, which share with the Consecration of Bishops the austere dignity of taking place after the Nicene Creed, namely, the Coronation of a Sovereign, and Profession under Religious Vows. In a more solitary and individual way even than Deacons and Priests these persons have each in their degree a specialized function to perform in the economy of the Church's life. The Bishop is the Father in God, responsible for the spiritual welfare of the flock; the Sovereign is charged with the maintenance of Christian standards within his realm; the Religious is the hidden powerhouse of ceaseless and intensive prayer on behalf of all: each needs the peculiar grace which they receive for their several vocations, and of each it is especially true that in their vocations they live unto others, not to themselves.

(3). *Private Occasional Offices*

These Offices are differentiated from the Occasional Offices which we have just been considering in that they form no part of the Daily Cycle. It is expected that the Holy Communion will be celebrated in connection with them, but the two services remain distinct and are only placed in juxtaposition. The Occasional Order is not found "in the course" of the Mattins—Litany—Holy Communion—Evensong rhythm, much less within the structure of any of its component parts. This shows that these particular Orders are individual and particular, not, as in the case of Baptism and Holy Orders, an intrinsic part of the common life of the Church. They are four in number: the Solemnization of Matrimony, the Churcing of Women, the Visitation of the Sick, and the Burial of the Dead. There is no mention of Holy Communion in connection with the last in the Book of 1661, but special Epistles and Gospels were provided in 1928.

[With regard to the Burial of the Dead, it may be of interest to compare the Order of the rites as provided in 1549, 1552, and 1661. The Order of 1549 is the traditional rite reduced to its essential elements—1. Procession; 2. Deposition of the body and its symbolical covering, with intercessory prayer and thanksgiving; 3. Service of the Dead, reduced to a single Office, i.e., three Psalms, Lesson, Kyrie eleison, Lord's

Prayer, praeces, Collect; 4. Mass (as it was still called). In 1552 and 1661 this last-named (Mass) was reduced to the Collect (still so named), "O merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .". The preceding prayer, "Almighty God with whom do live . . .", is the end of the Office of the Dead. In 1928 the following rubric appears: "When there is a special celebration of the Holy Communion on the day of the Burial, the Priest shall use the Collect appointed in this Order ['O merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'], or the Collect of Easter Even . . .", and the new Epistles and Gospels are then introduced.

1549	1552	1661 <sup>1</sup>
1. Procession	1. Procession	1. Procession
2. Burial	2. Burial	
3. Psalms		3. Psalms
Lesson	3. Lesson	Lesson } Office
Our Father Praeces Collect	Our Father } Office of the Dead	2. Burial
		3. Our Father } broken up by the
		Collect } Burial
4. Mass	4. Collect (from the Mass)	4. Collect (from the Mass)

Brightman's comment on these columns is: "The first column is intelligible and excellent: the second is only the first spoiled by the omission of the Psalms and praeces: the third is unintelligible" (with the burial inserted into the middle of the Office of the Dead). There are some who would feel that the second and third columns have suffered a grievous loss in the removal of the Communion Order.

The 1928 Book follows the unintelligible order of 1661, but adds a rubric allowing the burial to take place immediately after the Procession, as in 1549 and 1552.<sup>2]</sup>

The relationship of these four Offices to the Holy Communion Order is:

Matrimony	} → HOLY COMMUNION
Churching of Women	
Visitation of the Sick	

<sup>1</sup> The Prayer Book passed Convocation in December 1661. It was annexed to a Bill of Uniformity which, after passing both Houses of Parliament, received the Royal Assent on 19 May 1662. The Book therefore may be referred to as 1661 (its Church authority), or 1662 (when it was accepted by State and Crown).

<sup>2</sup> Tables taken from Brightman, *op. cit.*, p. ccxxi. Slightly adapted.

Burial of the Dead—→HOLY COMMUNION

or

HOLY COMMUNION—→Burial of the Dead

One Office has not yet received mention, the Order of *Confirmation*. Although it has such far-reaching effect in regulating the degree to which the individual Christian can enter into the Offering of the Holy Communion, there are no directions as to the relationship of the Order itself to the Daily Cycle. With regard to those baptized in adult life, it is ordered that Confirmation shall follow at the earliest possible moment; after infant Baptism it is to be administered to children as soon as they can say the Catechism, and have "come to that age when . . . they begyn to be in danger to fall into sinne" (1549). This latter phrase was placed in a different context in 1661, and was shortened to "are come to a competent age" (i.e., know the difference between right and wrong). The relationship of spiritual, moral, and intellectual competence to physical age is a subject of much debate; and childhood, adolescence, and maturity all have their advocates as being the optimum time for Confirmation to follow infant Baptism. In general it seems to be somewhat doubtful whether sufficient weight is given to the fact that there is no fixed relationship between physical and spiritual age. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned; and it may very well be that the prevalent over-emphasis on physical age without due regard for the spiritual development—or arrest—of the particular individual is at least partly responsible for the spiritual wreckage of lapsed first Communicants with which we are surrounded. There seems to be room here for a courageous attempt to disregard physical age altogether, and to be more alert in discerning the working and call of the Holy Spirit. It would produce shocking anomalies, not least in families; but has our strait-jacketing of the Spirit by physical age in contravention of the explicit directions of the Prayer Book been wholly satisfactory?<sup>1</sup>

Whatever the time at which Confirmation is administered it must in all cases precede the reception of Holy Communion. A final rubric,

<sup>1</sup> Godparents are responsible for seeing that their charges are presented for Confirmation *as soon as* they can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vernacular, and "be further instructed in the Church-Catechism" (this need not be known by heart). Where for any reason Confirmation is not forthcoming, Communion is to be administered to those "ready" (intellectually prepared as above), and "desirous", spiritually eager. Intense spiritual longing can easily be present at 4, and it can be dormant or absent at 16.

however, contains a proviso which remains from the days when, owing to difficulties of transit, the Bishops' visits in certain localities might be of very rare occurrence, and this may be usefully studied in the three forms in which it occurs in our three authorized Prayer Books. In 1549 it ran simply: "And there shall none be admitted to the holy communion: untill suche tyme as he be confirmed." In 1552 the second phrase was expanded to "until such tyme as he can say the Catechism and be confirmed". In 1661 competence in the Catechism was no longer required, but a very significant phrase was added. The rubric now runs: "And there shall none be admitted to the holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed." The "ready" and "desirous" are a sufficient indication of the cases where legitimate exception may be made. To be *desirous* of Confirmation is—to be desirous of Confirmation, *and of all its implications*. This rubric excludes those who are not, and have no intention of, living within the Church, since they do not form part of its organic structure enabling them to assimilate sacramental grace.<sup>1</sup> It is the ontological aspect of the Church which is overlooked in services of "open" Communion.

The rite of Confirmation is so closely connected with Baptism as to form its complement. Hebert points out in *The Form of the Church*<sup>2</sup> that there are two meanings of the word "form". There is the innate principle which determines the shape of a thing, so that a fir tree does not grow from a primrose, or a butterfly from a tiger; and there is the "formative" influence which draws out and actualizes this potential form. Both are essential. Both are essential for development; and in the Church we may perhaps discern aspects of the supernatural life corresponding to these two meanings of "form". Our Anglican formularies do not preclude us from applying this analogy to Baptism and Confirmation, so that we may say that Baptism conveys the definitive form, that which causes spiritual growth to be growth in the

<sup>1</sup> The Christian Mysteries are the arteries conveying the bloodstream to the living Body of Christ, and promiscuous blood-transfusion is dangerous to the recipient. Even were sacraments only external forms, empty apart from the intention of each recipient, making Holy Communion simply a commemoration analogous with present-day Remembrance services in November, Confirmation would still be requisite. No one can take part at the Cenotaph except in the attire proper to his position. In the modern operating-theatre the strictest rules of asepsis must be observed by every person present. The most distinguished visitor is no more exempt than any member of the surgeon's team. Nor are we given encouragement to treat the wedding garment as a foolish fad.

<sup>2</sup> A. G. Hebert, *The Form of the Church*, Intro., Ch. I.

likeness of Christ; and that Confirmation is a bestowal of the Spirit as the formative Life-giver, in whose power that likeness may be developed through sacramental Communion. There is no life, whether natural, supernatural, or divine, which is not mediated by the Spirit, for the Spirit is not only the point of contact between the Father and the Son in the Godhead, but also between our Lord and his Body the Church; so that neither the "form" in Baptism nor the "life" in Holy Communion exist apart from his agency. Post-Baptismal gifts of the "Spirit" in Confirmation or Ordination are rather a specific bestowal of capacity for a specific purpose than an endowment of associative contact with the Spirit not already received in Baptism. The Collect in the Confirmation Order says: "Almighty and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy Servants by Water *and the Holy Ghost* . . . strengthen them . . . with the Holy Ghost the Comforter<sup>1</sup> and daily *increase* in them *thy manifold gifts of grace* . . .". The whole suggestion is that the Holy Ghost has already been received in Baptism, and that this is a special equipping for the task of growth in the spiritual life which is effected by Holy Communion. That such wholly supernatural activity and transformation needs special powers is not surprising, but what was the actual position occupied by Confirmation in Apostolic days is a matter at present widely discussed, though for the moment without final results.<sup>2</sup> To those who feel that to speak of Confirmation as complementary to Baptism is to add a third Sacrament to the "two only, as generally necessary to salvation", we can only say that whatever may be the mystery of their spiritual relationship, these two rites are, in the Anglican Communion, complementary in their bestowal upon the individual of the capacity to share in the two aspects of the liturgical Offering. Baptism admits us to the Offering to God of ourselves and of our gifts because we are in Christ and make our Offering in him—there being no other form of Offering *wholly* acceptable to God: Confirmation completes the Offering by allowing us to receive back from God of and through that Offering the Life which is Life indeed.<sup>3</sup> Charles Williams says<sup>4</sup>: "The Passion and the Resurrection have been necessarily divided in ritual and we think of

<sup>1</sup> L. *confortare*, to strengthen—not to coddle.

<sup>2</sup> For an examination of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament see G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit*, 1951.

<sup>3</sup> See J. E. L. Oulton, *Holy Communion and Holy Spirit*, 1951, Ch. VIII, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, p. 141 ff., for a study of sacramental inter-relationships.

<sup>4</sup> *He Came Down from Heaven*, p. 58.

them as separate events. So certainly they were, and yet not as separate as all that. They are two operations in one; they are the hour of the coming of the kingdom." *Mutatis mutandis*, we may not inaptly apply these words to Baptism and Confirmation.

We have considered the various Offices found in the Prayer Book, and it remains to discover how the three main groups are arranged, so that we may know roughly where to look for any given Office. Some apparent anomalies in arrangement are due to additions made in 1661. If now we open our Prayer Book in the middle, we find the Holy Communion Order; and all the first part of the Book leading up to this is occupied with the Liturgy, the Daily Cycle. First, Mattins and Evensong (Morning and Evening Prayer), followed by the Quicunque Vult or Athanasian Creed<sup>1</sup> (in occasional use at Mattins), the Litany, and then various prayers for special occasions. After this come the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels appointed for the Sundays and Holy days throughout the year, and then the Holy Communion Order so-called. The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels are actually the "Proper" (i.e., the parts which vary according to the day), of the Holy Communion or "Ordinary" (i.e., the parts which remain fixed), but they are printed separately for convenience. The Proper and Ordinary together are the full Holy Communion Order. This, then, is our first section, the requirements for the Daily Offering. We turn the page, and are not surprised to find that the next Office is Holy Baptism. We have a double treasure enshrined at the heart of the Book, the two great Dominical Sacraments which the Catechism tells us are universally necessary for salvation. (The word "generally" in 1661 meant "for everyone without exception", not, as it does to-day, "usually"). These two Sacraments are contiguous; but whereas the Holy Communion comes as the climax of the daily public Liturgy, Holy Baptism forms the point of departure for the Offices relating to the private needs of the individual. Both arrangements manifest a natural propriety, and we can observe the delicate balance between the corporate and the personal. Baptism is administered as a public rite, and as such comes next after the Liturgy. It is then placed at the head or starting-point of the individual life, being followed by the Catechism (which was incorporated with Confirmation till 1661, when, like the Proper of the Communion Order, it was printed separately for convenience), Confirmation, Matrimony, Visitation of the Sick, Burial of the Dead,

<sup>1</sup> The Prayer Book rightly makes Quicunque Vult the title of the "commonly called" Athanasian Creed, for it is neither a Creed nor composed by Athanasius.

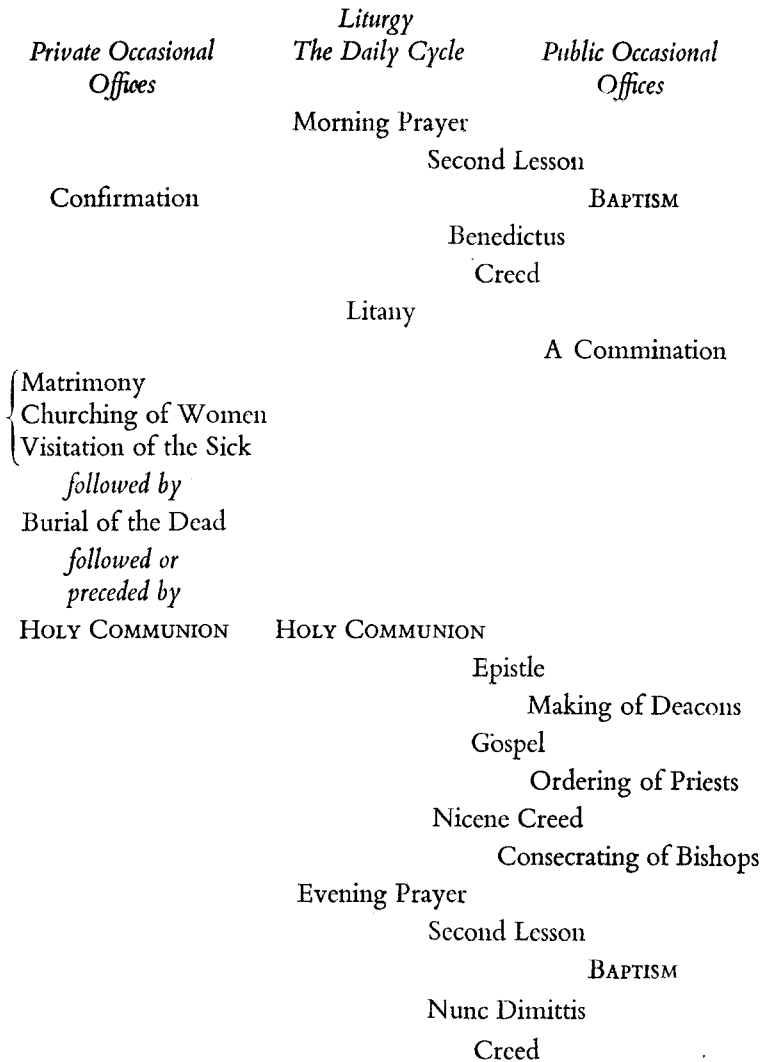
Churching of Women. The last, again, comes presumably for convenience at the end of the series, instead of after Matrimony.

The Churching of Women is followed by the Communion, which belongs to the public Occasional Offices, but is placed here, which was the original end of the Book, as it was only used once in the year. It was not till 1661 that the Book of Psalms was printed with the Prayer Book; and it was at this time also that the Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea were added. They, therefore, follow after the Communion. The Ordinal, comprising the Offices for the Making of Deacons, the Ordering of Priests, and the Consecration of Bishops, is printed separately, under its own title page, at the end of the Book of Common Prayer. These Offices are rarely used except in cathedrals, and were compiled separately after the first publication of the Prayer Book. The original Pontificals were the property of the Bishops, not of the Churches.

The general structure of the Prayer Book, therefore, is simple. There are three groups of Offices: the Liturgy; Services for individual needs; and the Ordinal; the last two groups being separated from each other by the Book of Psalms. The slight apparent anomalies are to be historically explained.

A scheme is appended to show the broad outlines of the Prayer Book arrangement. The Order of Confirmation is here placed tentatively at the head of those Offices which mainly concern the individual, to represent the personal side of the Baptismal Order, which has to be placed among the public Offices. It will be noted that the Dominical Sacraments occur at the beginning, middle, and end, of the Daily Cycle. They are both the centre and the enclosure of all our Godward life.

SCHEME TO SHOW THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE  
VARIOUS OFFICES TO THE CENTRAL RITE



It is expressly ordered that the Public Occasional Offices shall be included within the Daily Liturgical Cycle. The inference with regard to the Private Occasional Offices is that they are to be attached to an independent celebration of the Holy Communion.

THE REOPENING OF THE EXCHANGES:  
BAPTISM

*"A death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness."*

Catechism

SINCE no one can take part in the Church's Liturgy who has not been baptized—and the term "take part" is used advisedly, for an outsider may be present in body although having no organic spiritual link which puts him in touch with the underlying realities of the worship—it seems that consideration of a few points with regard to the various Prayer Book Offices may well begin with that of Baptism. And at the outset it may be stated that the Book of 1928 is left on one side. Not least in the 1928 variants of the Baptismal Order can we see the subtle alterations of doctrine and emphasis which that Book, probably unintentionally, enshrines. There are numerous rubrics and glosses which gravely impair the foundations of the 1661 Book. The balance of our Prayer Book is so sensitive that a small, and apparently neutral, alteration can dislodge a considerable mass. There is a widespread desire for the modernizing of archaic forms, but experiments suggest that the process is extremely liable to jettison essential doctrine enshrined within those forms. We may remember that George Herbert found it possible to make the Prayer Book intelligible to his people. The average intelligence is no lower to-day, and the educational facilities are incomparably greater. Alteration of form for each succeeding generation is far less satisfactory than drawing enshrined truth from the standard words by patient and thorough explanation. The understanding of faith transcends and is independent of the understanding of the intellect—but it must be trained and taught. There is considerable danger of assuming that the Prayer Book is out of date, and that exceptions are therefore legitimate. The thought of "exceptions" can so paralyse all effort that finally exceptions become established as authorized variants. If we could all bring ourselves to *want* to make the Book which we so magniloquently acclaimed in 1949 a working proposition, we should establish a sense of solidarity and mutual confidence which tends to be lacking when antithetic parties

are advocating alterations. It is often supposed that only one party is guilty of breaches of Prayer Book discipline, yet in fact all parties contravene its directions, and that not only in matters of convenience. Rubrics to-day may be disregarded, not because they are out of date, (which some are), but because they presuppose doctrine disagreeable to the individual or to his party. The Church, unlike Parliament, does not consist of different parties to which we owe primary allegiance. The Church is our party: sectarian over-attachments maim our own life and breed discord. A concerted effort to obey the Book of 1661 would provide valuable opportunities for the practice of obedience before the promulgation of Canons supposedly more binding than our present enactments. We are all rebels by nature, being children of Adam, be it the Anglo-Saxon who cottons to no one or the Celt who is agin the government. For all of us obedience comes only by practice, and in most of our parishes to-day fashion or fancy are followed, often in all good faith, but not the Prayer Book.

(1). *Rubrics*

The Order for the public Baptism of Infants opens with a lengthy rubric insisting upon the public nature of the rite, that it is to be administered on Sundays or Holy-days when the most number of people come together; and has another stating that it is to take place immediately after the second Lesson at Mattins or Evensong. No other time or place are countenanced by the Prayer Book for the public administration of Baptism. The whole balance of dogma and emphasis is upset by the ignoring of these rubrics, for to very many people "christening" has become a semi-private affair of the particular human family, on the same level as a wedding, instead of being recognized as the solemn public engrafting of a new member into the Body of Christ and his reception into the spiritual family of God. This aspect is safeguarded in the mission field by the use of the historic baptismal seasons of Easter and Whitsun for the baptism of adult converts; but Christian parents naturally do not wish to deprive their children of their Christian heritage for so long a period as this might involve. Possibly the provision of other public baptismal seasons, in analogy with Embertides, might meet the difficulty without losing the corporate aspect of the rite.

One of the reasons given in the Prayer Book for the "public" administration of Baptism is that "every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his Baptism".

And those who object to such reminders may nevertheless be in great need of receiving them. The number of parishes in which there would be several Baptisms every week if the rubrics were obeyed would probably be few; but in any case, since by obeying the rubrics every child will be baptized within a fortnight of its birth, there will be at least two Sundays in each month when by arrangement there need be no Baptisms. Every calendar month contains at least one Red Letter Day, which can be used for the Baptisms due to take place during the previous fortnight; and by collecting together all the children on this day, there will presumably be a large number of people come together.

(2). *Original Sin*

In a Norfolk belfry there are—or were—some old hatchments bearing the motto *Mors janua vitae*, which, for a certain child, flung wide the gate into a spacious pleasance. One hung on either side of a small door which opened into a west end gallery, so that standing between them one looked straight up the church to the altar at the far end. To this fortunate child the thought of death had been familiar from the first beginnings of memory, for there never was a time when the wonderful fact had been unknown that there are two red letter days in life, the day of one's Baptism and the day of one's death. The first bestows the gift which the second consummates after the preparatory exercises of the intervening period. Standing between those hatchments, however, it was possible to telescope physical and spiritual, and the *mors* became the Baptismal death opening the gate to the Altar of Life.

There are so many people who sit lightly to the doctrine of original sin that this is manifestly no time for any "humanizing" of our formularies which could cover a deviation from the Scriptural and traditional faith in this matter. The ninth Article would be a safeguard, but still there are some who in effect claim for the human race the exemption which Roman Catholics claim for the mother of our Lord. To such Herbert Butterfield says:<sup>1</sup> "Those who do not believe in the doctrine of the Fall can hardly deny that human history has always been history under the terms and conditions of the Fall." The concept may be denied, but the fact is there, and the whole historical process bears undeviating witness to it. (Whether the "Fall" was upwards or downwards, forwards or backwards, or sideways, is immaterial. It was

<sup>1</sup> *Christianity and History*, 1949, p. 106.



a moral phenomenon, and therefore extra-phenomenal.) The "good old days" indeed have existed, but before history as we ourselves know it "under the terms and conditions of the Fall"; being earth as God created it when he saw that it was very good. And the failure of Utopias past, present, and to come is that they do not, and cannot, reproduce the conditions of Paradise. They are not concerned with God as the centre and object of their existence, nor with his methods for the re-establishment of Eden. The Davidic acknowledgement, "in sin hath my mother conceived me", is apt to arouse resentment in our minds, partly for the apparent aspersion on our mother's virtue, and partly because it suggests an act of arbitrary injustice on God's part to start us with an unfair handicap before trying our paces. (We more rarely complain of a fair face or a brilliant brain inherited through no desert of our own, before our paces have been tried.) It is also widely assumed that the doctrine of original sin involves belief in the total depravity of man, and this belies human experience. Total depravity, however, is neither Scriptural nor traditional, and, as already suggested, redemption is possible for this very reason.

An old lady set herself the task of learning something new every year, whether it was a stitch in needlework or a line of poetry, or some hitherto unknown fact of interest. When she was in her nineties fear one day compelled the admission that she was very giddy, and she did not understand why, because she had never been like that before. By way of encouragement it was suggested to her that this was the "something new" which she could acquire. Did she not always like learning something new? "Yes," she replied in a flash, "but something of my own choosing." This was an admirable definition of original sin. It is this underlying *state* of choosing to go our own way which separates us from God. Legalistic views of satisfaction, and the obsession with actual sins, have overlaid the basic fact that the physical life which we receive from our parents contains within itself "something of my own choosing". No amount of actual righteousness, i.e., absence of breaches of the external law, alters this. It is our very life that is in fault, and it is by the introduction of a new life that remedy is made, and this gift is imparted to us in Baptism as truly and actually as our physical life is bestowed upon us by our parents. We then become a cockpit "In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side",<sup>1</sup> for God has not in Baptism destroyed our free will, neither can he save us unless we choose the way of salvation. If he overruled our choice we should be

<sup>1</sup> English Hymnal 563.

robots, not human beings, and the thing which he set out to save would not be there.<sup>1</sup>

Western Christendom has largely lost sight of the difference in kind between original sin and actual sins. If the whole aggregate of actual sins ever committed, or ever to be committed, were to be added together, the total would still not represent the "sin" of the world. St John uses the exact word when he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"<sup>2</sup> Had our Lord made atonement only for all the actual sins committed from the Fall to the Final Judgement, he would not have redeemed human nature. The twist inherent before it issues in overt act would have remained. Real damage has been done to our minds by the substitution of the word "sins" for "sin".<sup>3</sup>

Here, as so often, we see that we are not isolated units, but personal, individual expressions of a common life. The three opening chapters of Genesis, portraying fact in poetic form, are the essential foundation of Christian doctrine and of Christian hope. God created —man fell; and there, without the Christian climax to the Old Testament, man still remains.

This is the Catholic Faith, uncompromisingly enshrined in the Prayer Book, with regard to original sin and Baptism; and its very grim implications have led many persons of goodwill to gloss and explain it away. Nevertheless, it throws needed light on the awefulness of the remedy which God had to apply. Desperate indeed was the need which demanded such redemption. But we must beware of assuming corollaries. We have no data with regard to those who die unbaptized through no fault of their own. That is a wholly different proposition. And we have the express word of Scripture that our Lord preached to the spirits in prison<sup>4</sup> (where time is not).

The doctrine of the Prayer Book remains plain and Scriptural.

"All men are conceived and born in sin."

"None can enter into the Kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of Water and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Dean Matthews in *Christian Belief Today*, pp. 90 ff., for an illuminating treatment of Grace and Free will.

<sup>2</sup> John 1. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Another misquotation from Scripture is enshrined in the Litany, where we pray for the fruits, instead of the fruit, of the Spirit. Both these plurals contain defective theology.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. 3. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Baptismal Service.

The final result of the administration of this, as of other sacraments, is not seen on this side of the grave.

(3). *The Scrutiny* (preliminary questions)

After summarizing the benefits received in Baptism from our Lord Jesus Christ, that he will "receive him, release *him* of *his* sins, sanctify *him* with the Holy Ghost and give *him* the kingdom of heaven and everlasting life", the corresponding obligations of the person to be baptized are enumerated. "This infant must . . . promise . . . that *he* will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy Word, and obediently keep his commandments."

The categorical questions and answers then follow, and their order is of some significance. First comes the renunciation of evil. This in itself is a refutation of the charge of total depravity, for as yet no sacramental grace has been conferred, and still the candidate is expected in some degree to know wrong as wrong, and the active repudiation of evil is the necessary prelude to the possibility of exercising faith. Next therefore the Apostles' Creed is solemnly recited, and as solemnly we affirm our belief in it. In the mission field, our inability to believe in God while we are turned away from him towards evil is dramatized in order to bring home the essential need of "conversion". The Baptismal candidate faces west as he renounces the devil and all his works, and then shows what he thinks by turning his back on it; and facing east he recites the Creed. In the third question the high light of the whole scrutiny follows. There comes the challenge:

"Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?"

*Answer.* "That is my desire."

Finally comes a question as to our conduct, and we promise that we will keep God's Commandments.

So then Baptism is into the Faith of the Apostles' Creed (this point is obliterated in the Book of 1928), and the order of the several elements is:

- (a) renunciation of evil *before* there is possibility of faith;
- (b) faith in *all the articles* of the Christian Creed, and then through faith,
- (c) works, that is, the doing of God's will by *keeping* his Commandments.

This is the order, and this is the content, of the requirements laid upon those who come to be dedicated to God in Baptism; and the very use of the word "dedicated" in the prayer immediately following the promises shows what a "solemn vow, promise, and profession" is being made. We have dissociated ourselves from the "original" sin inherent in our natural being: we have repudiated the choice which separated us from God. Now we can face him and confess the truth of his complete sovereignty, that we are his, not only as creatures of his creation (which applies to all mankind), but still more as sons of his redemptive love through this sacrament of Baptism. We start in the right relationship of entire dependence. Doubtless we are weaker and less able to obey God's will than were our unfallen ancestors, but God's unmeasured bounty has given us the greater help. We are not restored merely to our natural state, but taken up into the very life of his Son. We have to remember that neither in this Order, nor in Confirmation, nor in the Ordinal, are the scrutinies the essence of the several rites. They are secondary and dependent, the setting of ourselves into that state of receptivity which is necessary for receiving an inflow of supernatural power "which by nature we cannot have",<sup>1</sup> because it is no more a part of our *natural* endowment than it is that of a motor-car to discuss politics.

Herein lies the rationale of Infant Baptism, to which people sometimes object both on the score that such solemn promises cannot be undertaken by proxy, and also that it is not "fair" to lay such heavy obligations on children without their own consent. The root difficulty in such cases is nearly always a disregard or ignorance of God's promises, or a misunderstanding of our own. Our renunciation of evil has no Manichean flavour in it. The Catechism is careful to say that we eschew the superficial unrealities ("poms and vanities") "of this *wicked* world", but *not* the real pleasures of God's good gifts; "all the *sinful* lusts of the flesh", but *not* their ordered use and enjoyment. God has given us our existence and all its capacities and he wishes us to use them, not to wrap them up in a napkin so that they atrophy; our promises are that we will develop them to the utmost of our capacity in the power of the new Baptismal life under the guidance of his Will.

There is no call here for the postponement of Baptism, but there is great need for faithful godparents, who will train the children for whom they have made themselves responsible, both by their example

<sup>1</sup> Baptismal Order.

and by word. It is indeed a solemn responsibility, and it is no wonder that such a transaction must take place in public. No wonder that we all need to be reminded of our own vocation and consequent obligations. All of us know the date of our birthday; few of us fail to remember it, if only in passing, as the day comes round. How many of us know, much less celebrate, the day of our Baptism, that red letter day which is the high light of our whole earthly pilgrimage? This is a useful test of our scale of values, a guide not only to the region where our heart is fixed, but also to our grasp of the stupendous spiritual event which then took place, which far outdistances the importance of our physical birth.

#### (4). *Christian Life*

It is worth while to take next a phrase from the final exhortation to the Godparents, since there is a parallel in the sequence of events. The Godparents are exhorted to remember always "that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and *to be made* like unto him".

Here again we see the balance between our own efforts and the work of grace. As we were unable to believe the Christian Creed, much less to obey God's will, until we had repudiated the devil, so now we have first to follow Christ, and *then be made* like him. To be made like unto Christ is to obey till obedience becomes the mainspring of our character as it was of his. As he obeyed the Law, notwithstanding his opinion of its guardians, so must obedience to the Church's discipline, the law of the New Covenant, live and grow in us. Our duty towards God and our duty towards our neighbour are admirable outlines of the rule of life which the Prayer Book lays upon us. Our "Duties", carried out through Prayer and Sacrament, fashion us as we follow them.

#### (5). *Sacraments and Sacramentals*

A sacrament, as the Catechism tells us, is a covenant issuing from God and dependent for its efficacy on God alone. The disposition of the recipient does not affect the *sacrament*, though it does affect his own personal benefit or otherwise in receiving it. The sacrament exists in its own right when the ordained form is observed, the external part being the means and the pledge of the interior gift which our Lord has expressly conditioned by the given outward means. A cheque represents the inscribed sum of money and "is" that sum, and it depends for its validity solely upon the will and the material substance of the

person drawing it, though it must be accepted and endorsed in proper form by the recipient before the latter can appropriate the benefit received. To deny that there is any sacramental Presence apart from the faith of the recipient is to deny that the sacrament depends upon God, and makes it depend instead upon ourselves.

Such a thing is a different, though analogous, matter, and is called not a sacrament but a sacramental. The sacramental principle, indeed, is found to underlie the whole of our created existence, outward form and inner meaning expressing a relationship between different levels and types of existence and unifying into an harmonious whole what would otherwise be non-related or even antagonistic. We may adapt Butterfield's dictum with regard to the Fall, and say that those who deny the God-created nature of sacraments do yet in fact live in a sacramentally-conditioned world. A sacramental is a bridge, linking up the exchanges to avoid a sudden jar, much as the contours of a landscape fade imperceptibly into neighbouring parts. Even a wide expanse of Norfolk fen cut up by drains into great squares resembling a chess-board is unified rather than divided by these arterial waterways. There is an otherness over and beyond the visible which knits the seen both with itself and with the unseen. Every experience at a given level can be used as the token and expression of something greater and fuller than itself. But the outstanding difference between this use of creatures and a sacrament lies in the fact that it depends for its efficacy upon ourselves.

There are, in addition to such private exercises, many ceremonies of so universal a nature that they have a public signification; such as bowing the head in honour of the most Holy Trinity at the Gloria, or at the Holy Name of Jesus; or of making the sign of the Cross. Now, as the introductory paragraph "Of Ceremonies" in the Prayer Book tells us, "the keeping or omitting of a ceremony, in itself considered, is but a small thing; yet the wilful and contemptuous transgression and breaking of a common order and discipline is no small offence before God", so this question of the making of the sign of the Cross is in itself indifferent, but is in fact one of the ceremonies which has been deliberately retained in the Prayer Book; and that in the most public and dramatic manner in the Baptismal service. Immediately after baptizing the infant (or adult) in the Trinitarian formula, the priest adds, "We receive this Child [or, this person] into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign *him* with the sign of the cross" . . . at which words the priest makes the sign of the Cross upon the forehead

of the newly-baptized, which, when reverently and devoutly done, is seen to be a solemn sealing of the new servant of God, who henceforth has Christ's name, and the name of his Father written on his forehead.<sup>1</sup> Further we note that where an infant is baptized privately and lives, it is brought to church later on, and after due scrutiny as to the validity of the private baptism, it is received into the congregation with the sign of the Cross in exactly the same form as if it had been publicly baptized. This signing with the Cross is never omitted.<sup>2</sup> Henceforth one who bears this mark in his body is authorized and expected to use it upon ceremonial and private occasions, as an act of loyalty and thanksgiving to God who has given us this family device. The fact that it can be made carelessly is no argument for its omission. The value of a habit lies largely in its automatism, and in the moment of death, when consciousness can no longer modify our actions, there are less desirable forms for our habitual movements to take than to proclaim the faith of Christ crucified. It is prescribed in the Prayer Book, therefore a Prayer Book mind must include it, for it is not a party label but the very treasurable badge of our profession. Its non-use, the Prayer Book suggests, "is no small offence before God".

(6). *Baptism and Confirmation*

In considering the relationship of Baptism and Confirmation we note that there is no blessing at the end of the Baptismal Order. When performed as directed in the Book of Common Prayer, after the Exhortation to the Godparents the Priest returns to his place in the chancel, and continues the Order of Mattins or Evensong with the Benedictus or Nunc Dimittis, as the case may be. In the case of infants it ends with an exhortation to the Godparents to see that the child is confirmed as soon as it can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; in that of adults with a rubric to say that Confirmation is to follow as soon as possible. If we read the Confirmation

<sup>1</sup> Rev. 7. 3; 14. 1.

<sup>2</sup> It is not to be supposed that Baptism is in any sense incomplete without it. Water and the Trinitarian formula are the outward and visible sign by which the recipient is regenerate. The signing with the Cross is, rather, a sacramental, expressing the personal, reciprocating side of the Baptismal transaction, the outward symbol of the promises. The Baptism with water was the sacrament of admission, the cross is the "sacramental" witness of the life which the newly-baptized intends to lead, the "token that hereafter he shall [will] not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified".

See Lampe, *op. cit.*, for a history of the interpretation of the use of the sign of the Cross, esp. p. 273; also the summary, pp. 320-2.

Order directly after the Baptismal Order we find that it is virtually an appendix to the Baptism. It is extremely short, and follows on from the Baptism in a perfectly orderly way. It consists essentially in the Laying-on of the Bishop's hands. This is preceded by a simple "I do" from the candidates in response to the question whether they accept the obligations undertaken for them by their Godparents at their Baptism, and is followed by the Lord's Prayer, two Collects and a Blessing. Nothing could be shorter or simpler or a more natural climax to the more detailed Baptismal Order. When we view the two Orders together, we see that Godparents have in some sense the function of proposers of a new member to a society. He cannot propose himself, but once he has been admitted, he gives his own guarantee that he will keep the rules. He then receives investiture which admits him to the full freedom and exercise of his membership. It is unfortunate that the customary separation of Baptism and Confirmation has led to a gross distortion of the latter rite from padding with addresses and other extraneous matter in order to convert it into a "service" in its own right. In Prayer Book phrase, "it is much to be desired" that the Prayer Book pattern should be restored.

## THE CREED

*"Wilt thou be baptized in this Faith?"*

Baptismal scrutiny

IN THE introductory chapter it was stated that the Book Genesis begins on the hither side of eternity. The Creed, on the contrary, both begins and ends in eternity. The first phrase is "I believe in God"; the last "I believe . . . in the life everlasting". Between these two phrases the drama of Creation, of the Incarnation, of Redemption, and of final Consummation is enfolded from the point of view of God. It is revelation, not research.

For this reason alone the Creed must be taken as a whole. The Catechism specifically requires us to believe *all* the Articles of the Christian Faith, and it expressly requires faith, not credulity or appraisal; which is to say, neither that which is contrary to reason nor that which is the result of reasoning. Faith is the faculty which enables us to take a leap in the dark, to transcend the limits of reason when we have reached the stage at which we are compelled to say, I do not know. There will be "reasonable" presumptions up to a point, but after that a dead blank. It *may* be true, and according to our temperament and predispositions we shall either be "reasonably" ready to take the plunge or, with forefeet firmly planted and head down, resolutely refuse every carrot blandishment. The act of faith takes us beyond the limits of our natural endowments; where they fail, faith enables us to make the necessary effort to reach the supra- or extra-rational plane in which the revelation is set. And this effort is essential. When we have said, I believe, and have abandoned ourselves to the void of darkness which lies beyond sensory perception, then, and then only, shall we find ourselves able to add the wonderful, I know. Not only will the light of revelation dawn, but we shall find that all our faculties remain intact and still capable of functioning within the limits of their several spheres; even, it may be, with increased efficiency. God does not demand the violation of our capacities, for that would be to contradict himself, to stultify his own "reasoned" creation. He *does* require our acceptance of that which it is

beyond our competence to know or to discover by the use of our natural faculties, because that is proper to the limitations of our creation, and an acknowledgement of our dependence upon something beyond ourselves. We have to begin by "taking it on trust" from those who are empowered to teach us, though our acceptance is not complete while it is purely passive. There comes another stage when, like all healthy children, we begin to say *why*? One of the features of the Jewish Passover celebrations is the question that the youngest member of the assembled company has to ask, "What mean ye by this service?"<sup>1</sup> thus sanctifying the spirit of inquiry at the very heart of their religious life. Our Lady at the Annunciation showed a practical grasp of her problems and a direct simplicity in stating them. The first occasion upon which we hear of our Lord after his babyhood, he is asking as well as answering questions. We cannot plead ignorance if we have taken no steps to inform ourselves. It is from inquiry and personal consideration that we pass on to the vital positive stage, when we no longer believe on the testimony of others, but make our own willed act of faith. And the surrender once made has to be continually renewed and deepened, for every day there are fresh mysteries for our growing consciousness to apprehend and assimilate, since under the influence of one revelation we are able to attain to another, to lay hold of some fresh fragment of the immeasurable truth which was all there present from the beginning.

Here is at least one "reason" for a credal formula. It is both our gold standard and our touchstone. It is the minimum and the maximum required for thinking right thoughts of God, and it saves us from debasing his revelation by partial truths which, when unbalanced, become error. Jewish monotheism before the Incarnation was God's supreme self-revelation. To-day the most exalted Unitarianism is heresy,<sup>2</sup> from which now-inferior worship our Creed protects us. Those who wear glasses know that they have to turn their head if they wish to see anything clearly which is at one side of them; the sideways look which is possible without glasses is either blurred or blank. We have to test our vision of any aspect of truth by *all* the Articles of the Creed, and if any of these are dim or blurred, we may feel "reasonably" certain that our own vision is in fault. We have turned our heads to look at something beside the mark, and we must return to that position in which the Creed as a whole and the whole Creed is clearly

<sup>1</sup> See Ex. 12. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Heresy—a portion of truth distorted into error.

in focus. It developed gradually<sup>1</sup> in response to the various heresies which, fortunately, showed themselves in the Apostolic and sub-Apostolic ages. These heresies are still with us, though their make-up is different. In essence they are still the same, as human nature is still the same. And as neither human nature nor heresies change anything beyond their appearance, the Creed is as up to date to-day as it was when first minted.

If we examine the Apostles' Creed we shall see that it is an expansion of the threefold Baptismal formula. Its three paragraphs relate respectively to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Thus it is concerned wholly with God. Man enters in only as an object. It is of first importance to realize that it is entirely God-centred, for the summary in the Catechism, admirable in its balance, may yet leave the impression that the chief object of God's existence is ourselves. We may remind ourselves that the summary runs as follows:

*Question.* "What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?"

*Answer.* "First, I learn to believe in God the Father,  
who hath made me, and all the world.  
Secondly, in God the Son,  
who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.  
Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost,  
who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people  
of God."

We see that the "who" phrases are qualifying and explanatory, and that the primary statements can perfectly well stand alone, though the additions depend upon the primary statements. It is worth while to set the Catechetical and Credal phrases opposite one another.

<i>Catechism</i>	<i>Creed</i>
"First, I learn to believe in God the Father,	"I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Secondly, in God the Son,	and in Jesus Christ, his only Son,
Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost."	I believe in the Holy Ghost."

<sup>1</sup> The Apostles' Creed enshrines primitive Baptismal teaching and profession of faith. The Nicene Creed was drawn up from a slightly different point of view to be a test of orthodoxy.

There are two points which are clarified by the slight readjustment of wording in the Catechism.

(a) It is made quite clear that the Godhead is not confined to the Father, but applies equally to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. It is a shortened form of the safeguard in the Quicumque Vult, "the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one . . . the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods: but one God."

In the Creed the first phrase runs, "I believe in God". The unity of God is proclaimed, and the diversity of Persons follows. This theological concept is carefully maintained wherever the Creed is sung to an ancient setting. The single voice of the Priest proclaims the single divine nature, "I believe in One God", and the choir joins in with "the Father Almighty . . ." announcing his Trinal Being. The One in Three is worshipped by the very nature of the liturgical division. Where the congregation is encouraged to join in after "I believe" the theological concept is blurred; and not a few are left with the impression that the phrase runs, "God-the-Father", instead of "God, the-Father", and for those who stop to think there is often a sense of puzzlement.<sup>1</sup>

(b) The insistence upon the unity of Godhead with complete equality of Being among the differentiated Persons does not lead to complete identity of function. In the "who" phrases of the Catechism we are told that "the Father" created the world and all within it; that "the Son" redeemed mankind: that "the Holy Ghost" sanctifies the elect (i.e., the baptized). Thus there is distribution of activity without division of essence; and if we examine more closely we find that there are concentrating spheres of operation from that of the Father creating the world to that of the Spirit perfecting the baptized. Thus creation, redemption, and sanctification, though separable, are not isolated, but find their fullness in the unity of Godhead, which, acting through one Person, acts *in all*.

Let us, for a moment, return to the Oneness of God. This is God alone, in the fullness of being, in the undivided plenitude of all his powers, having neither beginning nor ending nor any flux of change; Sole, for there is no existence other than himself. It is not, as in the

<sup>1</sup> There is a widespread similar confusion from the lack of a comma in the Nicene Creed, where the Holy Ghost is supposed to be the Lord-and-Giver-of-life instead of the Lord, and Giver-of-life. Here again the Quicumque Vult gives the true interpretation, "The Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords: but one Lord."

fairy stories of a bygone youth, "once upon a time". It is before time. God is pure IS, pure NOW, in the consummation of all his own perfection, to which nothing can be added, from which no power, not even his own, can take away. Sometimes a sense of the immensity of nature overwhelms us, the almost pitiless extension of space seems to crush our puny littleness; and at such moments we may steady our mental balance by remembering that God was, and is, there first, and that the presence of space in no way displaces or incommodes him. A lady had a friendly ghost who used to come in at the front door, run up the stairs and go into the back drawing-room on the first floor. He was well known to her servants and visitors, as many people had heard him, and the case-history made him rather one of the family than a source of alarm. One night the lady returned home late, after all the household were in bed, and went upstairs to go into the back drawing-room. As she had her hand on the door handle, the ghost knocked on the door. The shock of realizing that he was occupying *exactly the same space as herself* for a moment overcame her. We need not believe this particular experience unless we wish, but it is at least a faithful illustration of the theological truth that spirit does not occupy space as we do. We are circumscribably "here"; but God, being pure spirit, is both "here" and "not-here", for he is not spatially-conditioned. Thus farthest distance and our own immediate persons are equally in him, and *contiguous* through him.

Antithetic, though the same, complementary and identical, God's immanence waits on our creaturely weakness in compassion and tender love; his transcendence annihilates us with the burning fire of his holiness. He talks to Moses face to face, as a man with his friend; but none can see his face and live. Yet not two Gods, but one God. And the "difference" is the Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father in the Name of the Son.<sup>1</sup>

For in the mystery of this Being, this IS-ing of God, we contemplate "the Father", the Source, Fount, and Origin of Godhead, yet in no way separable from it; neither superior, exterior, nor antecedent, but of identical substance and simultaneous equality with "the Son" and "the Spirit". The doctrine of the Trinity is, in a sense, easy; easy, that is, in comparison with an undifferentiated Godhead. The conception of pure Deity lends itself to philosophic speculation, wherein we become embogged in our own processes of ratiocination. The doctrine of the Trinity, on the other hand, as embodied in the glorious loftiness

<sup>1</sup> John 15; 16.

of the phrases of the Quicunque Vult, rises, like Everest, above all thought, yet fulfils it with the energizing peace of its own vital but satisfying contradictions.

The three phrases uncreate, incomprehensible, eternal, define the relationship of the Godhead with regard to time and space; uncreate, therefore both before and after time, "having neither beginning of days nor end of life";<sup>1</sup> incomprehensible, therefore through this illimitability unconfined by the bounds of space; eternal, "before the world was".<sup>2</sup> After these, so to speak, external relationships have been defined ("so to speak", for in reality there is nothing that is truly external to God), phrases are formed with regard to the inner Being of Godhead, and his relationships with himself. The three Persons are almighty, they are God and Lord. In these things they are equal, though not identical; for there follow the verses which describe in allusive phrase those conditions of Being which differentiate the three Persons each from other.

"The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor begotten, but proceeding."

Since we are attempting to describe in language that which language cannot contain, we have to speak of the Father as the origin of life in the Godhead, although the word origin does not here connote a beginning of existence, for by definition God has no beginning. Yet the moment we have spoken the word "life" we remember that the Spirit is the Life-Giver, so that even in that origination the Spirit has his part. St Augustine's conception is that of a circulating life within the Godhead, which originates in the Father, is derivative in the Son, and proceeds in the Holy Ghost. However, "in this Trinity none is afore, or after other"; and we must bear in mind that we are speaking of the eternal existence within the Godhead so that the term "procession" does not mean going forth outwards into any created relationship. This is the life which is "neither made, nor created".

The mysteries here expressed with regard to the equality and fundamental inseparability of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity are so profound that, being beyond our comprehension, we stray outside the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 7. 3.

<sup>2</sup> John 17. 5.

formal wording at our peril. Which also the Quicunque itself recognizes by returning triumphantly without further explanation to its original proclamation, but uttered in reverse form, "the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped".

Having availed ourselves of the help of the Quicunque in speaking of the Holy Trinity we proceed to set out the Apostles' Creed in a schematic form.

<i>Transitions</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Description or Activity</i>
<i>Eternity</i> .....	"I believe in GOD the Father Almighty,	
(i) Time-space .....	and in his only Son	Maker of heaven and earth: Jesus Christ our Lord,
Earth.....		Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried,
Hades .....		He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead,
(ii) <i>Eternity</i> .....		He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
(iii) Earth .....	I believe in the Holy Ghost;	The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body
(iv) <i>Eternity</i> .....	And the life everlasting. Amen."	

In the middle column we have the subject matter of the Creed, which is GOD. On the right are the descriptive phrases of his activities, on the left an indication of the alternations in media which occur in the course of the Creed.

[The words "Jesus Christ" have been placed in the right-hand column rather than in the centre in order to show more clearly the defect in those post-Reformation endings of Collects which proceed to a final ascription of praise to the Trinity. All pre-Reformation Collects had the double ending:

(a) "Through Jesus Christ i.e., through whose mediation, and in company with whose prayer, we can alone approach the Father.

(b) Thy Son our Lord,  
to whom with thee  
and the Holy Ghost  
be all honour and glory world without end. Amen."

Or

"Who liveth and reigneth  
with thee and the Holy Ghost,  
ever one God world without end. Amen."

i.e., adoration of the Trinity.

Space was saved by writing these endings shortly "Through, to whom" or "Through, who liveth". Everyone knew the complete phrases, and the words "Thy Son" were never omitted.

Now, as far as the phrase (a) is concerned, our Collects are perfectly correct in saying, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord", for "Lord" in the phrase "our Lord" has not the exact connotation of the word "Lord" in the Quicunque, v. 17. His human name does not belong to our Lord in virtue of his Godhead, but of his Manhood, so that if we are to give glory to the Holy Trinity, we must use the Trinitarian formula, Father, Son, Spirit. To omit the words "thy Son" is to bypass God uncreate. *Qua* Son our Lord is equal to the Father, *qua* Christ he is inferior. It is defective theology, and therefore defective worship.

The wording of the Creed would have made this clearer if the order had been "I believe in. . . his only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" instead of "in . . . Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord", but in fact



the Credal order is much to be preferred, since it lessens the danger of dichotomy and of ascribing to our Lord not only two natures but two Persons.]

Eternity, we note, occurs three times, at the beginning, in the middle and at the end, reminding us of the similar interpenetration of the Dominical Sacraments into the Daily Cycle. Following the first of these three mentions of eternity we find the following movements:

- (i) The introduction of time-space, *Creation*—
- (ii) The return to heaven, *Redemption*, complete, but unapplied—
- (iii) The re-entry of Eternity into time, *Santification*, by incorporation into the Body of Christ  
for the purpose of
- (iv) The taking-up of creation into God, the final consummation in Eternity.

(i) *The introduction of time-space: Creation and Incarnation*

Within the time-space limits of creation we note first that we are concerned with "heaven" as well as earth, that is, with the angelic hierarchies as well as all other created phenomena whether known or unknown to us in our present state. We are not allowed to concentrate our whole attention upon ourselves, even in the subsidiary state of creatures. We are merely a part of the whole creative plan. Again, when we pass from the statement with regard to the primary creation, and come to the six phrases regarding the redemptive process in "earth" and "Hades", the creaturely and derivative state of mankind is even more arrestingly seen. The only mention of man in general is contained in the little word "our", which is itself dependent upon the "Lord" which it qualifies. As we glance down these short but brim-packed statements we see that they are wholly concerned with the Incarnate God. Between the first two phrases and the middle pair we have the Incarnate life on earth stretching from the account of his birth to that of his death; in the last pair we have the descent of his disembodied soul into Hades for the period which elapsed between his death and resurrection.

There is no reference in this Credal synopsis to his Ministry, or to any event between the Birth and the Passion and Death. Rattenbury<sup>1</sup> voices his regret: "Sometimes one wishes that one sentence had been

<sup>1</sup> Ernest Rattenbury, *The Adoration of the Lamb*, 1950, p. 58.

inserted in the Apostles' Creed after 'Born of the Virgin Mary' and before 'Suffered under Pontius Pilate'—Peter's words: 'He went about doing good.' The actual evidence that Jesus gave of his Messiahship . . . is not that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, but that he healed the sick and preached the Gospel to the poor." The moment that the difficulty is stated in that form one sees where the misapprehension lies. The Creed deals with facts, not with evidence. The Creed states the facts relating to the Incarnation; the Bible furnishes us with some of the reasons which our Lord and his disciples gave in substantiation of his claims. The relative functions of Creed and Bible are easily misapprehended. We cannot be too clear that the Creed is not "evidence". It is axioms.

The fact of sin is intimated for the first time in the phrase "suffered under Pontius Pilate", but with splendid concentration on essentials the Creed compels us to recognize that God's response to man's sinful rebellion is of infinitely greater importance than that very rebellion. Even here we are not allowed to be the centre of the picture. Surely any man-derived Creed would have phrased things differently. The essential steps in Incarnation and Redemption stand out in all the dignified splendour of their Divine origination; yet equally the principle of free will (and therefore of man's co-operation) is indicated in the otherwise curious juxtaposition of the names of Mary and Pilate. Mary's Fiat opened the way to the Incarnation: Pilate's drugging of his conscience set the seal on our need of Redemption. They epitomize respectively the response of grace and of self-will.

The Virgin birth has been subject to heart-searching possibly even greater than the mystery demands. The first Adam was created without parentage, and should therefore be subject to at least an equal degree of suspicion. The inbreathing of the Spirit into "man" was a type of the birth of the second Adam. Adam, we are told, was created in the image of God. This is the norm: an initial gift of the Spirit, creating a new form of life. If we bear this origin in mind, we shall have less difficulty in accepting the Virgin birth of the second Adam by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit at the Annunciation. It was a new creation, no less mysterious, if more wonderful in its revelation of the character of God, than was the original formation of man in his own image. And from this new creation a new type of life has arisen with which the third paragraph of the Creed is concerned. The first Adam was begotten of God by the Spirit; but since, by his sin, Adam had forfeited his fatherhood, the new "man" entered into the

continuity of the human race through the woman, conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. And at Pentecost the Bride of Christ, the Naos<sup>1</sup>, was born, by a similar initial inrush of the Holy Spirit. First in the man, then through the woman (since there is neither male nor female in heaven), the complete humanity assumed from both being perfected at the right hand of the Father is now poured out by the direct mediation of the Spiritual Life-giver.

With regard to the miraculous, we may remember that the births of Isaac and of St John Baptist were contrary to all natural expectation. Our knowledge is so partial that we resemble the small child, who, on making his *début* at church, saw his father in a surplice for the first time, and cried out in his consternation, "Why, there's Daddy in his nightgown." We can, if we like, rationalize all revelation that transcends our very limited natural knowledge, and call it a nightgown—but we thereby miss church, and with it the life of the Spirit. We shut ourselves up in our bedroom and our souls remain earth-bound.

In a statement as rigidly condensed as the Apostles' Creed our attention is arrested by the apparent superfluity in the description of the Passion and death. "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."

"He suffered", that is, he offered himself in sacrifice. The voluntary sacrificial nature of this dread drama is the essence of the whole transaction. It is the fulfilment of the great prophetic vision of the Suffering Servant, the Shepherd who gives himself for the sheep. The crucial point of the redemptive process lies in the willingness of the offering. If it is not irreverent to speak of germane issues in this connection, we see here the supreme example of the right exercise of free will. Free will is our only possible contribution in any matter, it is the only thing that we possess which is our own. Body, soul, heart, intellect, are part of our creaturely dower. Gethsemane should cure us for ever of imagining that our feelings, our emotions, are any legitimate test of conduct, or that honesty compels us to follow them. The whole moral value of any action lies in the will (since apart from that we have left *ourselves* outside it), though our emotional revolt lead even to sweat of blood.

"Was crucified." In this and the subsequent phrases the objective reality of the human nature is asserted in all its "natural" details.

"Dead." There may be those who find difficulty in the miraculous Virgin birth, and yet are not troubled by the equally miraculous

<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. 128-131.

death of God. Yet it is here that we confront the awfulness and finality of sin-earned death. It is not easy to grasp the *reality* of the death on the Cross, partly because we know the sequel, partly because, in so far as we have any grasp of the Divinity of our Lord, we do secretly evade the actuality. To speak of the death of God seems to be equally blasphemous and meaningless, yet as long as we translate *Theotokos* as Mother of God we are not left with an alternative. Probably in both cases the more accurate term would be "He who is God", but whatever word we use the death did actually occur. Those who have waited at the bedside of one dear to them know the devastating difference between the last breath and—no breath. *Anything* is better than that no breath—opening the impassable gulf between *that* existence and this blank; between that moment ago and the vast void of formless emptiness that looms in front of us, here, now, in this very room, and for ever. Similarly, he really died, and let those who remember their own dead know that, *qua* death, this was the same. All this had to be; we are passing through the redemptive process; and every step is of paramount importance and is the necessary precursor of its follower.

"And buried." Why? Well, how else are we to be certified of the resurrection of the body? Again we have the embellishing Biblical details of the women buying spices before the Friday sundown so that they might lose no moment on Sunday for lack of necessaries in order to complete the embalming required for final entombment. We cannot forget that this was an Eastern country, and that Martha has told us what happens to a (presumably) undamaged and properly embalmed body in four days. It was little short of heroic devotion on the part of these women to face their grim undertaking. They might well desire to waste no time on that third day; and it is a striking proof of their certainty of the death, and of its finality, that they acted as they did.

Leaving, then, the body in the tomb, we leave earth and descend with the next credal clause into Hades. Of this existence we know little, but that little gives no support to the common supposition that death, *per se*, changes us from what we are to what we should like to be. Indeed, those who most decry miracles do on occasion share the popular opinion that death is a conjuring trick, effecting for us that which we have been at no pains to struggle for here ourselves.

"The third day he rose again from the dead." Not from Hades. The last time we met the word "dead" was on the Cross, on earth,

and for the Resurrection he returned to earth in order to reassume his body.

The Church has been fully aware of the value of "visual aids" for many hundreds of years, and the so-called Easter garden has a very pressing lesson to demonstrate. It is a visual aid capable of correcting much erroneous devotion and not a little defective theology. Its great value lies in the fact that it draws together the two events which form the climax of our Redemption. In the background we see the hill of Calvary with its three empty crosses. In the foreground is the equally empty tomb: empty, that is, of the corruptible earthly body, but full, even to bursting, with spiritual portent conveyed to us by the flattened, spice-filled grave clothes and the head-shaped napkin an exact neck's length away. This is the essence of the "garden", the empty cross and the empty tomb. Everything else is embellishment. The contiguity of Calvary and the tomb is a matter of real theological importance, as is also St Paul's order of events regarding our own right approach to Christ, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings".<sup>1</sup> We must ever contemplate the death in the light of the resurrection. The tomb is in the foreground, and we look through and past it to Calvary in the background. The separation of Calvary from the empty tomb can have dangerous results. The death was once-for-all, never to be repeated; but it was the gateway, the *mors janua vitae* and therefore a perpetual memory—a most sacrificial word, laden for Jews with sacrificial meaning—because of the present life in which it has issued. By itself alone the Cross was *not* a sacrifice. Its completion lay in that near by tomb. Only on the third day did it become a "full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice", and without that consummation it would have availed nothing.

(ii) *The return to Eternity: Redemption complete but unapplied*

From the climax of Passion-Resurrection we pass away from time-space, where the work has been accomplished, back into Eternity. "He ascended into heaven." This transition is laden with import. If we study the cycle as revealed hitherto, we shall see that here it forms a completed circle, Eternity-earth-hades-Eternity. Redemption has been accomplished, but it is unapplied. If this were all, we should still be where we were, for earth is still earth, and our Lord has left it. There is no means of reaching him, or of making contact with him.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. 3. 10.

He is as far off as he was before the Incarnation. Yet the circle, though complete, has attained a difference. Our Lord has returned to heaven, but he is no longer the same as when he left it.

He "sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty". We come again to the value, and the danger, of poetic expression. There is nothing inherently anthropomorphic in speaking of God's right hand, nor in such phrases as sitting or standing or being in the midst of the throne. We can, if we like, imprison ourselves in literalness as we can wrap ourselves about in a nightgown, but if we do, we miss the sacramental means of transit to another plane. The truth underlying this phrase is that of the permanent reality of the Incarnation. Our Lord in leaving earth has not left his humanity—hence the importance of the raised *body*—and in so far as he is still man, he is only at God's right hand. As God, he is, and has always remained, God, without any spatial relationships; but as Man, in great mystery, he is in the closest juxtaposition to the Deity as That-which-is-not-God can be. How the splendour splashes out for us in this and in the following phrase, "From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead"; for here we learn categorically that not only has our humanity been carried into heaven, but also that in the day of judgement He-who-is-God will judge us in the character of He-who-is-man. *From thence*, that is, from the position of inferiority where he is something less than God, he will come to judge. If we wonder how a "lesser" judgement can be final, we seem to find that this judgement-in-humanity consists in the providing of an absolute, concrete standard of perfection. He is that for which humanity was created, that to which each of us ought to attain. Now indeed we see that we have no need to await God's judgement, for we have judged ourselves. In the presence of He-who-is-man, unless we are in him, how shall any be found perfect? He comes as our Saviour, true, *but* also as our Judge. We minimize the inseparability of these two aspects at our very great peril.

If the Creed had stopped here we might well question God's character. There is another term than all-loving which would be rightly applied to One who set a standard of perfection before us by which our own failure is measured with pitiless clarity, and then decreed that by that standard we should be judged. Could anything be more calculated to drive to despair exactly those who, struggling most after a higher ideal, are most filled with awareness of what they might have been?

(iii) *The re-entry of Eternity into time: Sanctification*

It is significant that this last section of the Creed starts afresh with "I believe", for with it there is a fresh development, a re-entry of eternity into time comparable with the original act of creation.

We may note first of all that the paragraph is an entity, not merely a collection of haphazard and discrete sentences fortuitously strung together.<sup>1</sup> It is a statement of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church which is the consummation carried on throughout time of his descent upon the Virgin Mary. It is the means whereby we are enabled to share in the life of the risen and ascended perfect-Man Lord. This Mission of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost is the climax of the Creed as far as it concerns God's activities towards creation, and its importance cannot be overrated. We may, if we will, see a certain parallelism between this and the preceding paragraph. For as the Holy Spirit was the creative power of our Lord's earthly life, so he descended at Pentecost as the power from on high<sup>2</sup>, promised by our Lord, to create his mystical Body, the Church. It is from our Lord himself that we learn that this was to be productive of greater works than his own; this process of sanctification, underlined in the Catechism by the use of the present instead of the past tense, outweighs in importance his own earthly life and activities which were only the prelude to the means whereby the miracle of the Church was to be accomplished. As in the Communion Order<sup>3</sup> we shall find that there is a twin climax, the zenith being reached a moment before the consummation, so we may say that in the Creed the zenith is reached in the second paragraph with the mystery of the Incarnation, but that the more glorious consummation is found in the third paragraph with the creation of the Church.

The word "Church" in the Creed means the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Body vivified at Pentecost. The mystery of the two aspects of form which we saw adumbrated in Baptism and Confirmation meets us again here, as we see the definitive germ of supernatural life imparted to the Twelve at the Last Supper, already uniting them in some sense with our Lord in his Passion; on which "dry bones" he breathed on the evening of Easter Day so that they came together in

<sup>1</sup> This fact—of such fundamental import—is gravely blurred in the 1928 Book, where the Revisers have introduced a fresh paragraph into the Nicene Creed in the Alternative Order for Communion. It may be noted that there is no paragraphing of either Creed in their Latin forms.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 24. 49.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 130.

the form of his mystical Body, in common with the other disciples then present (the Apostles being already the foundation bonds in virtue of their Communion preceded by the "Baptismal" foot-washing<sup>1</sup>, on Maundy Thursday); to which nucleus of organic structure the Pentecostal descent imparted the power of self-subsisting life, creating that new functional entity the Church, the Body of Christ.

We see this Church with his eyes stretching not only forwards through his Person to embrace those yet unborn, but also backwards to Abraham and to the Church in the wilderness, also through his own Person. The Credal Church has its beginnings in the Old Testament. This embryo stage reaches its climax in our Lord, through whose Person it is transformed into a higher state of existence. He becomes not only the possessor of a physical Body and a spiritual inheritance, but the Head of that mystical organism which is the predestined crown and consummation of created life. The Church is indeed a new creation but she holds within herself all that has gone before. The human embryo recapitulates the stages of its development, and even the adult body shows signs of vestigial remains, once of value but now superfluous. Surely the reason is not so difficult to grasp. These are the hallmark of our descent, and of the ascent through us of all that has gone before. The crown of creation is the image of God; and of that image, Christ in his Church. But the image on the mystical plane includes the visible and is expressed through it. If the Church is to be invisible, why not the human race? The second paragraph of the Creed, and the use of the word "body" in this connection, alike defy disembodiment.

"The Communion of Saints." By our incorporation into Christ's Body at our Baptism we are simultaneously made members of one another. When we think of the Church at any given era, whether our own or at some previous date, we seem to be faced with confusion; nor should this surprise us, for such a view is a cross-section of the whole, and any cross-section is a dead end, severed from its anterior and subsequent connections, thereby blocking out its functional relationship to the organism as a whole. We may think, perhaps, of a cross-section of the spinal-cord which conveys much information with regard to its constitution at that particular level; but unless we relate it to a longitudinal section many of its component parts will be meaningless. So

<sup>1</sup> See Fr Benson, *The Discourse at Capernaum*, Ch. XXIX, p. 303 ff., for a consideration of the non-glorified Body imparted to the disciples at the Last Supper.

then the Church also in any given Anno Domini is only a cross-section of its whole being; and its viability depends upon its connections through the ascending stages with Christ its Head, its virility upon the fullness and richness of the life which it is handing on to successive generations. This life is Christ himself, since he is not separable from the life which he imparts; therefore there is never any impairment or lack in the transmitted life, however much certain aspects may be overlaid or underemphasized in any given cross-section.

For descriptive purposes the Church is commonly spoken of under three heads, and these relate to its longitudinal, not to its transverse, existence. The Church Militant comprises those members who are still clothed in soul and terrestrial body. It is the cross-section here alive on earth at the present moment. The Church Expectant is, presumably, the largest numerically, and consists of those whose soul has been severed from its terrestrial body without having as yet been re-embodied in the heavenly places; the Church Triumphant is those blest souls whose purity enables them to gaze unveiled upon the Lamb. These three divisions together are the Church, and we have but a poor conception of it if the word "Church" habitually conveys to our mind only the idea of the Church Militant, that numerically—and increasingly—minute portion here on earth now. It is the whole Church, Triumphant, Expectant, and Militant, in which we profess our faith when we say that we believe in "The Communion of Saints".

"The Forgiveness of sins." The Nicene Creed says in greater detail, "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins." We note that the Church comes first, and then the means of entry into it. By Baptism we are taken into that which already exists independently of ourselves. Perfect and complete in its Head from the first moment of its being (Fr Benson says somewhere, "The Church has never been more holy or more perfect than she is now"), the Church is that form of visibility which corresponds with our Lord's own human Body when he was on earth. Even of him in his perfection there were very many doubters, and large numbers among those qualified to judge rejected his claims. It is not surprising that such doubts should be accentuated a thousandfold with regard to his mystical Body. On earth it is frankly a nursery school, and most of us are young hooligans. Baptism conveys forgiveness of original sin<sup>1</sup>, and of sins, when it is not administered in infancy. Post-Baptismal sins are forgiven by public and private absolution on the same conditions under which

<sup>1</sup> See p. 23 ff.

Baptism is administered. The sacramental principle governs our whole existence.

"The Resurrection of the Body." Our bodies as well as our souls have to be redeemed and drawn into the life of Christ (hence the need both of the Incarnation and of Sacraments), our sensible natural life being spiritually transformed by spiritually-vitalized natural means. With the putting-off of our natural bodies not only do sacraments become superfluous, but our natural senses no longer exist. Sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch are organs of our earthly bodies and determine our relationships on this plane. When we no longer have a terrestrial body we can no longer make "sensible" contact with our fellow-departed or with those on earth. The disembodied spirit of man is as incapable of movement as is the breath-bereaved body which it has evacuated. Has not our Lord told us that the angels come to carry it to Abraham's bosom? which is the Scriptural authority for the beautiful petition in the 1928 Prayer Book that the soul may go forth upon its journey from this world ". . . aided by Angels and Archangels, and all the armies of the heavenly host".

The medium of our life in God is charity, but charity is not a functioning instrument. It is not an organ whereby one human personality makes itself known to another. For such intercourse we need a "body", but in our present state we cannot grasp what disembodiment and re-embodiment really entail, which is probably the main reason why we are told so little of the hereafter. That material transformation can and does occur has been demonstrated by our risen Lord in taking and eating fish before the assembled disciples. There ought to be very little difficulty over material particles to-day, when scientists have transcendentalized the materiality of matter into something approaching nothingness.<sup>1</sup> Of our future shape we may remember that nothing unholy can find any place in the holy Body of Christ. Precisely how much of us is "in" him in this life it is perhaps better not to speculate.

(iv) *The taking-up of Creation into God*

"The life everlasting." There is an idea current in some circles that other-worldliness, that is, a belief that this world is not the end of our existence, leads people to despise this present life and in particular to be

<sup>1</sup> Sir James Jeans has said when speaking of matter and radiation that "these concepts reduce the whole universe to a world of light, potential or existent, so that the whole story of creation can be told with perfect accuracy and truthfulness in the six words: God said, Let there be light."

indifferent to the welfare of others, since everything will come right when we die. The Creed lends no support to this thesis. If we compare the paragraphs dealing with our Lord's earthly life and that of his mystical Body we find that there is no mention of death in the latter. We pass straight from Baptism to resurrection. There is no Hades in this part of the Creed. Death has been finally dealt with, and those who are in Christ have already passed from death into life. His mystical Body cannot undergo death because that which is one with him lives with his risen and ascended life. Here is the rationale of speaking of Baptism as a "death". The death of the Cross is imparted to us by mystical cleansing from sin in order that we may be engrafted into the life of the mystical Body. There is no room here for "pie in the sky when we die" because we are already dead, and our true life is the life of Christ, so that we view this earthly existence with his eyes. And this life was to him worth both Incarnation and Passion,<sup>1</sup> therefore in so far as we are growing into him we shall share his mind with regard to it and feel the same. "The life everlasting", the great finale of the Creed, is the splendid *raison d'être* of the whole of the dispensation recorded in the phrases placed in the right-hand column of our diagram. It is the sublime motive which makes even the awfulness of the Passion gloriously worth while, and makes sense of every effort after holiness.

So tremendous is this destiny that the phrase moves from the dependent clauses towards the midline,<sup>2</sup> not to the centre, for the eternal life of the creature is not the same thing as the eternal existence of God; but it is a true gathering-back of creation from the time-space detour which is effected by its incorporation through man into the Body of Christ, itself the comprehending expression of all created forms. This is the object of the Incarnation, to which the making of this world into a place fit for heroes to live in is subsidiary. There is no suggestion in the New Testament that it will ever become such: quite the reverse: but the only hope of an even partial realization of that ideal lies in keeping it in its place. Only by seeking God and *his* kingdom will these things be added. Fr Benson says<sup>3</sup> that Christ came "into the world to seek the glory of God as his only end in life. He willed not the salvation of men more feebly because he willed the glory of God supremely." It is the proclamation of this truth both in word and deed which is the only "good" that a Christian can do. This is Christian good, Christian glory. The character built on God can live

<sup>1</sup> He came "to minister, and to give his life" (Matt. 20. 28).

<sup>2</sup> See diagram above, p. 38.      <sup>3</sup> *Advent*, 4th edn, p. 261.

anywhere. The character becoming Godlike will of necessity be growing in selflessness and therefore be looking increasingly with God's eyes on its neighbour. By looking at God we see our neighbour in true focus because we see God's thoughts in regard to him. When we look *primarily* at our neighbour we only see our own ideas for him—and they are so seldom God's.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

No wonder the world is in a sorry plight.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. 55. 8.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

"MY GOOD CHILD", says the Catechism with comforting placidity after the recitation of the Duties explanatory of the Ten Commandments, "know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself." No, indeed! And to meet this impasse the Catechism proceeds to the recital of the Lord's Prayer.

Before, however, we examine the relationship of the Lord's Prayer to the Commandments and their correlative Duties, we may note the settings provided for it in the New Testament by St Matthew and St Luke.

*St Matthew*

The Lord's Prayer forms part of the Sermon on the Mount, and is introduced in an instruction on Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting. 6. 5 "When ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they . . . pray . . . that they may be seen of men . . . ."

7 "And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. . . . 9-13 "After this manner therefore pray ye:

Our Father  
which art in Heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done, as in heaven so  
on earth.

Give us this day our daily bread.

*St Luke*

10. 38 ff. Our Lord pays a visit to Martha and Mary. The last words "Mary hath chosen the good part . . . ." are followed immediately by 11. 1, "And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say,

Father,  
  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
(Thy will be done as in heaven, so  
on earth. *A.V.*)

Give us day by day our daily bread.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us.

And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. (For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen. *A.V.*)

And bring us not into temptation.

14 "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

5-8 "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine is come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee? I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will arise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

The difference in atmosphere between the brusquely didactic St Matthew and the bedside suavity of St Luke seems to be reflected in the differences found in their two versions of the Prayer, as well as in the commentaries which their respective arrangements provide. How characteristic for St Matthew to think of sin as "debts", and to make the writing-off of an I.O.U. the test of penitence;<sup>1</sup> whereas St Luke, facing sin as sin, makes the patient co-operate in his own rehabilitation by a tale of importunity followed by direct exhortation

<sup>1</sup> And if St Matthew is not himself the author, the tithing of mint and anise gave ample opportunity for the prevalence of such an attitude in Jewish circles.

to vigorous effort. We find, by dovetailing the two accounts, that repetition and persistence are a fundamental element in prayer (witnessed by St Luke in his Ask . . . seek . . . knock); and that the *vain* repetitions of St Matthew are equivalent to wanting "something for nothing", the hope that mere words of request will be enough without any real effort. Of St Matthew's sophistry we are all of us guilty from time to time; that interior craving for approval which we secretly feel that we deserve, the comfortable glow which puts us right in our own eyes. It is in something of that spirit that in the Lucan account the disciple asks for instruction in prayer, "teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples". What a self-revealing phrase! the desire to "show off" what *their* Master can do in the matter. In St Luke's sequence our Lord's commendation of Mary precedes a verse recording his own prayer, and into these high august regions comes the nearly jealous demand for a short cut to the same heights. Our Lord gives the formula; but he accompanies it with the pictorial warning of the importunate friend, which he further underlines with the emphatic "I say unto you, Ask . . . seek . . . knock". Prayer, in fact, is an all-out, not a short-cut, business; and if we desire to approach God in prayer it will not be done by the mere use of words, nor by the desire to gain human approval or a sense of personal well-being.

There are two minor points which may be noted here. The Lord's Prayer in its various parts can be so far paralleled with Jewish prayer that there have not been wanting those who deny any element of originality in it, contending that he merely told his disciples to use the prayer said daily by himself and by generations of Jewish children both before and after him. That the Jewish formula has been surcharged with profound originality is, however, undoubted; and what an anti-climax the similarity of the phrases must have been to the disciples looking for some striking pronouncement! As upon other occasions, they had added a costing interiorness to their already-existing obligations instead of securing a coveted labour-saving device.

The other point concerns the final doxology, which appears only in the Authorized version of St Matthew's Gospel, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen." They are an appendix, like the Gloria at the end of the Psalms, and not an integral part of the Prayer, and the Prayer Book very wisely restricts their use to certain times of special praise and thanksgiving. They occur only five times in the Prayer Book: before the Psalms at Mattins

and Evensong (the Psalms being the central act of praise in these Offices), after the Communion in the Communion Order, at the Churching of Women, and during a storm at sea.<sup>1</sup> At other times there is a simple Amen after the words "deliver us from evil"; and it would add greatly to the dignity of the Prayer to restrict the use of the doxology, both in public and in private, according to the Prayer Book pattern. When it is added upon all occasions, children, and perhaps others, are misled into supposing that it really forms part of the Prayer. The Prayer is, however, complete as it is given for us to learn in the Catechism; and there is a certain incongruity in appending a special act of praise on ordinary everyday occasions, or in times of mourning and calamity.

We are not in this place considering the differences which exist between the two Biblical versions of the Lord's Prayer, but are confining our attention to that third form with which the Prayer Book has made us most familiar. It consists of an address, a qualifying phrase, and seven petitions. The petitions may be divided into two sets of three with a bridge petition between them. They then suggest a pattern not unlike that which was found in the Creed, and they have, in addition, a certain congruity with the Gifts of the Spirit.

"Our Father,			
which art in heaven,			<i>Gifts of the Spirit</i>
I. Hallowed be thy Name.	} Heaven		Wisdom
II. Thy kingdom come.			Understanding
III. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.			Knowledge
IV. Give us this day our daily bread	} Bridge		Counsel
V. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.			Godliness
VI. And lead us not into temptation;	} Earth		Ghostly Strength
VII. But deliver us from evil."			Holy Fear

The address, in one felicitous word, brings God within our reach: "Father". But before there is a moment for familiarity or presumption we are sternly drawn up into eternal realities; "which art in heaven".

<sup>1</sup> We may note, however, that this doxology did not find its way into the Prayer Book until 1661, and we may well wonder whether it was not a doubtful benefit.



Father, yes: but, God first. For with the contact made, our true relationship appears; and creaturely adoration of his intrinsic Being, his infinite Dominion, and his unalterable Purpose of existence demands our instant and whole-hearted attention. And as the Creed started in eternity and midway returned thither again, so also does this opening section of the Lord's Prayer.

"Our Father, which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy Name,  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done,  
in earth as it is in heaven."

Earth is drawn up into heaven in the same breath which mentions it, exactly as at the outset the homely "Father" was rapt into the same region. But now having established its foundation and background, a bridge is thrown out from heaven towards earth in the words, "Give us this day our daily bread". Our double life, lying between earth and heaven, needs nourishment in both regions; and the heavenly manna as well as the requirements of our physical existence are equally comprised in this petition. Now having our eyes enlightened by the preceding heavenly vision, and with body and soul equipped for the ensuing day, we realize as we descend to our earthly relationships that our first requirement is charity. "Forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us." "As we forgive." Looking at our surroundings we see how all too easy it is to damage them by selfish use, how even easier through the same selfishness (or uncharity) to grudge forgiveness for damage received. Yes certainly "forgive us", and in equal measure give us that charity which can make Divine forgiveness operable. Finally, as we grow in consciousness of our frailty, we add, "Lead us not into temptation", shield us from tests before which presumption must be worsted; and, "Deliver us from evil", let not external assaults wear us down.

The Gifts of the Spirit have been divided by Holden<sup>1</sup> into three and three with a bridge between: and thus divided they acquire a functional bearing on the clauses of the Lord's Prayer. We can envisage them as the several helps of the Comforter towards the realization of that for which we pray.

<sup>1</sup> G. F. Holden, *The Holy Ghost the Comforter*, 1908, p. 47.

"Hallowed be thy Name"      The Gift of Wisdom enables us to apprehend in our creaturely measure the mystery of the great Name of God, the utterance and the embodiment of his very Being;

"Thy kingdom come"      by Understanding we may learn to pray for, or rather to enter into, the meaning of the coming of his Kingdom:

"Thy will be done"      through Knowledge of the action of his Will in heavenly places we can visualize its counterpart in the things of earth. Then comes the great transition, the watershed,

where we look both ways, upwards and downwards, forwards and backwards, the place where above all sound judgement is required; and for our aid is given the

"Give us this day our daily bread"      Spirit of Counsel, the adjuster, whose operation allows a smooth, unbumpy grounding as we run down to earth. This is the only petition which is concerned with our individual needs. The three which we have just considered are wholly God-centred, and the three which follow concern our external relationships. It is at this meeting-point of the specific duties towards God and man that so many of our problems arise. "Our daily bread", not our luxuries and self-indulgences, fleshly or spiritual, but our bread, our necessity. With counsel taken we go forward, following of our Saviour Christ by

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us"      a "daily proceeding (i.e., increasing) in all virtue and godliness of living", as prescribed in the Baptismal Order. This power is imparted to us by the Spirit of Godliness, however slow and however fitful our growth may be, cleansing us from sin and enduing us with charity to forgive like God.

"Lead us not into temptation"      By the Spirit of Ghostly strength, we are enabled to persevere with faithful endurance;

"Deliver us from evil"      and by the Spirit of Holy Fear we learn to hate, with a shuddering horror, "even the garment spotted by the flesh"<sup>1</sup>; and to fear "the

slightest trace of irreverence towards holy things as an unbearable insult to the Love of God".

<sup>1</sup> Jude 23.

This is the whole of the prayer for which the disciple asked; but where the poorer Matthean version is followed, and a doxology is added, the parallelism with the Credal pattern is completed by returning once again to the worship of and in the heavenlies.

Our short, but compendious, Catechism, after a preliminary series of questions in which individual responsibility is firmly stressed—"What is *your* name?" "*You* promised"—sums up the Christian profession as a repudiation of evil, a right faith, and an outward life corresponding to these inward dispositions. Then follow the Creed, as the standard of faith; the Ten Commandments with their explanatory elaborations in the "Duties" as the standard of life; and finally, the Lord's Prayer, with its commentary, and the Sacraments, as the means whereby this life of inward faith and outward actions is to be conducted.

If then, we correlate the Lord's Prayer with the Commandments, we find that the first four Commandments, together with My Duty towards God, are summed up in the three opening petitions; the last six commandments and My Duty towards my Neighbour in the remainder. My duty towards myself, "Give us this day our daily bread", is found in the last phrase of my Duty towards my Neighbour; "to learn and labour truly to get my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me". This phrase is sometimes quoted in perverted form, which is unfortunate, since as it stands it is an admirable vindication of the fact that work is as varied in its forms as the vocations to which God *may call* us: that however much our outward circumstances may change, our duty is to fulfil honestly the obligations of our present position.

The version of the Tenth Commandment that appears in the Catechism in the Prayer Book of 1549 begins like that found in Deuteronomy,<sup>1</sup> "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant . . .". In 1552 (at which date also the Commandments were first added to the Communion Order) our present version was substituted. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife." Even a non-feminist may concede that if so much detail is to be given, the 1549 order is more seemly in a Christian book. This version (neither in the Exodian nor the Deuteronomic form, as we have them) carefully excludes mention of the inanimate, except in general terms. It runs: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wyfe, nor his servant, nor his mayde, nor his Oxe, nor his Asse,

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 5. 21.

nor any thyng that is his." The Oxe and the Asse are dignified with capitals, a fitting tribute of reverence towards those honoured worshippers at their Creator's cradle. Their inclusion by inference in the Gospel narrative at that point as well as in the Mosaic law<sup>1</sup> may well remind us of our abiding duty and responsibility towards all sentient creation.<sup>2</sup> It is not a matter of sentiment, but a recognition of our essential oneness with them as created creatures, and of our very real responsibility in God's scheme for all "below" us in that scheme. Two sparrows for a farthing is man's estimate of their worth—but God's:

Our progress in prayer may probably be indicated to some extent by discovering at which petition of the Lord's Prayer we habitually become alert. It has been said that for schoolboys the pregnant phrase is "Forgive us our trespasses". This is a good, sound, and excellent beginning; still for many years we probably fail to realize that all our sins are finally sins against charity, in spite of the fact that our Lord has placed beside this phrase the very terrible test, "as we forgive". It is as we painfully struggle from the natural level of complaint and self-justification, the "I have been very jealous for the Lord . . . the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant . . . I, even I only, am left"<sup>3</sup> of Elijah; or the, "Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the observances thereof"<sup>4</sup> of Nehemiah; to the "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"<sup>5</sup> of St Stephen, that we begin to move into the higher levels of the Lord's Prayer. While our minds first become interested at "Give us this day our daily bread" or at "Forgive us", we have still much struggle before us, though this must not daunt, and need not surprise us. It is, however, a real step upwards and forwards when we begin to rest in "Thy will be done" though it is probably many more years before we realize that "Thy kingdom come" is a still purer prayer. Yet even here there is complexity, a dual outlook. We have not really risen to the upper plane of prayer till we rest in the first phrase, "Hallowed be thy Name", recognizing all the succeeding phrases as a radiant radiating commentary. Nor can we remain there except under the terms of that covenant-petition which governs all our relationships in earth and in heaven. "Forgive us our

<sup>1</sup> Deut. 25. 4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." Cf. also Prov. 12. 10, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast."

<sup>2</sup> Our discharge of this obligation as a nation is less perfect than we like to imagine. Consult UFAW, 284 Regent's Park Road, Finchley, London, N.3.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings 19. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Neh. 13. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Acts 7. 60.

debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"; "Forgive us our sins; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us." If we are beginning to find God, our charity towards our neighbour is increasing. This is something entirely independent of physical contiguity, and can be exercised under every possible external condition; as also it can be absent in a life apparently overflowing with good works.

We have noted the differences in the framework provided for the Lord's Prayer by St Matthew and St Luke. Both, indeed, are needed. St Matthew's systematic treatise of dogmatic theology is a very necessary background for St Luke's more advanced ascetical teaching. We cannot pray well without a thorough grounding in sound theology and we observe that St Matthew places prayer between the supporting duties of almsgiving and fasting. Until almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, these three elementary requirements of all religious life, are the established basis of our existence, we shall never make any progress in what are called the higher reaches of prayer. Indeed, very many people remain content and spiritually satisfied with a very elementary degree of prayer-life because the dependence of prayer upon self-discipline is either unrecognized or denied. But the arrangement in St Luke suggests deeper things, in harmony with the interior arrangement of the Prayer itself. The significance of the Lucan Bethanic prelude, followed by the definite introductory setting of our Lord's personal devotions, is too obvious to be missed. When he had ceased praying, he said, "When ye pray, say: Father, Hallowed be thy name". The same order is carefully followed in the Duty towards God: My Duty is "to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him", a very fair description of the four categories of vocal and formal prayer: Adoration, the worship of God purely and only for what he is in himself; Thanksgiving, for his myriad manifestations of his truth, beauty, and goodness; Intercession, in sure faith that we are heard; Petition, for whatever cause we desire his helping benediction. It is true that in experience we begin the other way round: our first conscious prayers are petitionary: but though "that comes first which is natural, that is first which is spiritual".<sup>1</sup> "Prayer" so often actually means to us "cadging", whether altruistically or for ourselves. The child of 5 says, "Please, Mother, give me an apple". At 10, having secured the apple, it gives it generously instead to Mummy. But at 15, there is neither request nor offering, because the

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Cor. 15. 46.

greater privilege of ascertaining, and of collaborating with, the Mother's wishes has overshadowed both the more selfish previous stages. The 5-year-old's prayer is a perfectly legitimate one—as Fr Benson says, "That which is an object of legitimate desire is a legitimate object of prayer"<sup>1</sup>—but it is a pity for the over-70's to be still mainly engaged in the prayer of the under-5's. The soul that is growing in its knowledge of God finds matters of greater value for its concern, having discovered by experience the truth of our Lord's words that those who really put him first find these things adjusted for them. Again Fr Benson says, "People often think of prayer as getting something from God. Christ's way of thinking of it is 'that God may be glorified' (S. John xiv, 13)."<sup>2</sup> This, besides securing our own necessities according to God's dispensation, is also the most fruitful prayer that we can offer for our neighbour, because in it we are no longer instructing God in our ideas for their welfare, but are bending our will and our mind to attend to his. It may be very exhausting, it has none of the glamour or the feeling of *empressement* that is often attached to our own initiative, nor does it need any details to "pray about", but if and when we can thus subordinate ourselves, however momentarily, we allow God's will to have that unhindered flow for which we pray when we say, "as it is in heaven".

Our Duty towards God closes with an ascription of praise, "to honour his holy Name and his Word", whereby it sums up all the varied aspects of the prayer life as being together an honouring of God's holy Name—his Being in Trinity—and his Word—the Incarnate Lord: in the power of which we are enabled "to serve him truly all the days of my life", for it is in these twin foundation doctrines of the Christian faith that we can alone render him true service.

Fr Benson has written:<sup>3</sup>

"It does seem to be the root evil of the present day, the want of pure theology. People are full of disputes about sacraments, eternal punishment, inspiration, and the like; and yet the people who know a great deal about these controversies know next to nothing about the Holy Trinity. But this is the Creed. The others are only corollaries of the Creed, and are helpful or hurtful just in proportion as they are made subservient to this fundamental doctrine—valueless, even when rightly held, if their connection with the eternal relationships of the Blessed

<sup>1</sup> *Cowley Evangelist*, July 1948.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, June 1948.

<sup>3</sup> *Further letters of Richard Meux Benson*, ed. W. H. Longridge, 1920, p. 220.

Trinity is not recognized. Our doctrine, teaching, experience of the Church, must be, so to speak, in a comatose state, unless there be an active, experimental, loving knowledge of the Name of the Holy Trinity, which is the living power wherewith the Church is bound together by the Holy Ghost sanctifying all the elect people of God.

“It is the want of this knowledge which is the strength of unbelief, heresy and prayerlessness.”

SPECIAL VOCATIONS I:  
HOLY MATRIMONY

HITHERTO the Prayer Book has been concerned with the foundation which is common to every member of Christ; for Baptism, Catechism, Confirmation is a triad which applies to us all, and is a “common” requirement. Within that foundation framework we now come to three specialized forms of work or service, which certain individual members may be called upon to perform.

*Holy Matrimony*

The description of this Office in the Prayer Book is “The form of Solemnization of Matrimony”, and a dispassionate perusal of the said form leaves solemnity as its most striking feature. The whole outlook and emphasis is almost the antithesis of that emotional reaction which the thought of a wedding commonly raises. Indeed, such is the language used that it might well be termed repellent rather than welcoming. After a reminder that monogamy is the law of humanity, coextensive with man’s existence as man, “instituted of God in the time of man’s innocency”, the Prayer Book asserts that for Christians its holiness is infinitely increased, because it signifies “unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church”; and adds very bluntly that it is not intended “to satisfy men’s carnal lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understanding”.

Three reasons for Matrimony follow.

“First, it was ordained for the procreation of children, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy Name.”

That is, Matrimony is primarily a co-operation with God in the extension of his glory. It is a hallowing of his name through the often arduous work of bringing up children for his service. It is *work* for God and for society. The theocentric and social aspect of Matrimony has been unduly neglected in this post-Romantic age.

“Secondly, it was ordained for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication; that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ’s body.”

The married life is not a life of self-indulgence but of self-discipline, perhaps as austere as that of the celibate.<sup>1</sup>

“Thirdly, It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.”

The need for a reasonable possibility of “mutual society” is often overlooked among persons who have come to regard the emotional complex of “romantic love” as the sole foundation and requisite for married life. C. S. Lewis<sup>2</sup> points out that before the eleventh century “falling in love” was an unrecorded condition; and it is not required by the Prayer Book for those desiring to offer themselves, in response to a call from God, for the work of the married state.

The three causes for Matrimony being stated, the Prayer Book calls on any persons present who know an obstacle to the proposed union to enter a protest. This public appeal is followed by a solemn adjuration to the couple themselves “as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgement when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed” to confess any known impediment even now, before it is too late. There is little here to suggest the lightheartedness of ignorance or superficiality, but there is a similarity with the twin vocation, that to the Religious Life. There also the Aspirant is received with a certain indifference, and, as in this Marriage rite, much is made of the difficulties of the life which is desired. In both cases, for those who have a true vocation from God, this solemn note strikes down through the upper regions of happiness and raises a response in the wellsprings of joy: for those who have come “unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly” it may well be the transfixing, premonitory herald of unguessed woe.

These two complementary vocations—and the call to the Religious State is more widely recognized as a “vocation” than is the Married State, to the great loss of the latter—have a further point in common, that both in the Life of Rejection and the Life of Affirmation, the contracting parties are themselves the ministers of the sacrament. Like the Religious, men and women are not “made” married, they marry themselves, and that in a form which is explicit and detailed. Before the actual taking of their Vows, there is a scrutiny (as before Baptism, Confirmation, Religious Vows, etc.). The man is asked:

<sup>1</sup> The Levitical rule of birth-control may for some natures involve heroic self-discipline. It is at the opposite pole from the modern devices for contraception, which are expressly designed to allow uninhibited self-indulgence.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love*, 1951, p. 44.

“N. Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God’s ordinance in the Holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her,  
comfort her,  
honour,  
and keep her, in sickness and in health:  
and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?”

*The man shall answer,*

“I will.”

That is, he gives his word, with the utmost solemnity, to God, and through his representative, to the Church, in the presence of his friends and neighbours, that he

will live *after God’s ordinance* (already stated at the beginning of the service),  
and will love, comfort (be a strength and support), honour and keep (protect) whatever physical or mental changes time may bring,  
and will forsake *all* other while *both* still live.

It seems clear. We may for the moment leave aside the controversial “obey” which the woman adds (“obey him and serve him”) to her otherwise similar declaration; though it may be permitted to wonder whether there is not something lost when the complementary nature of the sexes as indicated by the man’s “comfort” and the woman’s “obedience and service” are obliterated in a flat uniformity which in no case ever exists. The balance of equality with variation in this scrutiny is what modern colloquialism calls realistic; whereas the automatism introduced into the 1928 Prayer Book is not. And as old-fashioned chivalry would consider suitable, the better part is reserved for the Christian wife. Obedience and service are the choice privilege of followers of him who came not to do his own but his Father’s Will, and who announced to the creatures whom he had made “I am in the midst of you as he that serveth”.<sup>1</sup>

The exchange of Vows follows, words largely familiar, but so comprehensive and irrevocable that they cannot be passed over without any comment.

<sup>1</sup> Luke 22. 27.

"I N. take thee N. to my wedded wife (husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish (and to obey) till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight (give) thee my troth."

"I take thee . . . to have and to hold." It is primarily a free choice, a going-out of oneself to enter into possession of that which we desire both to have and to retain.

After that come the conditions under which this mutual having is to be accomplished. (For in this part of the Vow the wording is identical except for the words "wife" and "husband".) They are grouped in a series of three antitheses.

"For better for worse"—here is certainly included all that is comprehended in the word "character", together with all the hitherto unknown or undeveloped potentialities of being (and reactions under the new conditions of life) whether of higher or lower nature. The "taking" is not only of the obvious and of the already known. It is also a holding of all that is, and of all that will show itself in time to come.

"For richer for poorer"—not only the character and person as they now are, but as they will be under any given external circumstances which may arise.

"In sickness and in health"—this includes sickness of mind as well as of body, changes which may distort—or transform—into something unrecognizable and unimaginable.

The taking and the having are so intimate that future separation is as impossible as it would be to separate oneself from one's own character and being. These phrases are the charter of stability. Each solemnly undertakes to be as true, as unvarying, to the other, as God himself—therefore, no sin by one against the other can alter the outlook of the offended partner. Together they play the part of God, and remain as bound by vows as God is by his own Being.

"To love and to cherish." The New Testament might without any impropriety be called the Drama or the Book of Love; for all the separate components of the volume which we call the New Testament have the manifestation of love for their foundation. And the Marriage rite makes it clear from the outset that the man and woman

who come to use it are to model their love on New Testament lines. St Paul has a good deal to say about human love; and this phrase to love and to cherish in the marriage vow points more especially to the Ephesian description<sup>1</sup> with its daring and humbling comparison that a man should love his wife as his own body, which he "nourisheth and cherisheth" "even as Christ also the Church".<sup>2</sup> Authority and obedience are not only replaced in the natural (and therefore perfectly-adjusted) relationship of original creation, but they are also infused with their own peculiar portion of that Spirit which is the life of Christ in his Church.

"Till death us do part." The married state is an image of the divine creativity. Death destroys this image, since both partners are needed for its exhibition, and thus leaves the remaining partner free, if occasion require, to enter into another similar union. Nothing is broken by death except this image, neither can anything else obliterate it.

"According to God's holy ordinance"—not according to, or condoning, man's fallible misusings of his grace.

"Thereto I plight thee my troth"—so speaks the man. The intense solemnity of the word plight is demonstrated by its primary meaning of incurring danger; it is an engagement over and above mere giving; it is a giving even "to one's own hindrance". And troth is but a derivative of truth, that which can never vary.

When the woman has made a similar declaration there follows the giving of the ring, accompanied by a form of words which makes this the loveliest moment of the rite, but it needs to be taken in conjunction with the slight alteration in wording of the woman's vow. She promises to love, cherish, and *to obey*, and closes by saying "thereto I give thee my troth". Something is happening during this exchange of Vows. A new organism is in process of creation. The man has formulated his contribution, he has declared his readiness to subordinate his personal good to the needs of that-which-is-coming-into-being. To this already existent thing the woman gives—her obedience; for only so can she be constructively grafted into it. Now incorporated within it by her obedience to its laws (one cannot swim by standing on one's head), she *gives* it her troth, her faith, her honour. Before this mystery the man bows down, *in persona Christi*, as Christ in loving humility offers himself to his church.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 5. 22 ff.<sup>2</sup> 5. 29.

“With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

We have met that formula already, in the Baptismal Order. In conjunction with water it there created a new member of the Body of Christ. Within that Body, of two of those members, it here creates as new, as real, as permanent an entity: a family.

A family in germ certainly, but a spiritual unity, the completest “image” of the Divine Being which is possible in created form. Not for many years, not in all cases, does the family personality show itself outwardly; nor, for the matter of that, does true individual character appear very often till life is well advanced. But the new existence is real, even in cases where the disharmony of its elements might be expressed in physical terms as having a limp or a withered arm or different-coloured eyes. We may deplore our own appearance: there may be many necessary and legitimate steps which we may take for its improvement: but we may not take into our own hands the date of our own death. And a sundering of the two primary constituent parts of the family other than by death is akin to suicide: it is a similar violation of entity.

Thus we see, even if somewhat dimly, that whatever apparent catastrophes overwhelm certain individual family groups, something is involved over and above the sum of the individuals concerned. No fault of character, no mental or physical disability, interfere with the family relationship any more than they de-Christianize the baptized. Separation may be needed on occasion, as may be excommunication, but the way of return may never be closed. Eternal, not temporal, welfare is concerned in both cases; and for groups, as for individuals, our Lord’s word is the same. Be ye perfect. He never offers alternatives, he presents choices. There is nothing short of the ideal for anyone. Its actualization may, in some cases, bring little of what is popularly called happiness, but that does not affect the reality of its success as a Christian marriage if it is being effected in the spirit and power of the marriage rite. No Christian is called to be “happy”. All are called to be saints. The example of St Monica is not to be lightly despised or ignored.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the vexed matter of obedience there is an aspect which does not always receive its full weight, either in this context or

<sup>1</sup> St Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk IV, Ch. IX.

in general. God has made us mutually interdependent because we reflect his own essential Being. The utter dependence upon each other by total self-giving between the several Persons of the Blessed Trinity is reflected in our like dependence upon each other, whether by the obedience of authority or the authorization of obedience. (For Christian authority is not arbitrary, but is to be exercised within the lawful limits of its jurisdiction.) “He saved others, himself he cannot save” is literally<sup>1</sup> true, and in his supreme example we see that lawful authority is to be obeyed even when it is evilly exercised, because the complementary aspect of obedience may avail to save the faulty exhibition of authority. Two wrongs merely destroy the whole foundation of our interchanging existence.

The Church’s representative in this rite (known in kaleidoscopic alternation as the Curate, the Priest, and the Minister) directs its form, and announces its proper completion, after he has joined the hands of the contracting parties with our Lord’s words, “Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder”.<sup>2</sup> It is worth while to notice how careful the Church is to make clear that the contracting parties are the ministrants. The Priest says, “*Forasmuch* as N. and N. have *consented together* . . . and have witnessed the same . . . and . . . have given and pledged their troth . . . I pronounce that they be man and wife . . . In the Name of the Father”, etc. After which pronouncement, he bestows the Church’s Blessing (in the same form as that which is used in Religious Profession).

In the early Christian Church, unlike Jewry, divorce was not allowed. In the Jewish Church in our Lord’s day there were two schools of thought, the rigorists, who allowed divorce only for adultery, and the laxists, who allowed it “for every cause”.<sup>3</sup> Our Lord was faced by the Pharisees with the laxist version<sup>4</sup> and, in answer to their query whether

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 27. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 19. 6.

<sup>3</sup> On this question see Lindsay Dewar, *An Outline of New Testament Ethics*, 1949, pp. 87-98.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 19. 3 ff. “There came unto him Pharisees, tempting him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? 4 And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh? 6 So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. 7 They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? 8 He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so. 9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery:

a man may put away his wife "for every cause", he promptly went behind the Mosaic divorce laws and asserted the principle that monogamous marriage dated from the creation of man. It is a "natural" law, a law of man's being; before the call of Abraham, before the Law, and therefore applying to all men, everywhere, not only to the Chosen People, not only to professing Christians. And then he used the solemn words which are included in our Marriage rite. His hearers, however, asked "why did Moses *command* to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away?" Our Lord's answer now was so devastating that the disciples cried out against its severity. If we read his reply as at present it stands in St Matthew's account, their reaction is puzzling. Why should it be "expedient not to marry" if all that our Lord had done was to adopt the current rigorist Jewish enactment under which men were marrying every day? If we read the story without that little phrase, "except for fornication", we have a coherent picture: our Lord's assertion of principle; the pertinacious inquiry; his restatement in unequivocal language of the impossibility of a remarriage during the lifetime of the original spouse. To the disciples this absolute prohibition, not of divorce but of remarriage, seemed to cut at the root of all reasonable happiness. If a man cannot send a woman packing—why—where is the use in being a man? (And let us not forget what sex means to a Jew.) This reaction was so profound, that, according to St Mark, the disciples went back over the matter again in private. St Mark tells us:<sup>1</sup> "And in the house the disciples asked him again of this matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery."

and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery. 10 The disciples say unto him, If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. 11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

13 Then were brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. 15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

16 And behold, one came to him and said, Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? . . . 21 If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor . . . and come, follow me. 22 But when the young man heard the saying, he went away . . . "

<sup>1</sup> Mark 10. 10 ff.

It can be so dangerous to ask our Lord questions. Not only is remarriage again roundly condemned, but, scandal of scandals, the woman is given equal rights of divorcing her husband, on condition that she, also, does not remarry. It was well, indeed, that this alteration in the woman's status was announced in private, but it can hardly have been acceptable to a Jewish audience.

Our Lord follows up the law of absolute monogamy with its twin counterpart, the vocation of celibacy. In a beautiful passage he describes the condition of those to whom marriage is physically impossible, whether naturally or from operational interference, persons frustrated against their will, and points out that there is no frustration for those who accept the state of celibacy voluntarily, as God's call.<sup>1</sup> Here is his answer to the divorce problem. For the physically impotent, for the compulsorily divorced, there is still a life to be lived "for the kingdom of heaven's sake".<sup>1</sup> And then with a touch of yearning human tenderness, "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it", knowing in his pitifulness how many in their weakness would spurn it; a weakness which in individuals he ever showed himself so reluctant to condemn.

St Matthew completes this picture with an acted implication of its content in the bringing of little children to our Lord for his blessing. Our Lord, having just spoken of the "kingdom of heaven" in connection with celibacy, now adds the heavenly conclusion of pure marriage. "Of such", he says as he blesses the children, "is the kingdom of heaven".<sup>1</sup> Marriage as God ordained it, and celibacy, whether enforced or vocationally accepted, are equally contributions to its life. And as marriage failures have been envisaged, St Matthew concludes the series with the account of the young man unable to rise up to the call to make himself an eunuch for the Kingdom of heaven's sake. The whole passage Matthew 19. 3-22 hangs together, and rings true. It is in keeping with our Lord's character: he remains God Incarnate.

If now we introduce that little phrase "except for fornication", not only is the argument of the whole passage rendered pointless, but the atmosphere is radically changed. "There came unto him Pharisees, tempting him." *And he fell into the trap.* "I side with Shammai—except for fornication" . . . We can imagine the ensuing pandemonium, "We've caught him at last." Our Lord is no longer God, he is no longer Man; he is a man, and has made a *faux pas*.

There is a further consideration. This supposed "Matthean exception" has been eagerly grasped by many whose sensibilities have been wrung

<sup>1</sup> " . . . that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me." Catechism.



by the difficulties of a post-war world, as an opportunity for giving temporal happiness to those whose lives have been shattered on their very threshold. It has seemed to countenance a little irregularity in exchange for devastating war experiences.<sup>1</sup> There is no trace of this attitude in the New Testament. In the midst of difficulties comparable with our own the cry of the New Testament is that Christians should set a different standard, not fall to that of the world around them. The Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking of "divorces and consequent remarriages",<sup>2</sup> says plainly that these "are by their nature, though not in law, correctly described as bigamous". That is, they are bigamous whether entered into by the guilty or innocent party (so-called). There is some confusion of thought with regard to the "innocent" party. That term is being stretched even when applied to the divorce, since when a Christian consents to divorce he repudiates the creative image which was voluntarily accepted in the Marriage Vows. To enter into another contract while still under the original vows adds a violation of the Third Commandment, and produces a state devoid of Godlikeness. Further, each "remarriage" after divorce adds its own quota to the coarsening of the public moral conscience in exactly the same way that every act of sin in the individual life deepens and hardens the habit of evil. And a happy living-together of "remarried" persons may be directly responsible for the break-up of other homes by sapping the courage of those too weak in the face of such success to continue the struggle to be faithful to their own marriage vows.

Unsuccessful marriages will always be encountered, and there may perhaps be an analogy here with similar breakdowns in the Religious Life. Life under vows must at times be searching, whether the vows are those of marriage or of celibacy, for the whole object of vows is to raise the individual into a new relationship to God. For this reason alone vows must in all cases be voluntary, taken with a full understanding of their implications, because any state entered into on the basis of vows is not a state of obligation, but a response to the call of God to serve him in a particular and more exacting manner. The vows are made to God: the conditions under which they are to be carried out are provided by the marriage partner or by the Community. If now it is found that the celibate cannot live in Religion it may be necessary as a last resort to allow a return to secular life. The conditions of life in

<sup>1</sup> For a consideration of this attitude see Michael Furse, *Stand Therefore!* 1953, pp. 156-72 and Appendix, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *Canterbury Diocesan Notes*, No. 262, April 1951.

Community are suspended: *the Vows remain*. A Religious returning to secular life is *not* free to marry. The vow of celibacy has been made to God, and though the conditions under which the vows were to be realized have been abrogated, the promise to God remains. The same is true of marriage vows: the conditions of married life may be cancelled; *the Vows remain*. Those undertaking marriage need as careful grounding in the nature of vows as do Religious, and to realize that their state equally is governed by the dominant consideration "for the kingdom of heaven's sake". The first reason for marriage is the procreation of children to be brought up as citizens of that Kingdom, and how can those who are living in contravention of its laws fulfil this task? The children of illicit unions do not have a home in the Christian sense of the word.

Now that the first principles have been reasserted by the Archbishop, we have to face the disquieting fact that many Christian people accept divorce as a normal part of life, and have no scruple in meeting and entertaining bigamously married Christian persons. In this matter, however, Christians, whatever their station, can show where their true allegiance lies. And there is also imperative need for making it clear beyond any doubt to Christian boys and girls that they cannot take the liberties which in to-day's society their friends and companions think normal. In particular they should be warned that married persons of the opposite sex, no matter what the conditions, are completely outside the range of their interest or altruism. Our Lord, far from being a milk-and-water humanitarian who came on earth to make things smooth and pleasant and to ease everyone's difficulties, offered a fairly savage remedy to would-be adulterers. "Everyone that *looketh* on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already . . . if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, . . . *for it is profitable for thee* that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell . . . every one that putteth away his wife . . . maketh her an adulteress; and *whosoever* shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery."<sup>1</sup> The chain of reasoning is clear. When the look has begun to engage the feelings, gouge out the eye. If the hand has touched the form, cut it off; that is, so place yourself that the dangerous

<sup>1</sup> The phrase "saving for the cause of fornication" has been omitted above, as, even if it is genuine, it has no bearing on the adulterous nature of any subsequent union. The R.V. paragraphing of the whole passage is a real psychological help in recognizing its cohesion (Matt. 5. 27-32).

contact *can never again occur*. It is better to mutilate one's capacities—as is done by total abstainers—if self-control has become impossible. Otherwise there is adultery, and the body will be consigned to hell, Gehenna (*not* to the place of departed spirits).

Bishop Walter Carey relates<sup>1</sup> that he asked a certain sailor how he did, and the reply was that he was on a good ship because the captain was both strict and just. "A slack ship is an unhappy ship." So is a slack body. It is a *happy* body when it is kept strictly and justly, and for such there is opened the joy and the stimulus of Platonic friendship. This has always been possible between choice spirits, yet in an era when mingling of the sexes is not only permissible but compulsory, special training is needed to replace the old-fashioned safeguards. Over a hundred years ago Miss Nightingale watched a friendship through which "she acquired a belief in the possibility of a daily intimacy, a close friendship between a man and a woman on terms which did not include passion, and which did not provoke scandal".<sup>2</sup> Charles Williams, speaking of morals, says, "The Rigorous view is vital to sanctity; the Relaxed view is vital to sanity." Our youth needs them both.

We are approaching the opposite problem from that with which our Lord was called upon to deal. In the early stages of Christian enthusiasm there were those who in the radiance of their faith sought to bypass the physical altogether, and to live in subliminal company on a basis of the third cause for Matrimony alone, but with much higher intent than is suggested in the Prayer Book. It was not at that time destined to survive, but Charles Williams has a passage<sup>3</sup> in which he suggests that the Church lost an opportunity in the possible uses of sex when she entirely suppressed the *subintroductæ*. One cannot but wonder whether some of those ineligible for Christian marriage at the present day may not be called by the Spirit to "the use of sex, in this experiment . . . to pass below itself and release the dark gods of D. H. Lawrence directly into the Kingdom of Messias". That is, instead of living in false marriage for the sake of their personal temporal pleasure to use the whole energies of their creative capacities for battle with the spiritual wickedness so signally martialled to-day for the overthrow of the Kingdom of Christ. It is, indeed, in itself a state of singular danger, inevitable wherever singular conflict is involved, for there is always the risk of falling from the height of the ideal, and becoming involved in

<sup>1</sup> *Goodbye to my Generation*, 1951, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Florence Nightingale*, 1950, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 12-14.

the secondary, which in this instance is the normal impulses of sex. It was in this connection that St Paul decreed that marriage was no sin; it was wiser to marry than to have distracting strain. In the earlier part of the chapter in which various states are treated<sup>1</sup> he significantly says that "it is better to marry than to burn", thus echoing our Lord's statement that destruction in Gehenna is the inevitable end of a violated body. The conditions are precisely opposite: our Lord spoke of illicit union, St Paul of the attempt to live together in continency: the penalty of abuse is the same.

Perhaps it is no longer a matter of surprise that the Prayer Book does not include the Marriage rite as an occasion upon which it is suitable to add the doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer.

The final rubric in 1661 runs: "It is convenient that the new-married persons should receive the holy Communion at the time of their Marriage, or at the first opportunity after their Marriage." Both in 1549 and 1552 the wording was, "The newe married persones (the same day of their marriage) must receive the holy communion."

An echo of this "must" remained even within living memory when the wedding breakfast had still not been wholly superseded by the afternoon reception. Now that weddings can be conducted at the Registry offices, it may perhaps be hoped that the Prayer Book rite will be restricted to the use of Church people, that is, to those who are taking their full share in its liturgical and sacramental life, who will therefore naturally wish to make their Communion at the earliest possible moment after the inauguration of their new life. The Book of 1928 is printed in such manner as to indicate that the Communion normally follows.

The structure of the rite is more clearly brought out in those cases where the register is solemnly signed immediately after the Vows and Blessing, thus forming yet another link with the Profession of Monks and Nuns, where immediately after the Profession of Vows the signature is made and placed upon the altar.<sup>2</sup> It is clear when this procedure is adopted that the marriage proper is over, which fact is also demonstrated by the procession from "the body of the church" to the altar

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 7.

<sup>2</sup> At the Coronation of a Sovereign the signature is made immediately after the taking of the Oath, but in this case it is the prelude to the sacramental act of Anointing. In Marriage and Profession the signature is rather the formal ratification of the Vows, which have in these rites constituted the sacrament.

rails. This procession is the beginning of the Nuptial Mass and an Introit Psalm is appointed to be sung. The newly-married pair remain at the altar rails till after their Communion, and receive a special blessing before the final benediction of the whole congregation. The *raison d'être* of the procession to the altar is lost when there is no Communion, and one wonders how many of the myriads who have so processed have understood the implication of their action. Without the Communion, this is indeed a piece of ceremonial which "obscures rather than reveals".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 142.

## SPECIAL VOCATIONS II: THE VISITATION OF THE SICK

IT HAS to be confessed that the diction of this Office in the Book of 1661 is to our ears archaic and sententious, though whether some of the forms substituted in 1928 are more desirable is open to question. A footnote to the title of this Office in the Book of 1928 reads: "The Order in the Form of 1662 is not reprinted here, being, for the most part, contained in the Order following." A comparison of the two Orders shows that this note is misleading. The decade was still so thoroughly impregnated with Pelagic humanism that the Revisers failed to perceive that their liberalistic removal of archaic language was in fact subtly altering the fundamentals of faith. As an example of such alteration one may cite the careful elimination of references to personified evil. The devil, possibly to his own amusement, was outmoded in 1928. The opening versicles and responses in the omitted version ran as follows:

*Minister.* "O Lord, save thy servant;"

*Answer.* "Which putteth *his* trust in thee."

*Minister.* "Send *him* help from thy holy place;"

*Answer.* "And evermore mightily defend *him*."

*Minister.* "Let the enemy have no advantage of *him*;"

*Answer.* "Nor the wicked approach to hurt *him*."

*Minister.* "Be unto *him*, O Lord, a strong tower,"

*Answer.* "From the face of *his* enemy."

In 1928, "Let the enemy have no advantage of *him*; Nor the wicked approach to hurt *him*" is omitted, and subsequent direct mentions, e.g., "the fraud and malice of the devil", are also removed. There is further a subtle alteration of emphasis, sliding over the note of judgement and of just punishment. Where the old Order quotes the writer to the Hebrews on the difference in treatment of sons and bastards, the new Book speaks of sickness as a "gracious" means of correction, with other phrases of like kind; in lieu of the exhortation to take in good part the chastisement of the Lord we are encouraged instead to self-esteem

by the reminder that "there is great honour in suffering"; the warning that "after this life there is an account to be given unto the righteous Judge, by whom all must be judged, without respect of persons" is wholly omitted.

It is significant, also, to compare the two versions of the prayer which immediately follows the Absolution.

1661

"O most merciful God, who, according to the multitude of thy mercies, dost so put away the sins of those who truly repent, that thou rememberest them no more; Open thine eye of mercy upon this thy servant, who most earnestly desireth pardon and forgiveness. Renew in *him*, most loving Father, whatsoever hath been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by *his* own carnal will and frailness; preserve and continue this sick member in the unity of the Church; consider *his* contrition, accept *his* tears, aswage *his* pain, as shall seem to thee expedient for *him*. And forasmuch as *he* putteth *his* full trust only in thy mercy, impute not unto *him* *his* former sins, but strengthen *him* with thy blessed Spirit; and, when thou art pleased to take *him* hence, take *him* unto thy favour through the merits of thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

1928

"O most merciful God, who according to the multitude of thy mercies, dost so put away the sins of those who truly repent, that thou rememberest them no more: "Look upon this thy servant who most earnestly desireth pardon and forgiveness.

"And forasmuch as *he* putteth *his* full trust only in thy mercy, impute not unto *him* *his* former sins, but strengthen *him* with thy blessed Spirit: and whenever thou art pleased to take *him* hence, take *him* into thine everlasting favour: through the merits . . ."

The dread of such expressions as "thine eye of mercy" was very real to the rationalizing of this date: the suppression of the phrase "continue this sick member in the unity of the Church" is to be deplored. The additions made to this Order in 1928 were in most respects admirable,

but it is unfortunate that the Order of 1661 was not printed in full as in the case of the other Offices. There is room to-day for two forms; one for the aged and invalid, a class non-existent in 1661, and one for the dying.

The Book of 1661 is indeed frankly designed for those *in extremis*. True to the spirit of Scripture, it asserts roundly that "whatsoever your sickness is, know you certainly, that it is God's visitation". Indeed, it would be intolerable if anything could befall us that was outside God's jurisdiction. The joy of Christian life lies in the certain knowledge that *nothing* can reach us before God's own arrival; before his assurance, "Here is your opportunity". Let us remember that everything is under his control except our own personal individual choices. From the fundamental axiom of Christian faith that God is over all we can go forward to puzzle out the problems of the particular affliction, knowing that there must be a satisfactory answer somewhere simply because of the premiss. And the obvious place to begin is with the very lovely Prayer Book phrase (omitted in 1928), "there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sickness. For he himself went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain." This is the key, and if we study its pattern long enough, we shall find that it fits any lock. It is indeed the skeleton key, the crossed bars, which has already loosed every enclosing place, and it never fails when applied with the oil of patience. "Jesus chose pain, well knowing what he was choosing. That is the greatest fact that we know about pain."<sup>1</sup>

This consideration gives us a guide in our approach to the whole question of sickness and unhealth of body and mind. Physical disability, whether temporary or permanent, is not in itself so absolute an ill as to require healing at all costs. It is far from uncommon to hear the statement made that God wills us to have perfect and healthful bodies, or the assertion that our Lord never had a moment's illness, therefore neither should we. With regard to our Lord, for which there is no Scriptural warrant one way or the other—and the Infancy and Childhood must have caused comment with *no* childish ailments—there is the conclusive demonstration of fallacy in the fact that he had no sin. He did, however, have very great suffering, both natural and unnatural, of which the Gospels give ample examples; his weariness, his overwork, his exhaustion from lack of food, the strain of veiled and open hostility, are all a demonstration that even complete sinlessness is no exemption from

<sup>1</sup> C. E. Tomkinson, *Stations of the Cross*, II.

suffering; indeed, only enhances it. Since, then, suffering is not incompatible with sinlessness, we have to beware of making over-dogmatic assertions with regard to God's views of illness. We have constantly to bear in mind that he has to deal with bodies disorientated by sin, not bodies as he originally created them. We have chosen sin, and the result is bodies liable to sickness and decay. He does not override our choice, but allows it to go its full course into death. Those who find cause for indignation at the suggestion that God can "send" or even "allow" disease must own that death is a greater disaster than any known disease; yet no human being has yet existed, not even the Sinless One, who has not had to die. If the greater, why not the less: Juvenal's hedonistic *mens sana in corpore sano* omits the all-important Christian addition in *Spiritu Sancto*. Bodily and mental healing were not the object of the Incarnation, nor is it rational to imagine that it could need so tremendous a thing as God-made-Man to effect bodily cures. For physical healing a Hippocrates could suffice. In correction of so anaemic an ideal we have the credal utterance of glory, "for us men and for our salvation, he came down from heaven". "For us men", as we were, primitive and unfallen: "and for our salvation", for our restoration to unfallendom. Salvation is the proffered gift; and in fact in countless cases one observes that sickness and disability minister so positively to spiritual development and progress as to become a very signal blessing. A perfect body is a poor substitute for a developing soul, and this is, in fact, what the Prayer Book says. "If you truly repent you of your sins, and bear your sickness patiently . . . submitting yourself wholly unto his will, it shall turn to your profit, and help you forward in the right way that leadeth unto everlasting life."

One point needs drawing out in this Exhortation. The possibility of a vocation to sickness or permanent disability of some kind should not be overlooked. So the Prayer Book says, "for what cause soever this sickness is sent unto you: whether it be to try your patience for the examples of others . . . it shall turn to your profit". *And to theirs*. For Christians it is a tangible means of fulfilling their Baptismal profession "to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him"; (a point stressed by the 1928 Revisers, but at the sacrifice of other essential doctrine). St Paul says, "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church."<sup>1</sup> At first sight the verse looks rather shocking. How can there be anything

<sup>1</sup> Col. 1. 24.

lacking in the afflictions of Christ? Still more how can St Paul, or anyone else, effect that of which Christ has been incapable? There is indeed nothing lacking on Christ's part of complete atonement and perfect satisfaction; but as his sufferings were "on behalf of" others, so also those of his members are "on behalf of", because this is the manner in which his life circulates through them and so makes them a part of himself. We cannot be of his Body without in our own persons portraying his characteristics, and our bodies are so essentially a part of ourselves, not merely an envelope, that they must be as truly conformed to Christ by discipline and suffering as our minds and wills. These sufferings "fill up" for each individual that which is lacking until this experience has been vouchsafed.

Nor should we stop short at this point. Fr Benson says: "We are not to think that all suffering must be a gain to us as individuals. It is the fellowship of Christ's sufferings which is a gain to us as members of his Body."<sup>1</sup> And Dr Illingworth has expressed the infinite possibilities of pain in words that have yet to be surpassed in the nobility of their conception. "The pleasures of each generation evaporate in air: it is their pains which increase the spiritual momentum of the world."<sup>2</sup> Of what may not this generation be capable! A Russian girl in the hands of the Tche-ka set herself to overcome every feeling of resentment, contempt, and anger *because it would damage her tormentors*. This is true union with the Cross of Christ, and a very positive addition to the spiritual momentum of the world.

The Book of 1661, however, assumes that the sickness has by now brought the sufferer within the confines of death, and following the Exhortation to recognize God's Presence in and through the affliction because of its power of uniting with Christ, whatever may be the temptation to regard it as a sign of his displeasure, the rite proceeds to the recitation of the Apostles' Creed. The sick person replies: "All this I steadfastly believe." This is the reply that we made, either in person or through our Godparents, when we entered "this state of salvation" at our Baptism: this is the reply that we make on our death-bed as we pass into the fuller Presence of him with whose sacramentally-received life we have been living since that day.

Being thus assured that the sick person is, in will, a living and loving member of Christ, the Minister is directed to enter into personal details

<sup>1</sup> R. M. Benson, *War Songs of the Prince of Peace*, Vol. II, 1901, Ps. XXIII, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. Illingworth, "The Problem of Pain", in *Lux Mundi*, 1890, p. 124.

to see how far this may also be true in fact. He is to "examine" the sick person as to his

- (a) repentance for his former sins; and as to
- (b) 1 his sincere "charity with all the world"; that is, forgiving "from the bottom of his heart" all who have offended him; and, "if he have offended any other, to ask him forgiveness"; and "where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power".
- (b) 2 Further, the Minister is to ascertain whether he has made his will; and to see that he makes a proper statement of and arrangements for the discharge of any debts, and to urge him to show liberality to the poor.

All this comes under the heading of our Duty towards our Neighbour, and is both preliminary and secondary to the primary need of being free from any hindrance in our communion with God. So the Prayer Book continues: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. . . ." That is, the opportunity is offered of reviewing our life in the light of our Duty towards God. (The same sequence is followed in the Communion Order. There also, after all possible reconciliation with and restitution to our neighbour, the Exhortation bids any "who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience . . . let him . . . receive the benefit of absolution".) In the hour of death, then, how shall we regard our duty towards God, as set out in the Book of Common Prayer?

"My duty towards God is to believe in him" (we have just assented to the Creed), "to fear him, and to love him"

"with all my heart,  
with all my mind,  
with all my soul,  
and with all my strength."

This is the degree to which the Prayer Book asserts that our love of God must rise. There can be very few of us who need no penitence for the niggardliness of our response to this duty of entire surrender to God's claim upon us, as we look back over our life with its insincerities, vacillations, indifferences, defiances, ignorances, and negligences. Yet

possibly a large number of us would not give God himself a moment's thought in considering whether we had a weighty matter on our conscience or not. We might even feel quite at ease if we can say, "I have never been drunk, I have only told white lies, if people are too stupid to protect themselves it is perfectly fair to improve one's own position." That is, we are only concerned with flagrant faults against our neighbour, or gross abuse of our own body. Ethics have been substituted for religion,<sup>1</sup> for that which binds us to God. Blessed indeed are they who still feel that they are not wholly at peace, for this signifies that their contact with God is not so exiguous as to be merely co-extensive with their human relationships. If God is beginning to be a reality to us it is our falling-short of *his* intentions for us and through us which dominates the picture. True, all our sins damage our personal relationship with him, though some are in addition an insult to the Body of Christ as exemplified in a particular individual. One very cogent reason for confession before a priest is the fact that he represents the Body as well as God. It is an official act of restitution, especially in the very many instances where detailed acknowledgement to the person concerned is impossible or undesirable.

The Prayer Book makes it plain that at our latter end we ought to desire to make a confession before a priest, and it does not allow slurring-over or evasion on the part of the Minister. Whether it is wise for our last confession also to be our first, is left by the Prayer Book for each individual to decide. In the Communion Exhortation it is advised in cases where otherwise it is not possible to quiet the conscience. "Quieting" is a process open to some misconstruction. It can lead to a death-bed where persons will imagine that they are fairly good, or have never done anybody any harm, or else are entirely preoccupied with terrestrial matters of one kind or another. The Lambeth Conference of 1948<sup>2</sup> recommended that all Confirmation candidates should receive careful instruction with regard to sacramental confession. Such instruction should make it clear that even if the sacrament is not used, self-examination must be as thorough as is required for that sacrament. Lack of early training in self-knowledge can easily result in a self-complaisant death-bed.

The Prayer Book assumes that every Minister visiting a sick person

<sup>1</sup> Modern writers connect the word with *religare*, to bind. Cicero connected it with *relegere*, to read over again.

<sup>2</sup> *Lambeth Conference 1948*, pp. 51 and 116. The whole of the Committee's Report repays careful study.

will be conversant with the rite of sacramental confession. The Priest (as the Minister is rightly called in this portion of the Order) is expected to be himself a penitent, and it may be said in general that it is a much-needed safeguard for the proper exercise of the sacrament of Penance that the confessor should himself be living in the power of the sacramental grace which he imparts. It is true that in emergency, such as visiting the dying, every ordained priest has the authority committed to him of pronouncing the absolution of sins, but appointment as a chaplain or incumbent does not of itself convey the insight needed for this exacting ministration.<sup>1</sup> At one time it was necessary to awaken Anglican priests to their priestly functions, but to-day there is a real danger that "study" priests, conscious of their success in their own milieu, may suppose, not unnaturally from their point of view, that they are competent to undertake the sacramental ministry for those who prefer it. To themselves it makes little difference whether it is study or church, but the substitution of the study for the confessional does, in fact, make it a different proceeding. The clergyman, having a friendly talk, has set aside his professional status, and is substituting his own personality for his priestly powers, instead of disciplining and developing it through their appointed exercise; and he does this not least when he has recourse to extempore prayer. When he acts in his *official* capacity in church he is no longer Mr So and So, but the appointed representative both of God and of the Church, empowered to convey God's pardon, and to reopen the exchanges within the Body which have been clogged even by the most secret sin. The surplice and stole (or the stole alone) ensure an impersonality which the proceedings in an organic function require.

When a judge speaks from the bench he is largely protected by his position from natural bias in any particular case, and he approaches the matter with a sense of responsibility in the exercise of his office which is not present, and would be inappropriate, in his smoking-room, where he would rightly be more indulgent and more inclined to gloss facts. This may at times be the case with the study priest; and probably the term "penitent" is not always suitable for the study seeker. The desire is rather to relieve the conscience than to acknowledge the guilt

<sup>1</sup> The Prayer Book is careful to leave the choice of a confessor entirely at the discretion of the individual. "Let him come to me", the incumbent is required to say, "or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word". It is manifest that "discreet and learned" refer to his special competence as a confessor. An orthopaedic surgeon may be of international renown, but this does not make him a "learned" gynaecologist.

(the sincerity either of the seeker or the penitent is not in question). The temptation—unrecognized as temptation—is to put the best construction on the matter, to excuse, and to explain, rather than to own and repudiate sin.

In the confessional, on the other hand, there are no excuses. We do not come to justify ourselves, but to acknowledge to the very depths that it is *our* sin, our *own* sin, our own *great* sin. Neither priest nor penitent are considering extenuating circumstances, unreasonable provocation, or any suggestion that the penitent is more sinned against than sinning. The matter of the confession is that which this individual has thought or said or done which in those exact circumstances our Lord would not have thought or said or done. If our Lord would not so have behaved, then neither can a member of his Body so behave. It is our own falling-short of that standard which is in question, now as at the Last Judgement. Such a statement as, "Absolution is given far too easily. You only care about a man's soul. How long is a man to be allowed to ruin others while you go on giving him absolution?" shows the confusion of thought that can occur between the functions of the study interview and the absolution in the confessional. To say to an addict of any kind, "Keep clear of this and then I will give you absolution", is equivalent to saying to a man drowning with a weight round his neck, "Get out of the water and then I will cut loose that weight". It is impossible to give a *penitent* absolution too often, because it restores the capacity for living in the Body with the life of the Body. An abscess may need scraping many times before it heals, but this is not a very good reason for leaving it to suppurate untouched. It will undoubtedly heal more quickly and satisfactorily with treatment than without. Forgiveness is a restoration to life, a reopening of exchanges damaged by our defection. Absolution, if it merely meant the easing of distress or the reinstatement of a person in his own good opinion, would be valueless. The penitent is not dismissed with the words, "Go, now you are free to sin again", but with our Lord's words, "Go, and sin no more". There is no minimizing of sin as sin, no pretence that a sinful act is on occasion legitimate. The essence of this sacrament is not the preparatory confession, but the supernatural application of empowered and empowering grace. It is the absolution which makes the difference between the confessional and the study or consulting room. Someone wrote, "I disliked increasingly the sacerdotal claim implicit in the indicative absolution prescribed in the Prayer Book." In such a case the study is evidently the proper place for the exercise of

the individual's ministrations, but it does not imply the propriety of changing the Church's formularies.

The great problem which faces the whole of human existence is the proper relationship between the individual and the community or the institution, the due rights of the organism and also those of its constituents. We may observe how perfectly the sacraments answer this problem and fulfil the double need. Nothing could be more particular, more individual, than the sacrament of penance. Here is no "general" confession of a multitude, but the recitation of concrete definite acts committed by one certain person. The whole process is intimately concerned with the details of a single individual life. Yet the rationale throughout is only individual in relationship to the whole. Individual self-justification is a frame of mind commonly assigned to the Protestant outlook, but Jakob Jocz<sup>1</sup> has pointed out that it is typical of Jewry. "The characteristically *Christian* attitude . . . Faith in Jesus Christ, as the Church understands it, implies surrender. The underlying principle of Judaism is opposed to such an attitude, for it is based upon the fundamental Jewish assertion that man can hold his own before God. . . . There are many Christians in the Church who faithfully adhere to traditional Christianity but who in their self-sufficiency have assumed an attitude of independence *vis-à-vis* to God; in this their inward attitude, they are *Jews*." "An extreme example of an essentially Jewish attitude is provided by the person of Pelagius. His emphasis upon human freedom, upon the natural goodness of man, human sufficiency, etc., is characteristic Jewish teaching."

One cannot but wonder whether the words in the rubric which were added in 1661, "Here shall the sick person *be moved* to make a special confession", were the result of a hundred years of "an attitude of independence *vis-à-vis* to God". In 1549 there was no need to "move" a person to recognize his sin and his need of cleansing, and the rubric simply said, "Here shall the sicke person make a special confession". It is to be feared that now there are many persons who need to be "moved", simply because they have lost the sense of corporate life which faith in sacramental grace bestows.

And *there is nothing private in God*, which leads us to a point which does not always receive the consideration which it deserves, namely, the difference between secrecy and privacy in confession. The confessor in the confessional is bound to secrecy, that is, he may divulge nothing that he has heard without express permission. He has heard

<sup>1</sup> Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, 1949, pp. 202 and 384.

nothing in his own person, and he is not lying if he professes ignorance of something heard as a confessor. The study-receptor is acting in his own person, not in his priestly capacity, so the sacerdotal privilege does not apply. If he hears something to the danger of the community he has a first duty to the community. The confessor, if he cannot persuade the penitent to speak or to give himself permission to do so, is in the very terrible position of having to keep silence. He can only pray. Perhaps it was for this express purpose that the matter was providentially made known to him.

For the penitent, however, a difference begins to reveal itself between secrecy and privacy. At first, perhaps, the secrecy is all-important, the knowledge that never under any circumstances will the matter ever be known to such and such a person. But as the relationship with God develops and matures the need for this type of secrecy gradually disappears. The desire to appear better than we are (by pretending that those things of which we are now ashamed have never been) slowly gives place to the delighted and even amazed thanksgiving for the incredible love that has delivered us. Our sin is not now so much a matter of shame to self as of glory to God who has triumphed in spite of it. Not shame, but sorrow, sorrow in gladness, a sorrow that C. S. Lewis shows to have for accompaniment something approaching a carefree hilarity, transforms the sinner into the son of God.

"You mind your own business", says a character in *The Great Divorce*.<sup>1</sup> "I'm not taking any impudence from you about my private affairs."

"There *are* no private affairs", is the annihilating reply.

The very desire to be "private" becomes laughable in due course. How can there be anything hidden which shall not be revealed if we are in God? It is an impossible contradiction, the fraud of Ananias and Sapphira, *having something to hide*. As long as there remains anything that we wish to keep to ourselves or for ourselves ("to" and "for" both being dative, both possessive), we are still, in that respect at any rate, within the opacities of the purgative way. There comes with time a simplicity which learns not to be evasive, because no personal shame is any longer concealment-worthy.

It is sometimes urged that frequent or regular sacramental confession is unhealthy, and that it is ridiculous to pretend that we are continually in need of medicine. Since 1552 the Church has required us to say at the beginning of Morning Prayer, and since 1661 in the evening also,

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, 1952, p. 33.



that "there is no health in us". In response to this acknowledgement of our state she provides forgiveness of sins to those who are "penitent". It is possible that on many occasions we do not receive that needed forgiveness because we have not made self-examination and therefore are not among those "which confess their faults". Do we use the time before the service begins for remembering our omissions and commissions since we were last at church? Herein lies one great use of sacramental confession, for it does ensure that self-examination is made, and thus gives an opportunity for that deepening of contrition without which neither restoration to life nor growth can occur. In practice this sacrament does in fact help one to see oneself in so completely new a light that it may very well be called the sacrament of illumination. There is something tangible to work at where before there was almost complete ignorance of ill. Without this continual cleansing process the picture is so dim that we are unaware of the existence of many of the details of our failings.

We will, however, conclude with reasonable confidence that the sick person whom we left some time ago has by now made a thorough-going confession. He has realized that after setting his worldly affairs in order his whole thought must be Godward. This is no longer the moment for looking back. The voyager going on board ship makes his farewells on land, but as he mounts the gangway he keeps his eyes fixed on what he is about. Once on board he can turn round and view the shore from a new angle. The present Prayer Book Order has little further to offer him. A Collect, a Psalm with the antiphon, "O Saviour of the world . . .", and a commendation to the healing power of the most holy Name of Jesus. In 1549 the power of the holy Name was followed by anointing with oil on the forehead and breast, according to Scriptural exhortation. St James says: "Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."<sup>1</sup> So the prayer, "The almighty Lord, whiche is a most strong tower . . . be nowe and evermore thy defence, and make thee knowe and fele that there is no other name under heaven . . . in whom and through whom, thou mayste receyue helth and saluacion, but onely the name of our Lorde Jesus Christe" was followed by anointing with the "signe of the crosse", accompanied by the words, "As with this visible oyle thy body outwardely is annoynted: so our heavenly father, almightie god, grant of his infinite goodnes, that thy soule inwardly may be annoynted with

<sup>1</sup> Jas. 5. 14.

the holy gost, who is the spirite of al strength, coumfort, reliefe, and gladnes . . .". In 1552 this "strength, coumfort, reliefe and gladnes" were withdrawn.

There is a detail of interest we may observe at the end of the Order for the Visitation of the Sick. It closes with the Triune Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6. 24-6, which was added in 1661.

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:

The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

This is followed in Numbers by the significant words:

v. 27. "So shall they put my name upon the children of Israel."

It is a wonderful statement of the name of the I AM, a foreshadowing of the time when the fact of the One had been fully learned in post-Exilic days, and the fullness of time for the revelation of the nature of the Unity had dawned.

The blessing was added in this Order in the Biblical form as given above, but at the same time it was added as follows at the end of the Communion.

"The Lord bless us, and keep us;

The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us and give us peace, now and for evermore."

That is, it has lost its Triune form and the substitution of "us" for "thee" has converted it into a supplication. On those occasions, therefore, when the Aaronic blessing is, very suitably, used for dismissal after Mattins or Evensong it is the complete form as it occurs in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick which is suitable at the end of a Christian gathering.

We have already noted<sup>1</sup> the various alterations in the Order for the Burial of the Dead which were made at the several revisions. It is interesting to observe two points of actual practice in certain localities which instinctively attempt to make good some weaknesses in the present Order.

Before 1549 there was a long bedchamber Office consisting of com-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 2, p. 13, above.

mentatory prayers at the passing,<sup>1</sup> and the Office called Placebo during the composing of the body. This was wholly omitted in 1549, and has not been officially replaced; but we find in various districts that on the day of the funeral the Priest goes to the house and makes use of an *ad hoc* compilation of prayers before the funeral procession leaves. Since there is no set Prayer Book form they can well be the selfless prayers which lift the departed and place him in the hands of God. It is *Der Tag* for him; in our mourning let us be generous; let us think, not so much, "How does it affect me?" as, "How does it affect *him*?" Whether he was friend or foe, whether we are glad or sorry, or merely indifferent, we can with safety and sincerity commend him to God.

"Father, in thy gracious keeping,  
Leave we now thy servant sleeping."<sup>2</sup>

The other point concerns what Brightman calls the "meaningless" dislocation of the present Order whereby the committal is thrust into the middle of the "Office of the Dead". Again we find that by local custom this dislocation is quietly set aside by passing directly from the lesson to the Lord's Prayer and Collects before leaving the church. The whole "Office" is thus said in church, and the committal prayers follow at the graveside, restoring the sense which was destroyed in 1661.

<sup>1</sup> The very beautiful commendatory prayer of 1661, spoilt by the sententious closing phrases, has been purged of these in the Book of 1928 and enshrined in a brief but admirable Commendatory Office.

<sup>2</sup> *Hymns A. and M.*, 401. This refrain is a prayer for the departed, a rhyming version of the Church's habitual cry, "Grant him, Lord, eternal rest".

## SPECIAL VOCATIONS III: THE ORDINAL

MATRIMONY and sickness are not always recognized as vocations, but "going into the Church" has always been regarded as a call. That phrase, indeed, is unfortunately confusing, since there is only one way of going, or of coming, into the Church, and that is by Holy Baptism: but at least those who speak of "going into the Church" when they mean "taking Holy Orders" acknowledge by the phrase that the individual is set apart and becomes something other than he was before.

The Preface to the Ordinal opens as follows: "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." [We may note here at the outset that in all three Prayer Books (those of 1549, 1552, and 1661) the appeal is to Scripture *and* to the early Fathers.] We are thus at the outset brought up against the Apostolical Succession. In this connection it has been said: ". . . the Church of England at any rate is governed by the principle that she should not seek to teach anything as 'generally necessary to salvation' unless it can be proved by most certain warrant of holy Scripture."

This sentence rests its argument upon three sources: an extract from the Church Catechism, and a conflation of two of the Articles. (a) The words "generally necessary to salvation" are taken from the third part of the Church Catechism, and relate to the two Dominical sacraments. The phrase is confined to these sacraments and is not a universal formula. (b) The sense of the latter part of the sentence, "proved by the most certain warrant of holy Scripture," is found in Article VI and Article VIII.

### Article VI. *Of the Sufficiency of the holy Scriptures for Salvation*

"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith."

One may note that the Article speaks of "the Faith", not of faith. "An

article of 'the' Faith" is a credal statement, so that the title cannot be interpreted as meaning that Creeds are superfluous. What "views", if any, this Article may be said to exclude is not easy to define, for there is very little that human ingenuity cannot make the Scriptures say; and the phrase "nor may be proved thereby" renders "whatsoever is not read therein" nugatory for any who wish for Scriptural foundation. Article VI is indeed studiously vague in its statements. To "contain" all things necessary does not mean that they are explicitly stated, nor that they can be infallibly interpreted by all persons. An operating theatre may "contain" all things necessary for a surgical excursion into the brain, but *by themselves* they are valueless, and in unskilled hands catastrophic.

#### Article VIII. *Of the Three Creeds*

"The Three Creeds, *Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed*, and that which is commonly called the *Apostles' Creed*, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture."

We may perhaps open our eyes at this uncompromising assertion when we consider the stormy days of Nicaea, and the stumbling-block of the finally-incorporated *homo-ousios*, precisely because it was not found in holy Scripture. Yet our own Reformers proclaim roundly that all three of these Creeds ought to be "thoroughly received and believed" because "they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture". Could language be stronger? Here at least there is no ambiguity, no loophole for the conscientious objector either to Virgin birth or bodily Resurrection or even to *homo-ousios*. And this affords us a very useful example of the Reformers' own interpretation of Article VI, since they declare that *homo-ousios* is to be "thoroughly received and believed" "as an article of the Faith", because, presumably, they are satisfied that it "may be proved" by holy Scripture although it is *not* read therein.

We see now that in our original quotation the words "most certain warrants of holy Scripture" are virtually the last phrase of the Article on the Creeds (not the Article concerning holy Scripture). The Nicene Creed states categorically that the Church is "Apostolick"; so we are sent back to the Scriptures to find out, *not* whether Apostolicity is or is not of the *esse* of the Church—that matter the Creed has decided for us in the affirmative—but whether Scripture gives us any enlightenment

as to its function and scope. We find there that to continue "*steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship*" was from the first post-Pentecostal moment the mark of those who enter into the new Jerusalem. So both Scripture and Creeds agree that the Church is Apostolick in its foundation.<sup>1</sup>

In this matter our own Reformers were diametrically opposed to those on the Continent who were determined to abolish the Apostolical succession, but they had not the necessary information to be correct in all their statements. There is great doubt at the present time as to the exact number and the status of Orders in the sub-Apostolic age, and the implication in the Preface that the Orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons as we now know them have been in existence from the Apostles' time is untenable. But though details may be in doubt, Apostolic power was bestowed and has been transmitted. The continuity would have been as obvious to us as it was to the New Testament writers if Jewry as a whole had recognized its Messiah instead of repudiating him. There would have been no more doubt in the matter than there was when Israel came out of Egypt or when they returned from Babylon. We too commonly think of Christianity as a religion starting *de novo* with our Lord. This was not his own conception of the matter, nor was it that of his Apostles. He was the promised Seed, the Fulfiller of the Law, and his mission lay within the Covenant. Salvation is of the Jews for the world, not by the abrogation of the exclusive ordinances which keep them separate, but by drawing others into the covenanted life. The family inheritance is essential, and our Lord follows the Old Testament precedents when he appoints his delegates. In the first three centuries A.D. there was no New Testament to which to appeal when Gnostic and other sects claimed special revelations, but there was a Ministry. True branches of the Covenant Church established their claim to be within the Covenant by tracing their bishops in unbroken line back to their Apostolic founder.<sup>2</sup> So far as one can see, humanly speaking, it was a major tragedy that Luther went out of the Church instead of exploding within it. Possibly the grand scale Protestant secession with its inevitably fissiparous subsequent history was a necessary ocular demonstration of the results of attempting a new beginning by a complete breach with the past. Such a radical break, however, is

<sup>1</sup> Not merely in an inaugural, but rather in a genealogical, sense. See below, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> See Bevil Browne, *The Way and the Faith*, new ed., 1949, for an enthralling account of the early centuries.

not God's way. He does not discard, but out of the very confusion that we have made he recreates, whether it be individually or collectively. Never, in all the contexts in which we meet the cry, "Come ye out of her, my people", is it a call to leave the Covenant. It is always a call away from apostasy, from outside influence, back into the heritage. Never does any iniquity of priests, any idolatry or bestial sin of the people, derogate from the appointed Covenant. Unless by outward ordinance we are grafted into the family of Abraham, Moses, and the Prophets through the appointments of the promised Seed, we are none of his.

And it was this engrafting that our Reformers secured to us in our Ordinal. Even if we assume that some, or all, of them had no intention of perpetuating the episcopate as being of the *esse* of the Church, we can in this very circumstance see a valuable illustration of the methods of God's Providence. However greatly the exercise of the Apostolic Ministry may have varied, however confusing the nomenclature at different times, however unworthy the individual recipients and transmitters of the grace, it is the embodied power itself that is the *esse*, neither the power nor the individual alone, but the union of them both; and here and here only, are the Dominical rites exercised within the Covenant of which they are the effectual signs.

In Western Christendom the claim to Apostolicity has overridden other considerations whenever schism has raised its baleful head. And we may remember that "schism" technically occurs *within* the Body. It is a case of members falling out with each other, not one of disruption of the essence of the society. It is a hand saying to a foot, "I have no need of you", and refusing to put on its stocking. Hand and foot are both still receiving the same bloodstream, though outward relationships are at a standstill. It is important to realize that in schism all the affected parts still contain the *whole* Christian dispensation, however warped may be their appearance. Each branch is in the line of succession, each has its marriage lines, though, as may happen in families, some may hope to fortify their own claim by throwing doubt upon others' legitimacy. Separation from the Body is another matter, and those who have deliberately started *de novo*, from whatever cause, are of their own will cut off from it. They are not within the present purview.

While in the West Apostolicity has been of outstanding importance, in the Eastern Church orthodoxy rests at least as much upon Apostolic *doctrine* as upon Apostolic *fellowship*. For the Easterns, validity of Orders is not enough unless it be accompanied by orthodox formulae

of belief and *worship*. The Breaking of Bread and the prayers are for them the touchstone. We come nearer here to the Anglican formula, the Lambeth Quadrilateral, which shows such close affinity with the Scriptural four-point test which was established on the day of Pentecost itself. Those first 3000 converts who were both sign and seal of the viability and vitality of the organism which had that day come to birth, partook of its being, entered into its existence and formed its initial growing point, by continuing "steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers".<sup>1</sup> The parallelism is noticeable for we have

	teaching	corresponding	to	Creeds
	fellowship	„	„	Apostolic succession
Breaking of Bread	„	„	„	Sacraments
	prayers	„	„	Bible (synagogue worship centring round Biblical exegesis and Psalmody).

And Lambeth follows Scriptural precedent in making the four fundamentals equal, none afore or after other.

The Quadrilateral not unnaturally makes its appearance (even if somewhat ambiguously in one particular), in the Ordinal. The Preface certifies that the Forms following are the means whereby the Apostolic Succession is to be preserved and safeguarded in the Use of the Church of England. This pillar is therefore explicit in the very existence of the Ordinal. When we examine the scrutiny in the Form for the Ordering of Priests we find that eight questions are addressed to the candidates. (The candidates are not addressed separately, but *en bloc*.) In themselves the questions manifest a certain confusion of thought and a vague reiteration: the second, third, fifth, and sixth deal more especially with our present point.

2. "Are you persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all Doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? and are you determined, out of the said Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?"

*Answer:* "I am so persuaded, and have so determined by God's grace."

<sup>1</sup> Acts 2. 42.

3. "Will you then give your faithful diligence always so to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same, according to the Commandments of God; so that you may teach the people committed to your Cure and Charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same?"

*Answer:* "I will so do, by the help of the Lord."

5. "Will you be diligent in Prayers, and in reading of the holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?"

*Answer:* "I will endeavour myself so to do, the Lord being my helper."

6. "Will you be diligent to frame and fashion your own selves, and your families, according to the Doctrine of Christ; and to make both yourselves and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ?"

*Answer:* I will apply myself thereto, the Lord being my helper."

The third question speaks expressly of the Sacraments, so that we have now two pillars firmly established. The second and fifth questions are devoted to the Scriptures, though in both there is mention of other matter. In none is there explicit mention of the Creeds. This leads us to examine the other criteria by which the candidate is to guide himself, and we find in question two that the Scriptures "contain" all doctrine necessary for salvation, and that the candidate is to decide what Doctrine he considers can be "concluded and proved by the Scripture". In question three, in addition to ministering the Sacraments, he is confronted with the Doctrine and the Discipline of Christ and the Commandments of God. In question five his reading of the Holy Scriptures is conjoined with diligence "in Prayers", and in question six he is to frame his household "according to the Doctrine of Christ". He may well wonder what is the interrelationship between Doctrine; Discipline of Christ; Commandments of God; Prayers; Doctrine of Christ. The Creeds, after all, are the summary of the Doctrine contained in Holy Scripture. The Nature of God, Creation, Incarnation, Redemption, final Consummation, are there enumerated in the form "required of necessity to eternal salvation" without inviting the candidate to discover what he is "persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture". (Racial discrimination is concluded from Scripture.) It does not seem

to be an overstretching of fancifulness to suggest that the word "Doctrine" contained in Holy Scripture may reasonably be interpreted as indicating the Creeds, according to the description given of them in Article VIII. If we accept this as an oblique Credal reference, we may say that the fourth pillar is represented in the scrutiny.

With regard to the Bible, there is no doubt about its even prominent mention, but the function of Holy Scripture in the Christian economy is a matter over which acute differences of opinion have arisen. The controversy is based upon man's twin instincts of urgent need for safety and solid foundation, together with a passionate urge towards exploration and experiment. A Holy Book gives a sense of great security, but Christians are not primarily People of a Book. They are Followers of a Person—and a Person terrifying in his venturesome innovations and demands. It is to this Personal Godhead that Sacraments, Creeds, Ministry, and Bible bear their respective and mutually-balanced witness. Isaac Williams says: "Many believe in the Word of God—*Verbum Dei*—but the Catholic Church only in God the Word—*Verbum Deus*."<sup>1</sup> And the value which the *Verbum Deus* set on the written word is demonstrated by the fact that he wrote nothing himself. He did not become Incarnate in order to bring us a Book. He was superseding words by the gift of his own sacramental life. "I came that they may have *life*, and may have it abundantly."<sup>2</sup> The early spread of Christianity was accomplished by the establishment in each locality of viable units of a living organism, and it is certain that St Paul would not change his methods to-day. The distribution of a printed Book does not engraft into the Kingdom of heaven. We do well to remember this when we speak of "the *supremacy* of the Bible", and also to remember that Christianity was established without it. It is indeed pertinent to inquire whether one of the roots of our latter-day difficulties may not be found in the substitution of a written Word and long tutelage in the mission field for the appointment *ab initio* of local elders in every church,<sup>3</sup> whereby the Christian organism is supplied with its means of life and growth through the weekly Eucharist.

The "Scriptures" of our Lord's day were not our present Old Testament, but three sets of documents of varying value: the Law or Pentateuch, supremely sacred, the Prophets, and the Writings. The New Testament was not so much as begun in his lifetime, and it was not till the Third Council of Carthage in A.D. 397 that the "Bible" gained its

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Williams, *The Nativity*, 1870, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> John 10. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 14. 23.

present form. The most noticeable thing in our Lord's treatment of the "Scriptures" was that he handled them in the manner of a prophet, "I say unto you" replacing "Thus saith the Lord". He uncompromisingly altered the current balance of importance between the Law and the Prophets, interpreting the Law in the spirit of the latter; and he fearlessly asserted the limited, non-final nature of the Jewish sacred books. He claimed to supersede them, but not to render them of no account. "To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears." And the record of this entrancing occurrence has in its turn become a "Scripture" for us. That, indeed, which makes the Bible different from every book that has, or that can ever be written, is its inspired gradual unfolding of the nature and purpose of God. It stands within the context of its own content, speaking to us of God and of his ways. The Old Testament was closed with the climax of revelation still to come, an unsatisfactory place at which to write "finis", but ideal for the end of Volume I. After a period of quiescence during which prophecy ceased, Volume II opens with the thrilling tones of John from the wilderness, and the New Testament triumphantly records God's irruption in phenomenal form within the framework of his own created universe. The Bible is the Book which encloses God. No wonder it is explosive: no wonder that even when divorced from its liturgical context (where it grew up) and treated as an isolated self-sufficient portent it still works mightily. And as the Creeds are the epitome of faith, so is the Bible the epitome and explanation of history. It contains God's mind for his creation. There is no further revelation: God has nothing more to say. Hence the closure of the canon.

The Bible speaks to us of God, and unless it does this its primary purpose is lost. It speaks, indeed, of God, *but it is not God*. It may be that with the passage of years our own Bible acquires an almost living voice, so that the mere touch of the volume as we pick it up brings with it the sense of the immediacy of God's Presence (as the feel of the Rosary beads habitually does to those who use them), and in this case we shall not confuse the Book with the Person; but for some there is this danger. The spirit of reverence—and with it God—is very easily lost when we are proof-hunting for polemic or intellectual satisfaction rather than God-hunting for spiritual enlightenment. We long to know something of that amazing exegesis from "Moses and from all the prophets" on the way to Emmaus when our Lord interpreted from *all* the (three books of the) Scriptures the things concerning himself.<sup>1</sup> But while we may

<sup>1</sup> Luke 24. 27.

be very confident that we have his way of interpreting all the Scriptures, old and new, as long as we use them after his method, letting them speak "concerning himself", we need not repine that we have no further records, for, in company with these two disciples, we have something better. Four verses further on we read that he was himself revealed in the Breaking of Bread. "Their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." (v. 31)

On this verse Isaac Williams writes<sup>1</sup> with devotional lucidity:

"Here, therefore, we may consider that in this Sacrament is found the conferring of Divine knowledge; and that no less than the knowledge and recognition of Jesus Christ in the power of His Resurrection. But nothing is said of its sensible effects; whereas, 'their hearts burned' within them, and their feelings were moved, and awakened to feel after Him and retain Him, on His unfolding to them the Scriptures. Thus, it would appear as if the more sensible movement of the feelings accompanied the earlier progress in religion, arising from the teaching of the Word; but not the fuller manifestation, and imparting of Himself, who is Love and Light, and Life in His Holy Sacrament: for that is a Divine life, not animal or sentient. Thus [Quesnel] says, 'It happens on some certain occasions, that we possess God without knowing it, and that when we do know Him, we lose the sensible enjoyment of Him.'"

This exegesis is an apt commentary upon the immediate problem, that of the place of Holy Scripture in the Quadrilateral; for both in the scrutiny, and even more clearly at the actual ordination, we find this juxtaposition of Word and Sacrament. In the scrutiny, as already noted, the ordinand is asked whether he will minister the Doctrine and Sacraments as the Lord hath commanded; and at the laying-on-of-hands the Bishop expressly says, ". . . And be thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments . . .".

The Word and Sacraments are thus clearly placed upon the same level, as gifts to be distributed by ordained Priests to the faithful under their charge. The Scriptures speak *concerning* himself: the Sacraments convey him.<sup>2</sup> There is no suggestion that either the one or the other are to be dislocated from this setting; both equally are administered means of grace for members of the Church. They are the central core of our

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Williams, *The Resurrection*, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> The Word, which includes all our prayer, public and private, vocal and contemplative, is the breath of our spiritual existence; the Sacraments convey the Life blood which keeps us in the organic unity of Christ's mystical Body.

worship and the means of our corporate existence and growth. Isaac Williams raises an interesting point when he suggests that the Word is the proper outlet for our emotional nature and that a true use of the Sacraments would normally be unaccompanied by sensible manifestations. It is interesting because probably most of us would find that in practice we try to satisfy our head with the Bible and our heart with Holy Communion. In the latter case we may even become rather anxious if we are not emotionally stirred. Perhaps here, as in other matters, God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Perhaps we ought to be more ready to seek satisfaction for heart in Holy Bible, for head in Holy Sacrament.

The Quadrilateral very suitably finds its focus in the Ordinal, for as we examine the component parts, we find that three are abstract, but that one is embodied in a human personality. In searching for a pattern, we instinctively begin from the concrete, and it is plain that without the human vehicle of the Apostles and their appointed successors we should never have had Bible, Creed, or Sacraments. To that extent Apostolicity comes first. It is first in order of time; it is the source and the means of the distribution of the rest. It is easy to appreciate the overmastering nature of the temptation to regard it as first also in importance. The authority is there, but immediately we are confronted with the Creeds as the defining framework within which the authority is validly exercised. Those dogmatic summaries are as essential to the developed supernatural body as the skeleton is to the natural one: they give shape, cohesion, strength, and suppleness of movement. As let those consider for a moment who have a stiff joint or a missing finger. The Church is neither an amorphous mass, nor a rigid and immobile block. We confess proudly in our Creeds that she is visible and viable, of recognizable pattern, of heavenly origin, God-centred, God-inspired, and thence returning whence she came. Safeguarded by every clause—as urgently needed to-day as in the times of more distant historic strife—the new-made priest receives solemn commission to administer Word and Sacrament. Again it would seem so easy to allow primacy to the person distributing the gifts; but here we find that we have reached a different level. Word and Sacrament exist in their own right. They need the ministering hand for their conveyance, but their efficacy does not depend upon it. They are divine in origin, and divine in power; hence the reason that they are independent of the personal sanctity or otherwise of the minister, as is most explicitly stated in Article XXVI. With the gifts of Word and Sacrament the faithful have their life safely nourished,

whatever the temporary weakness of those in high estate. Word and Sacrament go hand in hand, within the powerful and pliable framework of the Creeds, conveyed and guaranteed by the transmitted and transmitting authority of Christ himself. Pliability is a wiser word perhaps to use than development when speaking of the necessary adaptations of a living faith to the changing externals of historic succession; and where the Quadrilateral is faithfully followed, in company with the 3000 on the day of Pentecost, such movements will only result in greater stability, without loss of essentials or accretions of human logic.

The close of the Form for the Ordering of Priests is an impressive "Quadrilateral" climax. The Deacon receives the Apostolic grace by the laying-on-of-hands for "the Office and Work" of a Priest. The Office is the power; the Work is to forgive or to retain sins, and to dispense the Word of God and his Holy Sacraments. He is sealed, as in the marriage rite, with the Triune Baptismal formula. Now a Priest, the Bishop delivers to him a Bible with the words, "Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments in the congregation, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto."<sup>1</sup>

Without any further word the Communion Order is resumed at the point where the Ordination was interpolated; and the very first act of the newly-made and-commissioned Priest is to recite the Nicene Creed, his solemn affirmation before God and the Church of his faithfulness to

<sup>1</sup> The Bible delivered to a Sovereign in the Coronation rite is a complete one, i.e., it contains the Apocrypha. Most unfortunately this is not always the case at an Ordination. A careful study of Article VI makes it plain that our Reformers no more repudiated the Christian Bible first authorized in A.D. 397 than they departed from the Covenant Church by rejecting the Apostolical succession. There is a difference of value accorded to the Apocryphal books in that we do not appeal to them for the establishment of doctrine, but they are included in the Article in their proper place between the Old and New Testaments, not being appended as an afterthought, or mentioned in a separate Article, as would be the case if they were not Scripture. Each book is mentioned by name that there may be no misunderstandings, since the actual distribution of the books of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha varies. As in our Lord's day the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings had not the same value, so in the Anglican Communion to-day the Apocrypha is not placed in the same rank as the Old Testament. But it remains Scripture none the less.

Great confusion is caused, even among Church-people, by the prevalent practice of publishing volumes without the Apocrypha as "The Bible". Such volumes are correctly called "The Old and New Testaments". The title "The Bible" should be reserved for the *complete* edition of the Scriptures only, "those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt. . . . AND the other Books . . ." (The phrase in italics needs modification in the light of modern knowledge.)

the faith within which he intends to exercise his ministry. This sequence is worthy both of study and of reflection.

NOTE ON CHAPTER 8

A diagram is appended of the Church, with its Eastern, Roman, Old Catholic, and Anglican aspects, in which the newly-ordained has been called to minister.<sup>1</sup>

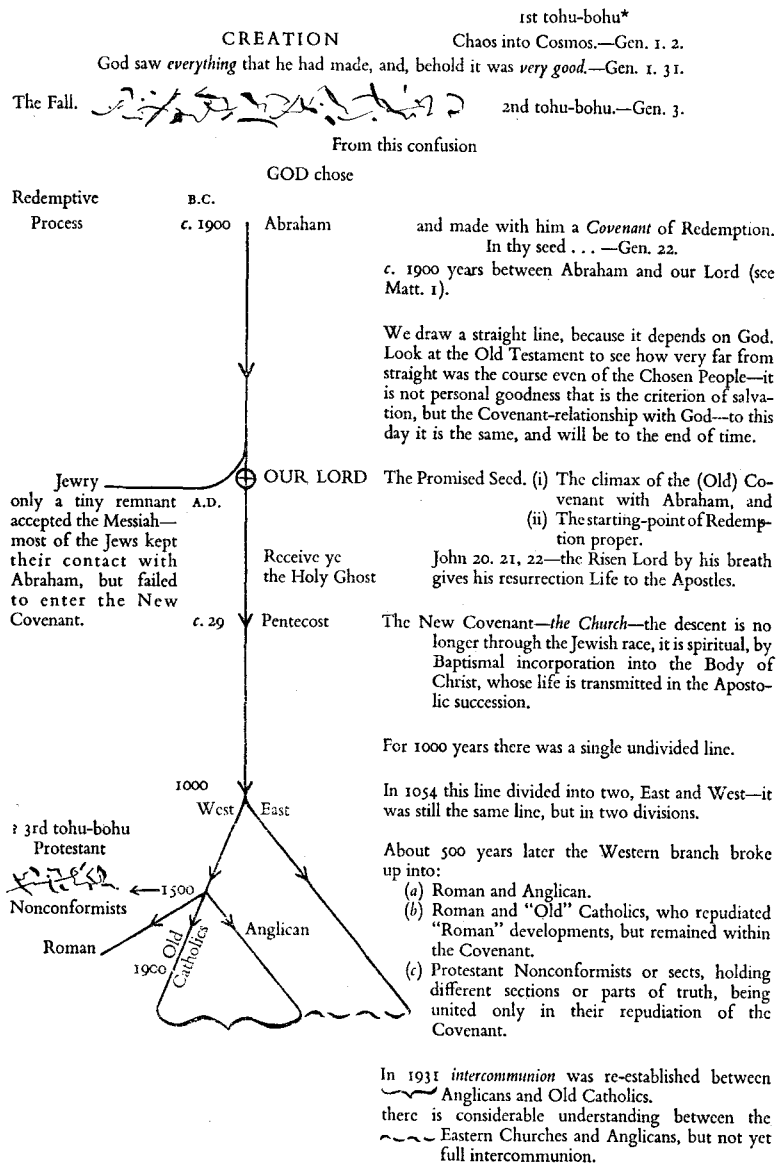
The gravest fact in the world to-day is the vast body of Christians who do not stand in the Covenantal line. One can only wonder whether this is a third *tohu-bohu*. The first was lack of form rather than disorder; the second was true confusion on the natural plane; the third has introduced spiritual chaos.

Second only to this calamity are the schisms within the Covenant. Yet in spite of them the Church remains One, and remains Holy, both in virtue of the creative Spirit of its Head (in no case as the result of the unity or piety of its members). It is not for Jews only, or for Gentiles only; it is Catholic. It is Apostolic, because it is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets of the inaugural dispensation. We must remember that to-day the word "Churches" is used in the diametrically opposite sense to that which it bears in the New Testament. To-day it is used of Christian bodies which are out of communion with the Covenant Church. In primitive usage it meant the Covenant Church established in various localities. There was only one Church. The Churches were its local branches.

Charles Williams says:<sup>2</sup> "It is one of the great advantages (or disadvantages) of Christianity that in the last resort it has no arguments: it can do nothing but say, in the phrase which the Church claims that she only has the right and power to borrow from her Lord: 'I am'. I am: not here in this world only, but with the God of the living Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the heaven of His glory, in all the saints and holy souls who have passed within the veil."

<sup>1</sup> We hear much of the ethos of the Anglican Communion. Only while it faithfully reflects that of the Covenant Church has it either value or validity.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Williams, *He Came Down from Heaven*, p. 135.



N.B.—Protestants are all Western Christians who are not Roman Catholics, Protestant Nonconformists or Sects are those who broke off from the Covenant as well as from the Roman Catholics (note the different position of the Old Catholics and the Anglicans). To all schemes of reunion the Anglican contribution is the Covenant relationship, the only foundation for permanent reunion.

\* Tohu—without shape or beauty (R.V. form or waste). Bolu—empty of life.



## THE CHURCH'S YEAR

WE BEGAN from the Baptismal Order, and with the Ordinal we reached the end of the Prayer Book. Anything that follows the Ordinal is an appendix, and the subject matter will depend upon the date of publication of the particular book. In books published before 1859 there were four special services, all having the Royal Warrant only. On 17 January 1859 three of these services were discarded by the same authority,<sup>1</sup> and only a service for the day of the Sovereign's Accession was retained. This is followed by the Thirty-nine Articles and a Table of Kindred and Affinity.

It should be noted that the Articles of Religion are an appendix,<sup>2</sup> not a part of the structure of the Prayer Book, and that they do not concern the laity. Their origin lies in the confusions of the Reformation period, and their purpose is to delimit the degree of speculation which the clergy may allow themselves when they are giving authoritative teaching. Some of the Articles are loosely-drawn and are demonstrably capable of varied interpretation; others have become somewhat obsolete. The Anglican Communion is not founded on them since the Anglican Communion is truly a Re-formed body, not a New-formation as is the case with the Continental so-called Reformed bodies. The Articles therefore must be read in the light of the Prayer Book, not vice versa. Confusion has sometimes been caused by putting the cart before the horse, under the impression that the Articles are a Charter analogous with those of foreign Protestant bodies. The nearest approach to such a charter possessed by the Anglican Communion is the Lambeth Quadrilateral; and this asserts that she is in direct lineal contact with our Lord and his Apostles. As the Archbishop of Canterbury has succinctly said: "We have no doctrine of our own—we only possess the Catholic doctrine of the Catholic Church enshrined in the Catholic Creeds."<sup>3</sup> The Anglican Communion and the Old Catholics thus differ

<sup>1</sup> One of these services related to King Charles the Martyr. When it was deleted the printers also removed the commemoration of King Charles from the calendar on 30 Jan. without ecclesiastical authority. Neither Crown nor printers are empowered to alter the Prayer Book, so that morally the feast still stands.

<sup>2</sup> O.E.D.: "Appendix. 2. An addition subjoined to a document or book, having some contributory value in connexion with the subject-matter of the work, but not essential to its completeness."

<sup>3</sup> *Canterbury Diocesan Notes*, No. 262, April 1951.

fundamentally from the rest of Protestant Christendom. The Articles are a local and temporary enactment which could be altered or withdrawn<sup>1</sup> without touching the foundation upon which the Anglican Communion rests, but the slightest infringement of the Lambeth Quadrilateral would destroy her nature as part of the Church Catholic. At the present time candidates for ordination make a general declaration of assent to the Thirty-nine Articles, the form of which was altered in 1865 with the deliberate intention of allowing a greater latitude in the interpretation of its meaning. Subscription is no longer required to the letter, but only to the general purport.

We are now ready, therefore, to turn back to the beginning of the Prayer Book to examine the Liturgy in which the whole congregation of Christian people in their several vocations, the baptized, the confirmed, the married and unmarried, the old and young, the healthy and the ailing, under the direction of their lawfully ordained and appointed minister, is expected to take part.

There are several places in modern Prayer Books where the printers have decided to deviate from the Book of 1661 in addition to the modernizing of the spelling. One of these concerns the title-page which in 1661, as also in 1549 and 1552, was all written in commensurate type. The words *Common Prayer*, however, have gradually assumed a bolder and bolder aspect till at the beginning of the nineteenth century the present form established itself. One would suppose now that the title is "The Book of Common Prayer" with subsidiary addenda. In fact the whole title is of equal value.

The format of the introductory items of the Prayer Book is habitually so forbidding that probably few Prayer Book users have ever attempted to inform themselves of their contents. The Preface, however, and the disquisitions on the Service of the Church and on Ceremonies, repay study, and are by no means intended merely for the use of research scholars. These are followed by short directions for the reading of the Psalter and of the rest of the Bible; and then comes the Calendar, starting for convenience in January, and Tables and Rules for the Feasts and Fasts to be observed throughout the year. This raises the question of the object and value of the Christian year, a matter upon which there is some vagueness among those unaccustomed to the life of the Church.

<sup>1</sup> The history of the nature and number of the various Articles before they finally became the present Thirty-nine can be studied in E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England*, 1929.

“Why doth one day excel another,  
 When all the light of every day in the year is of the sun?  
 By the knowledge of the Lord they were distinguished  
 And he varied the seasons and feasts;  
 Some of them he exalted and hallowed,  
 And some of them hath he made ordinary days.”<sup>1</sup>

Post-Reformation life has so thoroughly succeeded in decentralizing God that it is probably true to say that except in certain specialized circles there are few who have any suspicion that he was ever both the centre and the circumference, the Prime Mover in things great and small, in a world where there was no sharp distinction between things secular and sacred. There are certain of the Christian festivals, it is true, which still figure in the secular year; Christmas, Easter and Whitsun are still known by name and observed by pleasure, though no longer as Holy-days.

The Church's year presents us with an admirable practical means of reintroducing the idea of God to daily life. Since the Church's origin is from above it is probably fortunate that the beginning of the Christian Year does not coincide with the secular cycle. If both began on 1 January conflicting interests might raise unnecessary strain. But here, at the very outset, there is very much that might be done by professing Church-people to make Advent Sunday a real beginning. Advent is one of the most thrilling of the Church's seasons—well does the hymn proclaim “Hark, a *thrilling* voice is sounding”<sup>2</sup>—but we do not always look forward to it as something exciting and worth while in itself. Yet the Prayer Book prepares us for it by special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for use on the Sunday before Advent. Once a part of the Advent season, it is now the Advent herald, to ensure that we make this, and not 1 January, the real beginning of our year. It is a real measure of our personal secularity of mind if we think of 1 January as New Year's Day rather than Advent Sunday. We are by that very tendency secularizing the atmosphere instead of raising it. The clergy have much responsibility here, and by following the Book of Common Prayer through the delivery of suitable exhortations on the last Sunday in Trinity, could do much to reorientate our life towards heaven. Only too often we hear “end of year” sermons during the Christmas Octave, Christmas being thus treated as of much less account than the beginning of the civil year. And if professing Church-people, “loyal to the Prayer

<sup>1</sup> Eccus. 33. 7-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Hymns A. and M.*, 47.

Book”, make light of the Prayer Book provisions, it is not surprising that worldliness has so far taken possession of the general outlook that Christmas fare and Christmas celebrations are commonly provided in Advent; and that no one thinks shame to eat mince pies in Ember week or to have parties and presents on Christmas Eve. The Christmas season *begins* on 25 December and is at its height till 13 January, the Octave of the Epiphany. It continues for six weeks, till the Purification on 2 February. In these days, therefore, let us eat mince pies and have our jollity.

There is another disregard of the Prayer Book provisions which may occur at this season, namely the holding of ordinations *before* the Ember days which at quarterly intervals throughout the year are appointed to be kept as days of prayer and fasting *in preparation for* the coming Ordinations. No Bishop is compelled to ordain at the Advent season, and if the Sunday following the Ember days is, in his view, too near Christmas to be convenient, he is a faithful administer of the letter and spirit of the Prayer Book if he postpones his Ordination till such time as it can follow, and not precede, the Ember season. The Ember Collects make it clear that the Church's intention is preparatory. We pray that “the Bishops . . . may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred Ministry”; which prayer becomes a very vain repetition and very unworthy offering to Almighty God if the Ordination has already taken place. It is another sign of the secularizing of our minds which has occurred that such inversions are possible, and no longer cause outrage to our sense of seemliness. Under conditions of time, events occur successively whatever their simultaneity may be extra-temporally.

As in Lent the outlook changes when we enter Passiontide, so we find that Advent also falls into two distinct parts, marked in our Calendar on 16 December with the words *O Sapientia*. This is the first of the Great O antiphons, which proclaim the style and titles of the coming King, engaging our reverent and wondering awe as day by day till Christmas Eve they are unrolled before us.<sup>1</sup> Advent is wholly a

<sup>1</sup> The sense of urgent expectancy is well conveyed in the old Advent Collects, with their reiterated “Stir up” and “Come”. Now, even before Advent begins, we “stir up” our *wills*. On Advent I there follows, “Stir up thy strength, we beseech thee, O Lord, and come . . .”; on Advent II, “Stir up our *affections* . . . that through his coming . . .”; on Advent III, “enlighten the darkness of our *minds* by the grace of thy visitation”; on Advent IV the opening words return to Advent I, “Stir up thy strength, we beseech thee, O Lord, and come . . .” (virtually our present Prayer Book Collect). We are accustomed to two Collects in Advent, and we should be gainers if the old Collects with their ordered

time of preparation for, not the premature celebration of, Christmas, the most stupendous event in tellurian history, the climax and permanent summit of human development and attainment. None can complain that three to four weeks is too long to attune themselves to such a theme; for deepening their hold on this central Christian doctrine, for cleansing their minds and hearts for a fresh perception of this immeasurable mystery. How great a difference it would make to the atmosphere of bustle and rush and excitement which modern publicity makes of this season if Church-people as a body were to observe it *religiously*, as the beginning of their year with God, preparing themselves by prayer and fasting, by meditation on the coming Feast and by plans for the almsgiving of good deeds, and most of all by times of silence, to sensitize their souls to the sound of the Angels' song. The antiphon at the evening Office of Christmas Eve chants, "The King of Peace"; but peace and quiet go hand in hand, and unless we make quiet in our hearts the peace beyond understanding will not be ours to receive or to pass on.

The very method of the Incarnation, its hiddenness, its veiling in the actual presence of such commotion and disturbance as was in miniature not incomparable with our own more blatant stridency, is indication enough that only those who go apart, who cut themselves off from the stream of social and public requirements, can make contact with the reality in which we profess to believe. It was King's business, the form-filled direction of the Welfare State, then as now, which was the all-absorbing distraction. But we cannot claim to be loyal Church-people if we fail to make the pilgrimage from Nazareth, and therefore fail to find ourselves in the right place at the right time. Whether the Mid-night welcome, which seems to be re-establishing itself in this country, is the right time is a matter of opinion. It is at least an encouraging return from the secular New Year's Eve watch-night service substituted when the Christian Year was not very vital to Christians.

In our present Prayer Book we are given in the Epistle and Gospel for Christmas Day only the profound theological truth of the Incarnation of the Word of God for our adoration and meditation. For the

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Advent sequences—come, stir up our wills, affections, minds—were restored. Our present disconnected ones of the first three Sundays could be used as the second in each week, returning to our first Collect in the last week as the old Collect does. We may note that Cosin's Collect (our present one for Advent III) is an unfortunate departure from the standard Collect form by being addressed to our Lord's humanity.

appointed Gospel we have St John's Prologue, and an almost equally abstract commentary from the Epistle to the Hebrews for the Epistle. St Luke's account of the Nativity is never read since its deletion from the Prayer Book in 1552. In 1549 it was appointed, most suitably, for the Midnight Mass, but we now have the (characteristically English) irrationality of celebrating a Feast of which the Biblical account has been rescinded.

Whatever the origin and intention of the three Festivals which follow immediately after Christmas Day, we cannot but be struck with the apparent interruption which they cause in our contemplation of Christ's Nativity. We feel that—even after an Advent well spent—we have not begun to grasp the significance of the event before we are called upon to celebrate so to speak ordinary Saints' days. But herein we may see a part of the great mystery. What only animals were permitted to witness in the flesh, we are required to see, not merely in the mystery of its essence, but as mediated and brought to its intended fruition in lives won through its power. Thus we have the Holy Birth followed by a quick circuit, St Stephen the martyr, St John the contemplative, the Holy Innocents of God's own Providence, manifesting its full completion, after which we return again to historic sequence.

Our Reformers firmly removed most Octaves from our Calendar, refusing to allow the Church's benediction to lie upon amusement and jollity and Holy-day junketing. We have a resulting cleavage in our outlook between the holy and the secular of which our forefathers were, fortunately for themselves, quite unaware. Licence there may have been in their fun, but the removal of the restraining religious motive has paved the way for our present dissociate and compartmental lives. Officially, however, we have an Octave of Christmas, which is found in the fact that the Christmas Preface is to be said on Christmas Day and seven days after; but it is noticeable that the Octave day itself is appointed to be kept as a feast in its own right. Our calendar gives us the Feast of the Circumcision on 1 January, a plain and firm indication that it is not to be kept as a secular new year anniversary, but to be incorporated into the Church's year, whose rhythm is not to be dislocated by secular accidents. We may note here that Christmas Day, Easter Day, Ascension Day, and Whitsun Day<sup>1</sup> are appointed to be kept with Octaves, but

<sup>1</sup> Whatever the origin of "Whitsun" it is a "Day" like Christmas, Easter, and Ascension. There is no propriety in speaking of Whit Sunday, though Christ's Massday would be perfectly accurate, and would better convey the meaning than our usual Christmas Day.

neither Christmas Day nor Whitsun ever cease, for their Octaves are incomplete. So also the mysteries which they commemorate, the Incarnation and its fulfilment at Pentecost, never end.

From the hidden withdrawnness of the night wherein the Almighty Word leapt from his royal throne, followed by his personal dedication and incorporation into the Covenanted life by his circumcision on the Octave day, we pass to the blazing light of the Epiphany, still the central commemoration in the East, as it was in primitive Christianity. Not the dogmatic truth of the Incarnation as in later days and as in our own Prayer Book, but the visit of the kings, typifying the Lord of all, the King of Peace because the King of all peoples, is for Eastern Christendom the Manifestation of the Incarnate Glory.

The Christmas—Epiphany season rests upon solar calculations, and Christmas itself is an arbitrarily chosen date. The approximate year of our Lord's birth is given with some certainty as being 4–6 B.C. but the actual day is unknown. This allowed a congruous date to be chosen for the celebration of the Nativity, and what more suitable for the appearance of the Sun of Righteousness than the darkness of midwinter, the lowest ebb to which the yearly cycle falls? Nor was there lacking a pragmatic element to balance this more sentimental consideration, for it afforded a legitimate alternative to the feastings established in connection with the Mithras cult.

Hitherto we have travelled along this line governed by solar reckoning which gives us the twelve-monthly rhythm, and has dates fixed by the day of the month. Christmas Day is always on 25 December, the Circumcision always on 1 January, the Epiphany always on Twelfth Night. Advent Sunday, New Year's Day, on the other hand, is on a variable date, being calculated from the fixed date of St Andrew's Day, 30 November, which always falls nearest to Advent Sunday. That is, when St Andrew's Day falls on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, Advent Sunday precedes it; when it is on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, Advent Sunday follows it; when it falls on a Sunday the celebration of St Andrew's Day is transferred to the following Monday or Tuesday.

From the Sundays after Epiphany, however, we pick up a new thread in the Church's life, and we come to dates dependent upon the more ancient lunar reckoning. Even primitive man discovered that days reckoned from midday to midday are approximately the same length, as are also lunar months. For nomadic life with its habitual nocturnal travelling, lunar measurement, from one full moon to another, was natural

and practical. Devotion to moon worship persisted in Jewish history, and from it Christians have received the variable part of their calendar. The problem of amalgamating lunar and solar reckonings lies in the fact that neither a lunar month nor a solar year contain an exact number of days, nor, in addition, does a solar year correspond with twelve lunar months. Our own lunisolar calendar is derived from Pope Gregory XIII. Yet for all the majestic splendour of changing seasons, of day and night, no one has yet been able to devise a calendar which will absorb the spare hours at the end of the year with mathematical exactness. After all our careful measurements of seconds, minutes, hours, and days there remain these unharnessable extras, making havoc of our neat precisions, our mechanical closed shop. That merciful aberration whereby two and two just fail to rest in four opens up the way for the ceaseless change which is the glory of eternal immutability. They are, as it were, the flourish at the end of God's signature, introducing just that element of immeasurability that befits his transcending Majesty.

At the present time Easter is still subject to calculations which attach it to the Jewish Passover. In the Jewish lunisolar calendar the two systems of reckoning are caught into yearly realignment with each other by the convention which decrees that the Passover, 14 Nisan, must always fall at the full moon after the vernal equinox. So central was the Resurrection to the early Christian conscience that of all the events of Holy Week it was the Resurrection which was singled out for weekly commemoration, and from the outset Easter Day travelled in company with the Passover as regards the full moon, but away from it in that Easter Day must always be the First day of the week. The calculations for fixing it are complicated, but a rough guide is provided in the Prayer Book formula that it must fall on the first *Sunday* after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. If this full moon falls on a Sunday then Easter Day falls a week later. This date was the subject of tragic controversy before the present reckoning was generally accepted, but in such a matter one may well respect those who felt strongly about it. It is the date of dates, the day of days; and incidentally our one connection with the lunar calendar, introducing precisely that interference with a settling on our lees which the event it commemorates is destined to accomplish even for this mechanically-minded age.

Thus we see that although the date of Christmas was arbitrarily chosen, and is no more than a commemoration, the case is very different with Easter. That is not only fixed by the Passover date, but is in a true sense an anniversary. As such it is the dominant factor in determining

the Christian cycle in any given year, and it is from Easter that the yearly reckoning is made both backwards and forwards. In addition we see that Easter and Whitsun (coinciding with Pentecost) are the two feasts which anchor us to our Jewish ancestry, for Passover and Pentecost have passed into the worship of the New Covenant without a moment's break. A mechanically fixed Easter and Whitsun would suit the modern stream-lined consciousness, but many people feel that the present methods of reckoning, which testify to their origin, should not be discarded for the hedonistic convenience of an age characterized by "religious illiteracy on a grand scale".<sup>1</sup>

Easter is preceded by a preparatory period of nine weeks: two and a half weeks from Septuagesima Sunday to Ash Wednesday, six and a half weeks from Ash Wednesday to Easter. When the date of this period is known, the number of "Sundays after Epiphany" in any given year is the number of Sundays remaining after Epiphany and before Septuagesima. This is the minor concertina period in the year, and varies from one to six Sundays. It is a little interlude of green between the festive Christmas and the penitential Lent, a little grace note in the early part of the year, swelling into an *obbligato* when Easter falls late. These little variations are of real spiritual value when intelligently used. They afford a welcome alternative to the set pieces, an opportunity for individual expression within the rhythmic scheme; and are a valuable illustration of and exercise in the legitimate scope of aberrancy without confusion in the general pattern.

From Advent, those days waste and void, when darkness is upon the face of the waters, we pass at the nadir of the *tohu-bohu* to the light of the Incarnation, and thus into a new dimension. This is the climax of creation's story, the point in time towards which all time was tending. From Christmas till Easter we pass through the thirty-three years of this phenomenal manifestation of Deity. The leisure of the hidden life of Nazareth and the short intensive years of the Ministry are summed up in the Epiphany season; and in Septuagesima we begin to turn towards the dread drama of the last few days. Nor dare we gaze on the last and fiercest fight so to say from the plush-covered stalls. In Lent we share the conflict, at our Lord's command, by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Rather, not at his *command* do we exercise ourselves in these three foundation aspects of spiritual life, for they are so fundamental that he takes them for granted. There is no religion, no search after God, with-

<sup>1</sup> G. K. A. Bell, *The Word and the Sacraments*, Charge delivered October 1952, p. 15.

out them, but our Lord lays down their spirit and extent for those who would be his followers. It is beside the point to consider whether we "believe in" fasting, to argue that something else is better, that we like fish, and that our climate does not allow us the privilege of obedience in this matter. It has taken two world wars to convince many of us that to abstain from meat on Fridays is not equivalent to ordering the undertaker. We may, in fact, note that it was in our recent meatless state that old and older age began to abound among us.<sup>1</sup>

Easter Day is followed by the fifty days till Pentecost; forty days of mysterious intercourse with the risen Lord before his Ascension; ten days of expectation in gladness—days to be fittingly compared with the dazed and semi-conscious automatism of the hours between the cry from the Cross of *Consummatum est* and the empty tomb—till that outpouring of the Holy Spirit which is both the seal of the Incarnate Life, and also its abiding presence in the Kingdom which, founded during the thirty-three years, is now accomplishing the work of reconciliation, day by day, and year by year, as the Lord adds to the number those that are being saved.

We may be very grateful that the Prayer Book has completed this cycle, not on earth in the Pentecostal activity, but in heaven, in contemplation of the Eternal Trinity. The heavens have been opened, the ascending Lord and the descending Spirit are seen to be the very ladder set up between earth and heaven, and the Lord Jehovah is revealed in Trinity; God of Abraham, Creator, originator; God of Isaac, Redeemer in sacrifice; God of Jacob, Sanctifier—and who, more than Jacob, an example of the converting power of grace? It is the picture of the opened heaven, of the ascended Lord and the descending Spirit, both remaining immutably one with him that sitteth on the throne, that it is so necessary to keep before our eyes throughout the long, otherwise monotonous, days of Trinity. This is the second, the major, adjusting concertina, adapting the number of its Sundays to the requirements of

<sup>1</sup> One of the old Collects for the first week in Lent expresses the matter in felicitous phrase.

"Almighty and everlasting God, Who hast graciously appointed fasting and almsgiving as remedies for sin: grant that we may ever be ready, both in body and soul, to give up ourselves to Thy service."

"Who hast graciously appointed." We need not allow the scruple about "liking" fish to trouble us. It no more affects our corporate obligation than if a member of the Forces were to "like" getting up early, and therefore did not attend morning parade. We have St Paul's word for it that God loves a cheerful giver: it is our Lord himself who demands a radiant faster.

each year as it comes; again, as in Epiphany, dependent upon the Paschal moon and Easter Day. As for a brief period we donned our green after Epiphany in hope of coming spring, so now we settle down in more business-like way in the full tide of summer to see to it that this second period of green will mean growth, not merely show of leaves, as we pass forward into autumn and so again towards the *tohu-bohu* of another Advent. This movement of the Church's year, with its ever-fresh lights and surprises, is the marching song whereby we develop our community sense, and our concerted use of its provisions is one of the most powerful unifying forces that we possess.

The Sundays of the year are so important that each has its own particular portions of Holy Scripture. The Epistle and Gospel give the considerations for the whole day, and add just that little touch of particularity as an overtone to the underlying seasonal theme. Nor is this all. So central is this weekly commemoration of the Resurrection to the Christian consciousness that the Sunday gladness may never be dimmed by any occurring days of penitence. The calendar orders that any Vigil that chances to fall on a Sunday is to be kept instead on the previous Saturday. Every Sunday, then, has a threefold message. First and foremost it bears witness to our Exodus on the Third Day; and following from that we have the seasonal theme and the Sunday's own variation. There is a danger that the liturgical importance of Sunday may be impaired, and even lost, from the tendency to introduce anniversaries of Battle Days or Mayoral Sundays. Such things are very properly high lights in a mundane calendar, but added to the Church's year they gain all their value from their association with the Great Remembrance of our deliverance from the Egypt of sin. Then only do they form a proper part of the public devotions of the passing generation. They are ephemeral; the Church's year remains, with its weekly call to contemplate the verities of our religion as the seasons come and pass, that year by year our apprehension of them may be deepened and our *Christian* life developed. Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension with the Sunday following, and Whitsun, are sacrosanct, to be shared with no lesser theme, but even "ordinary" Sundays belong first to God. The Christian year is the Creed in action. The Eastern contention that faith and worship reveal each other is a shrewd evaluation.

Upon the underlying chain of Sundays is strung a disconnected series of brilliants of varying lustre, the Saints' days which occur on fixed days of the month. There are the Red Letter days, days of special

importance, and Black Letter days, less outstanding commemorations of the rank and file of the heroes. Whatever may be the merits of any particular assignations, the calendar is enriched and filled in by this new and overlapping series, which adds intricacy and variation to the already-established pattern.

Some of these fixed feasts, by reason of their position in the calendar, reflect a changing light from year to year, like a shot-silk seen from different angles. The feast of the Purification of our Lady is the end of the present Christmas season, the forty days of the Law from Christmas Day. It may fall during Epiphany, but not infrequently an early Septuagesima touches her heart with a faint premonitory warning of the sword promised by Simeon. In these years the feast strengthens the point of union of the two seasons, binding together Christmas-tide and Septuagesima by an overlap. Lady Day, the feast of the Annunciation, may be celebrated during Lent, but if it falls in Passiontide it is kept after Easter, and rejoices in the gladness of the angel's message, "of his kingdom there shall be no end".<sup>1</sup> Formerly it was kept as part of the Advent preparation for Christmas, but as it stands in our present calendar it is fixed for its nine months' distance from the Christmas, not of the current, but of the coming, year. Both feasts are "variegated" as to their background, but their relationship with each other remains the same and knits in yet another strand, for it bears out in the Christian year the deep spiritual truth that Christmas never ends. Christmas past comes to rest in February with Candlemas; Christmas to come whispers its reassuring message in March with the Annunciation. Here in anticipation we begin a new year, and when we reach the next *tohu-bohu* in the following Advent we are not so desolate after all, for the emptiness is already filled with burgeoning promise. Throughout the year we find similar overlaps and intricacies and in some calendars the additional feasts so crowd the canvas that the eye is dazzled.

The Red Letter days (a technical term derived from the method of writing in different colours) have special Collects, Epistles, and Gospels provided; the Black Letter days in the Book of 1661 have no such provision. In the main the Red Letter Saints are the Apostles, and their commemorations are evenly distributed throughout the year, so that it is nearly true to say that one occurs every month. June and December are high lights, June having three, December four, Red Letter days; midsummer and midwinter gleam with extra brilliance. The Red Letter days which are not specifically Saints' days belong to the under-

<sup>1</sup> Luke 1. 33.

lying cycle, and are concerned with events in our Lord's life, and the two rhythms are intertwined by the two "mixed" festivals already mentioned, the feast of the Purification and the feast of the Annunciation. The latter may perhaps be regarded as more predominantly a feast of our Lady than of our Lord; but the title of the former in our Prayer Book is careful to maintain the double aspect, and speaks of "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, commonly called, The Purification of St Mary the Virgin". (The first half of which was added in 1661.) But this ambiguity is not identical with that which has been previously noticed: one may say that here is enshrined that which is not, "This also is Thou; neither is this Thou", of which Charles Williams is so admirable an exponent; the two levels, the Divine and the human, here meet and mingle and remain distinct; and which exactly, or what exactly, is and is not, veils itself within the dual title which has to suffice for its description.

One may wonder whether there is any theological significance in the grading of our Lady's feasts in our calendar. These two where she impinges on the great mystery of the Incarnation, more racial antitype than individual woman, are strung into the rhythm of the Church's year as Red Letter days. Here, so to say, she touches God in the scheme of Redemption—and here only. This is undoubtedly the New Testament evaluation of her position. From Annunciation to Purification she is the central figure, but thereafter she plays no leading part. Yet this leaves out of account her own personality, and we find a curious little trio of Black Letter days which seems to supply the need, a commemoration of her mother, of her own conception and her own birthday, three matters of moment in preparing her for that unspeakable nine months which were before her; and in addition her Visitation to Elizabeth. So even here it is all preparatory. We are not allowed even to commemorate her death. To many this is a great loss, especially as the day of her "Falling Asleep" is one of the earliest of her commemorations in the East; yet we may be content to make our contribution to the riches of truth by emphasizing what was, after all, in historical fact, her hiddenness. With St John the Baptist she has the privilege of being the only human being to share with our Lord the commemoration of her nativity into this world, and this of itself indicates her special place in the rhythm of the Church's faith. Those two who were so intimately concerned with our Lord's spiritual and physical Advent have little further Scriptural mention beyond a record of their own searchings and doubts. There is a suggestion of anticlimax in making much, so

very much, of her departure from this life. That is the glory of the Saints, but hers lies elsewhere. Let us contribute as our facet the treasureable truth enshrined in the little Biddy's dream of her own arrival in eternity, when she saw our Lady, "running across the floor of heaven in her bare feet" to welcome her. That rings true to Nazareth.

The monthly calendar has attached to it the Table of Lessons appointed to be read at Mattins and Evensong in 1871. This was largely superseded in 1922 by a Table which allowed for special Sunday lessons. It was a "realistic" approach to the fact that the majority of persons who came to church on Sundays did not read the lessons at home throughout the week, so that the portion appointed for the particular day of the month upon which any given Sunday chanced to fall might be incomprehensible apart from its context. Changes have followed fast since then; so that now, in addition to the Table of 1871, which is still printed in the Prayer Book, we have had Lectionaries of 1922 and 1928 (a revision of 1922) and an Amended Lectionary for Sundays and certain Holy-days revised in 1947-8, with further amendments in 1950. The ideal lectionary is yet to find. At present the Sunday lessons on occasion repeat and overlap those read in the daily course, which suggests that the worship of God is a secondary consideration. The 1871 Lectionary is based on the secular year and begins Genesis in January and Isaiah in the middle of November. (In the Christian year Isaiah starts in Advent and Genesis in Septuagesima.) The Apocryphal readings are reduced to a minimum. A few of the lessons are not in harmony with the paragraphing in the Revised Version,<sup>1</sup> an indication of the growth of Biblical research between the two publications. For ferial readings the 1871 Lectionary has much to commend it, but the new Holy-day readings are invaluable, and the principle of a different series

<sup>1</sup> One can but regret that the Revised Version, owing to its prohibitive price, is still virtually only a scholar's book. That scholars prefer it is sufficient indication of its superiority in conveying truth. In the Preface to "The Shorter Oxford Bible" 1951, we read: "The text which we have used is . . . the Authorized Version. . . . As a rule the Revised Version is the more accurate; but it sometimes loses a beautiful cadence which we cannot afford to lose." The Revised Version has a rhythm of its own, as dignified and less archaic than that of the Authorized Version; and its paragraphing is both a psychological help in grasping the sense of any passage and a deterrent to the wresting of isolated verses from their contexts with consequent distortion of their meaning. The light that it throws upon the many dark places of the Authorized Version is not to be exchanged for any cadence. This is the moment for installing it on our lecterns, since only the elderly would notice any change of text, and all would gain from its increased intelligibility.

for Sundays is much to be commended. Sunday should be as unique as possible, and one wonders whether the possibilities of bringing the lessons into harmony with the Epistles and Gospels have been fully explored.

But whatever lectionary is employed, there are four lessons every day which Church-people are expected to read in union with their brethren, which gives a wonderful opportunity for a real growing together. Yet it is to be feared that the appointed lessons are sometimes treated as a dead letter in our Bible reading and that something of our own choice is read instead. Particularly may this be the case if we have joined some fellowship for Bible study which provides a fifth lection for our consideration. But Bible reading is no more a private matter than the receiving of the Sacraments; both are to be done in the Church and with the Church; and any divorce of the Bible from its liturgical context in the minds of Church-people is very greatly to be regretted.

The Calendar of the months is followed by the Tables and Rules for the Feasts and Fasts which are to be observed in the course of the year. The Prayer Book commands us to keep all Sundays as Feast-days, together with twenty-nine other specified days. All these days have special Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, so we recognize that it is an obligation to keep Feast-days by celebrating the Holy Communion. For many the services may not be at an hour when our daily employments will allow us to be present, but we all have Prayer Books and can read the Proper (Collect, Epistle, and Gospel), acknowledging our obligation to read the Bible with the Church. Sixteen of these Red Letter days are preceded by Vigils, which are to be kept as Fast-days, these sixteen days being the only ones which are specifically directed to be kept as "fasts".

Fasting means going without food, a reduction in quantity; abstinence is leaving out meat, an alteration in quality. We are naturally inclined to take evasive action where there is any question of self-discipline to be faced; and it is very commonly held that the Church of England has too many days of fasting or abstinence, therefore that it is better to abstain from them all. Yet it is worth while examining the list a little more closely. It is headed "A Table", and under it there are two groups of days. The first relates to the "Eves or Vigils" before "The Nativity of our Lord, The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Pentecost (which in the Table of Feasts just above is called Whit-

sunday)"; that is, so far, the Feasts relating to our Lord, with which we may note the inclusion of both Feasts of our Lady. The list is completed by adding the independent series of Saints' days, beginning in February with St Matthias and ending with All Saints, displaced from its position at the beginning of November in order to be the consummation after St Andrew and St Thomas (occurring at the end of November and in December respectively). A note follows to say that if any of these Feast-days fall upon a Monday "then the Vigil or *Fast-day* shall be kept upon the Saturday, and not upon the Sunday next before it". (These fasts are also tabled in the Calendar.)

Then comes the second list headed "Days of Fasting, or Abstinence". These are: the forty weekdays of Lent (these spread into seven weeks as Sundays cannot be Fast-days, thirty-six after the first Sunday in Lent and four before it); the Ember days (three every quarter: the spring triad always comes after the first Sunday in Lent, so runs concurrently with the Lenten days); the three Rogation days (before Ascension Day); and all the Fridays in the year. The "Table", therefore, consists of two lists of days, the first of Fasting days, the second of days upon which it is optional whether to fast or to abstain. Abstinence can be very fruitfully exercised in the superfluities which grace our tables; pepper and salt, for instance, or sugar and special delicacies, can be avoided, or both butter and jam or marmalade at the same meal. One may even find that abstinence from bacon for breakfast upon these days is not universal among those who lay claim to be good Church-people.

It is open to question whether we should be spiritual gainers by too much alteration in the list provided in 1661. It is a frequent experience that the lowering of standards, so far from exciting a more vigorous effort to maintain them, results in a clamour for their further reduction. The principle of one Fast-day a month and one day of abstinence a week would not have seemed over-exacting to the writers of the New Testament; and the discipline and backbone provided by that one day of little checks every week, year in, year out, in all companies, is of inestimable value in slow character training. If it were as normal for every Church household, even every parson's household, to observe the Friday abstinence as to observe the Sunday Thanksgiving, the difference in the spiritual atmosphere of this country would be immense. It would mean much to feel and know that we shared this common bond of sporting spartan comradeship.

We may note another element in the Feast-Fast rhythm introduced



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in this series of Tables, and that relates to the recitation of the Quicumque Vult. This is to be said thirteen times in the year, and the spacing and juxtapositions are quickly observed when presented in tabular form.

Month	Feast of our Lord	Combined	Saints	Vigils	Quicumque
Jan.	Circumcision Epiphany		Conversion St Paul		Epiphany
Feb.		Purification	St Matthias	Purification St Matthias	St Matthias
Mar.		Annuncia- tion		Annuncia- tion	
April	Easter Day Monday in Easter week Tuesday in Easter week		St Mark	St Mark	Easter Day
May	Ascension		SS. Philip and James	Ascension Day	Ascension Day
June	Whitsunday Monday in Whitsun week Tuesday in Whitsun week Trinity Sunday		St Barnabas  St John Baptist St Peter	Pentecost	Whitsunday  St John B. St Peter  Trinity S.
July			St James	St James	St James
Aug.			St Bartholo- mew	St Bart.	St Bart.
Sept.			St Matthew St Michael and All Angels	St Matt.	St Matt.
Oct.			St Luke SS. Simon and Jude	SS. Simon and Jude	SS. Simon and Jude
Nov.			All Saints St Andrew	All Saints St Andrew	St Andrew
Dec.	Nativity of our Lord		St Thomas	St Thomas Nativity of our Blessed Lord	Christmas Day
			St Stephen St John Holy Innocents		

THE CHURCH'S YEAR

but in the second half, from July to November, the pattern of Red Letter Days with Vigils and Quicumque Vult stands out clearly, with its challenge to Watch and Pray.

In passing from one set of rubrics to another we see the constant difficulty experienced in nomenclature, as for instance between the Nativity of our Lord and Christmas Day, or between Whitsunday and Pentecost, and in other places between Morning and Evening Prayer and Mattins and Evensong. We are greatly relieved to find these innocent variations which allow a liberty in the letter which in no way lessens the truth conveyed. There is also the problem of adjustment between the ecclesiastical and civil years, whether to make our calculations from Advent or from January. In the above Tables that for Feasts<sup>1</sup> begins in January with "The Circumcision of our Lord", that for Fasts in Advent with "The Nativity of our Lord". It is one of the alluring paradoxes with which we may so often refresh ourselves if we are alive to their presence, that Cranmer borrowed the idea of making the daily lessons fit the civil year and of printing them with the monthly Calendar from Quiñones. Thus we owe this detail in addition to the general scheme of the Prayer Book to a Roman Catholic. Some of the Exchanges, even at prayer level, have after all never been closed.

NOTE

Since writing the above, a new Lectionary, dating from Advent 1956, has been issued. It is hoped that this will finally supersede all previous Lectionaries including and subsequent to that of 1871.

There are no Vigils in the Christmas season (from Christmas Day till the Purification), since this is a festive period throughout. The first half of the year is enriched, so to speak, by double entries of Feasts;

<sup>1</sup> It is headed "A Table of all the Feasts to be observed . . ." but omits the moveable Feasts, which have a separate Table. The Ascension, however, figures in both.

## OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

IT HAS already been noted in a general scheme (Chapter 2) that the Prayer Book Liturgy is a whole, of which the order of Holy Communion is the central act. This Liturgy is divisible into "Hours" like the synagogue and Temple worship from which it is derived, and, like them, it has the offering of sacrifice as its focus and rationale, and all the exercises are coloured with the sacrificial ethos.

To the majority of us this may be a hard saying, but our difficulties in this matter arise largely from the fact that the Protestant<sup>1</sup> mind is as medieval in its outlook as that of post-Tridentine Rome, since it reflects the background which was its origin. Given the medieval outlook, as Dr Hicks suggests in *The Fullness of Sacrifice*,<sup>2</sup> everyone's point of view is inevitable and right. But to-day there is no further need to perpetuate the medieval point of view. A brief redaction of some of the points in Dr Hicks's book is offered in the hope that it may lead any who are unacquainted with it to make a careful study of the original.

If we watch the reactions of a normal young baby to the approach of strangers we see that they fall under two main headings: either there is placidity, leading to definite attraction, or aversion, leading to fear. This picture seems to be a fair description of Dr Hicks's observation that "the Old Testament records leave . . . the door . . . almost open for the theory that sacrifice originated as a gift, and the theory that it originated in the sacrificial meal".<sup>3</sup> One would be tempted to say that under conditions of a comparatively smiling nature, as in Egypt, the joyousness of the meal would take the leading place; whereas in the appalling desolation and volcanic terrors of the Harrat edge of Midian, as described by the explorer Musil,<sup>4</sup> propitiatory offerings would become an imperative prerequisite. These two reactions to the unknown are an essential part of our nature, and which precedes which in any given instance probably depends upon adventitious circumstances. The point which concerns us in the present context is that "no

one in the old days . . . ever conceived of a religion which did not express itself in outward acts of worship; it is questionable whether such a conception is found anywhere, in the line of Hebrew, Jewish and Christian development, until a quite recent period in the after movements of the Reformation".<sup>1</sup>

We have already seen that the Anglican Communion, unlike the Protestant Reformed bodies of the Continent, and unlike the post-Tridentine Roman Communion has no doctrine of her own,<sup>2</sup> and we are therefore free to accept without further discussion the fact that Christian worship expressed itself from the first in outward acts, and that these acts were built up upon the Jewish sacrificial background where sacrifice came to be expressed in certain definite steps. Dr Hicks points out that these are six in number.<sup>3</sup>

1. The offerer "draws near" with his victim. This "drawing near" is so integral a part that it has even entered into our Anglican Liturgy in the words "Draw near with faith." That is a sacrificial phrase which links us with the earliest Jewish prototypes.

2. The offerer lays his hands on the victim's head, thus identifying it with himself. Dr Hicks points out that the old "substitutionary" explanation of this act breaks down, if only because the victim remains holy. The action is a solemn transference of the offerer's own *Shaliach* empowering the animal to represent himself, dedicating it to God for this purpose.

3. The offerer slays the victim. It is of first importance to realize that it is the offerer, and not the priest, who performs this act. It is the deliberate free will gift to God of the offerer's own person. We see here the significance of our Lord's words, "No man *taketh* it from me, but I *lay it down of myself*".<sup>4</sup> He is emphasizing the sacrificial nature of his death.

4. Here for the first time the priest appears, and here also it is imperative to be unmistakably clear in our own minds that to the Hebrew the blood is the *life*. Hence the enactments with regard to the killing of animals when this was legalized apart from sacrifice at the setting-up of the central sanctuary. (No flesh was eaten apart from sacrifice until sacrifice was limited to the Temple. If there was a flesh meal it *was* a sacrifice.) To eat flesh tainted with blood is utterly abhorrent to the devout Hebrew. It is a horrible cannibalism, whatever the flesh may be. "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon

<sup>1</sup> For the word "Protestant" see above, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> F. C. N. Hicks, *The Fullness of Sacrifice*, 1930.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> W. J. Phythian-Adams, *The Call of Israel*, 1934, Appendix II.

<sup>1</sup> Hicks, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Hicks, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 ff.

<sup>4</sup> John 10. 18.

the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life."<sup>1</sup>

The offerer in the first three steps has done the utmost possible to him. He has slain himself, setting free his life blood, and *he can do no more*. But now the priest steps in, and takes the shed blood, the life, into the presence of God. This is the atonement. The offerer is again in contact with God, and in consequence the body of his offering can be made. Therefore the next step follows.

5. The flesh of the victim is placed on the altar and is burned with the holy fire. Here we have to note two points of great importance, the purpose, and the meaning, of the burning. The purpose varies with the type of sacrifice and is indicated by the words used. Before the Exile there were two types of sacrifice, the burnt-offering and the peace-offering, and both contained the piacular element of the offering of the blood. In post-Exilic times sin- or guilt-offerings were added to the series, and in these the offering of the blood is the fundamental feature. They are piacular in essence.

The burning, however, is *never* burning for destruction. The word used for it is the word used of incense, and means "that which goes up". The offering is not destroyed, but sublimated; and as is seen from Elijah's sacrifice on Carmel, the consuming fire descends from God<sup>2</sup> and marks his approval and acceptance of the offering. For at this stage God himself actively intervenes. First the offerer brings and slays himself in his victim-deputy. Then the priest offers this surrendered life, and here God accepts it by fire. By the burning he transforms it into a condition in which it can be absorbed into himself. And as the fire of the sanctuary originally "came forth from before the Lord"<sup>3</sup> so, once on the altar, it was to be kept burning continually. "Fire shall be kept burning upon the altar continually; it shall not go out."<sup>4</sup>

6. The last stage in sacrifice (absent in the burnt-offerings, since here the whole of the flesh was offered for sublimation into union with the Being of God), was the sacrificial meal on that portion of the offering which was reserved for this purpose. In the peace-offerings this was the sacrificial meal of the offerers; in the sin-offerings the flesh was so holy that it was consumed only by the priests.<sup>5</sup>

If we can grasp the various stages of sacrifice thus illuminatingly

<sup>1</sup> Lev. 17. 11.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings 18. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Lev. 9. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. 6. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. Dr Edersheim, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services, as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, Rel. Tract Society, 1874 (now out of print), gives details as indicated in the title.

enumerated by Dr Hicks, we see what a beautiful and high ideal of worship is enshrined within this system, and we begin to understand why Temple worship was not only restored, but greatly enhanced, after the Exile; and why it has entered into the very being of Christian existence, as the truth of the worship which our Lord enjoins, in contrast with any more "spiritualized" forms of approach to the Deity. For we cannot even begin to enter into communion with God while we refuse the homeliness of our created state. The first step in worship is our acknowledgement of our creaturely existence, consisting of body as well as soul, and our creaturely dependence. We draw near, humbly owning that God has made us, that we have sinned and, thus unworthy, can only offer our life in acknowledgement that it lawfully belongs to God, since he gave it. In token of our sincerity we slay ourselves, laying our very life before him. But what appeared to our sin-darkened souls as death was, in fact, the release of our life which the priest hastens to gather up and present before God. We have made the supreme act of sacrifice from the human angle, and by the priestly intervention—is he not both Priest and Victim?—it has become effective as at-one-ment. *The way is now open to the altar.* ("Upon the altar of the Cross, his Body hath redeemed our loss" is only true if we recognize that the Cross is *not* the altar, but the means of approach to the altar. This is the point at which confusion reigns.) Here, in glad wondrous joy, the burnt-offering goes up to the very presence of God: the blood poured out has become the reclamation and transformation of the whole sin-stained nature; the flesh is added to the blood and nothing is left behind as useless carcase; thus reunited with God, "man finds his fellowship with man" (to return to Dr Hicks) in the sacrificial meal. Any alteration in this order destroys the pattern and impairs or nullifies its action.

Dr Hicks sums up:<sup>1</sup> "As in the sin-offering the characteristic feature is not the death of the victim but the liberation of its life, so in the burnt-offering the significance lies not in its destruction but in its transformation. . . . The significance of the peace-offering lies in the fact that it is a meal." "When the system was complete the three were found together (Ex. 29. 14, 18, 28; Lev. 8. 14-17, 18-21, 22-32, etc.). There was always a burnt-offering with the sin-offering, and the two, or the three, always followed in the same order—first the atonement, then the offering, then the meal. Thus the complete action of sacrifice is constant."

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., pp. 19, 20.

Can we imagine a more glorious reality for fallen<sup>1</sup> humanity? Can we not see how poor, how thin, how inadequate, are the "spiritual" substitutes which we so often think are an improvement? Man, however, is quick to resent his double nature and to look down upon his animal connections. He prefers to think of himself as sharing in angelic being rather than to recognize his kinship with the beasts, and thus tends to depreciate an external worship which uncompromisingly involves his material as well as his spiritual attributes.<sup>2</sup> Christians who find such thoughts troubling them have the remedy at hand by deepening their hold on the central fact of the Incarnation. What God created and God himself shares is not for us to think of as common or unclean.

Our modern difficulties with regard to the conception of sacrifice arise from the fact that by the Reformation era the word sacrifice had become limited in meaning. Instead of covering the six steps as described by Dr Hicks, the word had been fatally limited to the concept of death. "The Priestly work proper begins . . . after the death. The sacrifice indeed begins before the work of the Priest. But the Cross itself is not the Sacrifice. It stands in its place—and that an essential place—in the whole course of the sacrificial action, but is not either its beginning or its end."<sup>3</sup> If we can regain a true sense of the real and full meaning of sacrifice, disentangling the word from its perverted and truly mischievous use, we shall find ourselves in the fresh air of resurrection life instead of the dank finality of the mortuary. We shall also realize that so far from having a problem which can be stated in the form "Sacrifice or Communion?", such a proposition is actually meaningless. Communion is the final step of sacrifice; it is the con-

<sup>1</sup> We should, however, bear in mind that the sin-offering is a sophisticated post-Exilic overlaying of the simplicity of the primitive sacrificial rhythm. Man's sin, man's repentance, are, happily, not an integral part of the sacrificial relationship. The fundamental rhythm of sacrifice is a double action of creaturely self-offering, the highest form of adoration of which the creature is capable, "Father, glorify thy name", followed by the Divine acceptance, "I have both glorified it" (in this present approval), "and will glorify it again" (in the consequent oning of all with each). John 12. 28. Here, as with the fire on Elijah's altar, it is the Voice from heaven that transmutes, validates, and completes the offering.

<sup>2</sup> Man is responsible for the right interpretation of the impulses both of his bodily and of his spiritual nature, and the problem of his response to his Creator's Will is thereby raised to a much higher state of complexity than is the case for simple spirit, such as angels, or for mere animal sub-rational life. The latter respond by a perfect non-volitional obedience, the former by the choice of a single-eyed pure intelligence.

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit., p. 240.

summing part of the whole action, apart from which it has no autonomous existence.

Each act of sacrifice contains within itself the six steps which constitute the sacrificial entity and each is a climax in itself, namely, the purpose for which that particular act has been made. This may overshadow some of the steps, which nevertheless are all always present. In the sin-offerings the element of expiation is predominant, but the sacrifice does not on that account stop short at the slaying of the animal. The sacrifice completes its course, and the "communion" is represented by the portion of the offering which is set apart for the priests. In the burnt-offering, that lovely holocaust preserved for us in parabolic action by the widow's mite, the "communion" is suggestively absent. There is a deep lesson enshrined in this apparent anomaly. In this holocaust, communion is with God alone; the whole being has been transferred into that which God's acceptance makes it. Nothing is left. All is transmuted. It is only after this transmutation of the whole being that the peace-offering of communion is possible. God communicates himself, through the accepted and transmuted gift, as the means of *man's communion with man*. This is an aspect which has been over-neglected by Catholic and Protestant alike. Communion is far too often looked upon as a wholly private and personal matter, so that it has actually been possible for the following words to be written: "Hitherto we have been a crowd, we Mass-goers, trying to remember our solidarity in Christ. The Communion means the coming of Christ to the individual soul, and *that breaks the charm*; the priest wants to be alone to make his thanksgiving; each of you wants to be alone to make hers." One may feel quite confident that such a description, which totally ignores the vital fact that communion is a social act, the participation in a common meal, would have been impossible in early Christian circles. It might perhaps have been inverted—"hitherto we have been making our individual sin- and burnt-offerings, our personal approach of penitence and self-oblation, but now we are united with each other because we are, and as long as we remain, in Him"—but that Christ's coming should be the cause of social breakdown and break up—would have been a *skandalon*, an outrage. Viewed from the angle of the whole sacrificial drama, its irrationality is quickly obvious. The consummation of sacrifice, reunion with God and union with man cannot result in a Lord Mayor's banquet where every guest has a table to himself and his back to the company.

In a very interesting excursus, Dr Phythian-Adams traces the conception of the Tabernacling Presence throughout Israelite history, and

he suggests that even after the destruction of the Temple the hope of the return of the visible Presence was never lost in spite of maturer thoughts of the Holiness and Transcendence of God. He proceeds to show how this return of the Lord to his Temple was taken up in the New Testament; and that prophecy is fulfilled in Christ's mystical Body, so that every Communicant becomes incorporated into the Naos, the Holy of Holies, of the "tabernacling" Presence, the one feature of Revealed Religion, whether Jewish or Christian, which sets it at once apart from all other religious systems".<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we have the peace-offering, the true climax, not in self and private intercourse, but through the purified self-surrender of intimate communion becoming the very seat of the intruding Love of God and therefore the focus and point of contact for our neighbours and surroundings. We are no longer ourselves, because we have "become" him. And we *cannot* be "him" while we "*want* to be alone" or try to avoid kneeling next to someone whom we dislike. The consummation of love is giving, which is why love is eternal. The last stage is never complete, because it is impossible to retain anything and to remain in love. So we find that the new Naos is God's Utopia, the Kingdom in which the individual has his highest and most intimate contact with God in the sacramental company of his fellows. It is the only society in which neither is the individual sacrificed to the community nor is the community outraged by individualism, because no antithesis arises between the good of one and the good of all. It seems possible that we defraud God when we limit our Communion, in intention and practice, to what they mean to *us*. How many intending Communicants asked on a Saturday night whether they were peace-offering the next day would understand that the question meant "are you making 'your' communion?" Indeed, if the phrase "to peace-offer" could be substituted for to make your, my, our, their, communion it would supply a much-needed constructive, extroverted atmosphere in place of the present subjective and self-centred one inherent in the fatal possessive particle.

Anything short of Communion is an incomplete offering, since Communion is the final purpose of the whole sacrificial movement, but the restitution of the word sacrifice to its primitive meaning helps us to grasp the rationale of non-communicating attendance at the Holy Eucharist. As in the old sacrifices the series was always complete, even

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Phythian-Adams, *The People and the Presence*, 1942, p. 119.

though each worshipper may not have made a personal offering at each stage, so now the unconfirmed are not debarred from its piacular and holocaustic aspects. The Baptized, in virtue of their Baptism, which incorporates them into the Death of Christ and thus associates them with the Blood outpoured, having done all that the offerer can do of himself, are carried forward by this integration in Christ's Body into the further actions of holocaust and sacrificial meal, which Christ in his own Person and in his Church enacts at each Celebration of the Mysteries. Our Anglican formularies speak of this service as "our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving", and by this deliberate reference to the peace-offering we know that the whole series of sacrifice, sin-offering, burnt-offering, and peace-offering, is in fact included. To the first stages we are admitted by Baptism, and we cannot be excluded without dispossessing us of our right and privilege of worship. For worship is sacrifice, or Eucharist, since it is bringing to God not our goods, but ourselves, as a sacrifice, reasonable (deliberately willed), holy (by virtue of our incorporation in Christ), and lively (in the Resurrection life, because the Cross was *not* the final climax), which formula is merely the recapitulation of the three stages of the sacrificial act, the sin-, the burnt-, the peace-, offering. It is "fulfilled" in those "who are partakers of *this* holy Communion"; but the wording of the Prayer of Oblation allows us to interpret the following phrase ("although we be unworthy . . . to offer unto thee *any* [sin-, burnt-, or peace-] sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this. . ."), as including those who offer only the sin-offering upon *this* particular occasion. There is, indeed, very much for the unconfirmed to learn with regard to sin- and burnt-offering which precedes their admission to the sacramental meal. The Person and the work of the Holy Ghost in Christ's Body are, as we have said, a mystery and miracle far exceeding the preliminary mystery of Christ's historic Incarnation. We have to restore the conception of sacrifice for the proper interpretation of the third section of the Creed, which apart from this key lacks cohesion. When we grasp the fact that sacrifice is the term used for the highest and closest possible communion with God, and that under the New as under the Old Covenant it is communion with a here-and-now Presence, we see something of the tremendous implications of our belief in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church. Christ is gone up: Love betters the gift, and the Holy Ghost comes down. The heart of the mystery lies in the dramatic development under the New Covenant of the nature of the Tabernacling Presence. As the written "Word" is raised into the living Person of the Lord, so the sacrifice (or sacrament)

by the operation of the Holy Ghost is embodied in the persons of the worshippers. Word and Sacrament retain their intrinsic value, but both are merged into the still greater mystery of the Naos. We recognize and believe that mystery has overtaken the elements at the consecration, at the empowering words of the Canon pronounced over them. And the temptation to rest at this level of mystery, true and real as it is in itself, is very subtle and very powerful; but this is not the post-Pentecostal Tabernacling of the New Covenant. That is in ourselves, so that Communion is a greater climax than the Consecration, and apart from Communion the consecrated elements remain, so to say, at the level of burnt-offering. One may perhaps suggest the simile of a rocket which, having reached its zenith, turns slightly and so discharges its scintillating treasures. The zenith, indeed, was a moment since, but its purpose was the display at the descending level. The Consecration is the zenith towards which the rite has been moving; but without Communion it has failed of its intended consummation. The *external* tabernacling of the Old Covenant is manifested at the zenith, but has been immeasurably enhanced by its myriad-distributed life in the persons of the communicants.<sup>1</sup>

Yet we must be careful to remember that the post-zenithal development in no wise affects the reality of the Presence within the sacramental species. The Anglican Catechism<sup>2</sup> leaves no manner of doubt as to the givenness of the Presence in the Bread and Wine. It states without equivocation that the inward part, the thing signified by the tangible Bread and Wine, is "The Body and Blood of Christ, which are *verily*

<sup>1</sup> It was the misfortune of the Tractarians to have no guide to Catholic worship other than what they found in Continental practice, and their introduction of an Early Service for Communion with a Sung Celebration later for thanksgiving was something approaching a disaster, such multiplication of Masses being in essence a legacy from medieval misconceptions of the nature of sacrifice.

<sup>2</sup> *From the Catechism:*

"Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?"

"For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby."

"What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?"

"Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received."

"What is the inward part, or thing signified?"

"The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."

"What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?"

"The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine."

and *indeed taken*<sup>1</sup> and received by the faithful". This solemn echoing of our Lord's Verily, verilies, places us beyond the turmoil of our own vacillating emotions on the safe peace of revealed truth. He is there: the remembrance of his death has been made, that sin-offering (as mentioned in the Catechism in a previous answer) whereby we are able to make this commemoration and to receive these present benefits; which the next answer describes as being "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine". Admirable statement of the process of oneing; except that the strengthening of our bodies is effected by the conversion of the Bread and Wine into substances assimilable to our constitution as human beings, whereas the oneing of our souls with God is the result of our transformation into that which is conformable to the Divine Being. The simile, however, is wholly valid, for throughout nature these transformations always take place by the adaptation of the lesser to the higher form of life; the lesser lives on in the greater, so we are changed into him. We become the Naos. And since the God of grace is the God also of creation, we may with confidence aver that the principles which are operative on the one plane will be the guiding principles also on the other. The "strengthening", then, of our bodies only occurs if the Bread and Wine cease to be bread and wine. If they were absorbed unchanged, immediate catastrophe would ensue. Only when they have been broken up into their simple components, and have become unrecognizable as bread and wine, can some of their constituents be assimilated by the body, while the residue is thrown out. The "strengthening" of our souls proceeds upon a similar plan. We perhaps assume that by being strengthened we become rather finer fellows than we were before. Nothing, as the Catechism points out, is further from the truth. Through the Bread and Wine which we take and break down into the strengthening of our bodies, our souls are—or may be—similarly strengthened by being taken into Christ; that is, our "self" is slowly broken down till all trace of "self" has been cast out, and the remaining purified personality can be built into its appointed place in the Body, which is the Bride of the Lamb, the Naos, the holy City of God. Christ is not broken down into conformity with our stature: we are broken up to be incorporated into him through this continual re-freshing of our inner life. Any number of communions may be made without our co-operation in the work of grace which they are

<sup>1</sup> *Taken*, because present before reception. This is a Sacrament, not a sacramental.

intended to perform; and on those occasions and to that degree we are performe "thrown out in the draught".<sup>1</sup> The work of assimilation is painfully slow under any conditions, yet the means of grace remain, the call of God is unchanged.

We should bear in mind that in Jewish worship it is God throughout who is blessed, not primarily the offering. We too often lose sight of the fact that the manifold blessings in Jewish liturgy are ascriptions of praise to God, not direct invocations of his benediction upon the species being presented to him. When our Lord took bread, and blessed and brake it, there is here in St Matthew's Gospel a semicolon, indicating a completed stage; after which he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat. In St Mark and St Luke we are told that it was "*when* he had given thanks" that he brake and gave it, saying, "This is my Body". The blessing *had been offered*, the consecration had been made by the "blessing" of the Father over the gift; and the words of administration followed which have, almost without exception, formed a defining part of all subsequent Eucharistic rites. These words, by the very inversion of the steps of sacrifice, "Eat", the peace-offering climax, preceding "This is my Body", the imparting of the offerer's *shaliach*, lie within the whole movement of the "blessing" of the Father; otherwise the "Eat" would be meaningless before the operative words "This is my Body" had been spoken. Actually, "*when he had blessed*" it became possible to say, "This is my Body". The Prayer Book of 1928 has taken the opening words of the Prayer of Consecration from the Scottish rite. Instead of the present words, "Almighty God, our heavenly Father . . . hear us . . . and grant", we have "All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father", after which follows a recitation, curtailed, indeed, in comparison with ancient Eucharistic forms, of the events *for which we bless God*. Eucharisting is a glorious and splendid paean of praise, in which we pile up in loving and adoring gratitude the record of all that God has done for us in the past, in the strength of which we add in joyful confidence this fresh offering for him to accept in his bounty and transform for his glory. It is a "perpetual memory" which we plead in radiant triumph, in exultant joy, not to wheedle a sulking and uncertain autocrat, but to join in the victorious wave-offering of the Lamb before his Father and ours.

We may note that the passages in the Psalms (and in the Prophets) which appear to be a condemnation of sacrifice upon a superficial

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 15. 17.

reading are in reality a condemnation of sacrifice offered in the wrong spirit. All mention of joy and thankfulness, "whoso offereth me thanks and praise", is almost certainly a direct reference to the peace-offering, the climax attained after due and heartfelt sin and burnt-offerings have been made. To quote Dr Hicks again, with regard to the Temple psalmody, we find that "the daily and Sabbath sacrifices, and the special sacrifices of the feasts, were all celebrated with the singing of fixed Psalms and Psalm-like passages".<sup>1</sup> There are "many Psalms linked either expressly or in thought with the peace-offering" (such as Psalm 50, quoted above), which "remained the most joyful of the sacrifices . . . and it is probable that, not only the actual phrase 'sacrifice of thanksgiving' but all outbursts of rejoicing and thankfulness in Psalms that have anything to do with the Temple should be referred to it". How greatly this adds to our appreciation of the content of the Psalms in our daily recitation! As we rehearse the lists of instruments employed, and note the little outbursts of joy like the sudden thrill of a bird's unexpected song which accompany them, we are caught up into the worship of offering which, as the outcome of love, is the purest, most unalloyed joy of which we are capable.

We may here remind ourselves of a fact not very widely appreciated, that the life of the synagogue was essentially Temple-centred. It was not a refined superior form of religion that had outgrown the coarser material conceptions of a cruder age, but after the establishment of a central sanctuary it formed the link with the Temple worship for those who were inevitably prevented from living permanently in Jerusalem. At the destruction of the Temple during the Exile the focus was for a while blurred, but the direction of the post-Exilic worship was clear. Dr Hicks has a passage<sup>2</sup> which describes the methods employed.

"[In post-exilic worship] it is often assumed that synagogue worship was . . . fundamentally unsacrificial . . . There was, naturally, no actual sacrifice. . . . The problem had to be faced of the participation in the sacrifices. . . . There were . . . three ways in which this was done. In the first place, individuals could journey to Jerusalem, be present at the public sacrifices, and offer their own. . . . In the second place, there was a definite organization of the people, priests, Levites, and laymen alike, into twenty-four divisions, each of which was corporately responsible for the Temple worship for a set period. Representatives of each of the three classes went to Jerusalem on behalf of the rest; and while they were there the remainder followed in reading, in thought, and in prayer in

<sup>1</sup> Hicks, op. cit., pp. 92 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (quoting from Gaster), pp. 105 f.

their local synagogues what was being done on their behalf in the Temple. Thirdly, there was a movement of the utmost significance in the direction of the spiritualizing of the actual sacrifices. The concrete acts of the Temple worship were performed in a liturgical setting of prayer and praise . . . It came to be felt that the worshipper could identify himself with the moral meaning of the sacrifice by the spiritual acts corresponding with it. . . . It is not suggested that sacrifices are futile or to be abandoned in favour of something inherently different . . . their moral significance is emphasized. . . . The synagogue worship in its traditional form has never been non-sacrificial; still less, anti-sacrificial."

This is a point of great significance for ourselves. It makes clear the coherence of our whole liturgical drama as noted in a previous chapter<sup>1</sup>, and may even be of service in guiding our methods of revision. Let us examine our Communion Order in the light of the several stages of the sacrificial act, and the three main forms of sacrifice.

The approach to the Altar is necessarily in penitence, and this is exemplified in the priests' private preparation which culminates in the Lord's Prayer and Collect for Purity, now actually the opening words of our Communion Order. The Commandments<sup>2</sup> are an excellent sequel, and under Dr Hicks' guidance we can realize that the Invitation, with its "Draw near" taken from the initial act of sacrifice, is far more suitable at this stage than in its present position in our Anglican formula. (We may note that when our forefathers a-liturgically divided the Communion Order as provided in the Book of Common Prayer into two separate services, interpolating a blessing after the Prayer for the Church and dismissing the greater part of the congregation, they did, in fact, restore the "Draw near" to its proper place at the opening of their truncated Communion Order.) Let us suppose that the Invitation, Confession, and Absolution follow the Commandments, if necessary with the Comfortable Words<sup>3</sup>, and we have then secured a coherent sin-offering in its proper place at the beginning of the sacrificial movement. The synagogal preface is found in the psalmody and Bible lections of Mattins (without the additional "padding" of the

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 2, pp. 8 ff., above.

<sup>2</sup> The Kyries were retained in 1552 when the Commandments were added, and they were spaced between the Commandments with a qualifying "appendix", similar to those added to the words of administration of the sacramental species. A tenth Kyrie was added at the end of the tenth Commandment with a different appendix.

<sup>3</sup> The Comfortable Words were taken from Hermann of Cologne's *Einfaltigs bedenken*. They introduce a subjective element foreign to the robuster tone of the rite as a whole.

Introduction and the State, or other, prayers), and the intercessions of the Litany.

The second stage, representing the burnt-offering, then opens with Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, followed by Creed, notices, subjects for thanksgiving and intercession, and the sermon. This synagogal element leads up to the first climax, that of the Offertory, the bread and wine, together with the alms of the people, which represent the self-offering of all present. The fact that this bread and wine and these alms are indeed the offering of the people is dramatized in some Churches by having them brought up to the chancel by members of the congregation. Whether this is done or no, we see here a recapitulation of the early stages of sacrifice. This is the laying of the hands of the people on the offerings to impose on them their own *shaliach*, and now, the slaying having been done in the preparatory forms of penitence, and the offering of the self being made, the work proper of the priest begins. With the Offertory of the bread and wine, we enter upon the third stage, that of the peace-offering. The Prayer for the Church, the Great Intercession, passes at once from the Offertory to the *Sursum Corda* and the Prayer of Consecration. In the alternative Order of the 1928 Book this Prayer is summed up in the Lord's Prayer, followed by the Pax. If the *Agnus Dei* were restored, it would come here, after which, in place of the old private prayers of the priest, is the 1549 position of the Prayer of Humble Access, before the Communion of the priest and people. Here, again, we have the brief quick recapitulation of the expiatory element present in all sacrifices, linking us with the fuller "sin-offering" of the opening of the rite.

This is the *Act* of Thanksgiving, the climax of the whole Liturgy; and in gratitude for its successful accomplishment there is a final outburst of praise in the Prayer of Thanksgiving (the Prayer of Oblation forming a part of the Consecration Prayer) and the Gloria, followed by the Blessing.<sup>1</sup> If the Pax, "The peace of the Lord be always with you", has been given before the Communion, it seems superfluous to preface it to the Blessing ("The peace of God which passeth all understanding . . . *And* the blessing . . ."), but it was a suitable way of retaining it when it had been removed from its usual place.

It has been found experimentally that Cranmer's subdivisions of the

<sup>1</sup> There is no authority for breaking up this little close of thanksgiving with interpolated prayers. If special extra intercessions are needed they should follow the Collect for the day, as directed in the rubric after the Blessing.



old Canon are better adapted for sustaining attention than the rather longer forms of the alternative Order of 1928. If the Canon is to be subdivided, this point deserves consideration. Anglicans are inclined to pride themselves on the congregational form of their Offices, but in fact they do not always avail themselves of the occasions provided for their audible response. It is very rare to hear the *Amens* all said by everyone, and there are too few churches whence the Amen-thunder at the Early Service arrests the attention of the passers-by. The Confession, and perhaps the Creed, are the usual points at which something other than the voice of the Celebrant is customarily heard. There are even occasions when the Celebrant goes steadily through every word of the rite, including the *Amens*, a form of sacerdotalism which destroys the corporate offering.<sup>1</sup> More serious than the over-lengthened prayers of the 1928 Book are some a-liturgical innovations. In the old Offices, after the Confession there follows a short prayer for forgiveness, which if a Priest is present, is completed by a short absolution. The prayer for forgiveness is not sacerdotal in character, and does not convey the absolution which is inherent in the 1661 Prayer Book forms. In the 1928 Book, a shortened form of confession and absolution is provided for certain occasions at Mattins and Evensong and at the Holy Communion. The absolution appointed for Mattins and Evensong is the *absolution* from the old Offices, that for the Holy Communion is the preceding congregational prayer for forgiveness. When this shortened form is used at the Holy Communion, therefore, the Communicants do not receive absolution in a valid form.

There is also an interpolation carrying doctrinal import in an exhortation prefaced to the Prayer of Thanksgiving. This runs: "Having now by faith received the precious Body and Blood of Christ, let us give thanks unto our Lord God." It is perfectly true that we assimilate the gift by faith, but this preface seems to invite a denial of the objective Presence. The Prayer of Thanksgiving has stood in the Prayer Book since 1549 without this compromising formula, and it would seem to be the better part of wisdom so to leave it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the Prayer Book the *Amens* are printed in italic type when they are to be said as a *response*. (This alone shows that, e.g., the General Thanksgiving and that in the Baptismal Order are *not* to be said by the congregation.)

<sup>2</sup> A similar infelicity is found in a Proper called "Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion". The original Collect of this Proper ("O Lord, who in a wonderful Sacrament hast left us a memorial of thy Passion . . .") is placed second, and a new one precedes which contains the following: "O Lord Jesu Christ . . . Grant that we who partake thereof by faith with thanksgiving . . .". This phrase, which is just *not* a quotation from the Prayer of Oblation, expresses a

The 1928 Revisers grouped the Communicants' prayers together by removing the Prayer of Humble Access from its present position after the *Sursum Corda* to the seemingly more natural place after the Comfortable Words. We have become so much accustomed to it between the *Sanctus* and the Prayer of Consecration that we do not always realize its liturgical impropriety in that position; but when it follows the Comfortable Words it involves a restlessness on the Celebrant's part, a turning back and forth, which detract from the dignity and quiet which should mark the rite at this stage. Cranmer's original position is undoubtedly the one best suited to it, immediately before the Communion of the Priest and people.

A scheme of the foregoing description is appended.

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definite alteration in doctrinal significance from that which obtains in our present Book. This change is further emphasized by an alteration in the appointed Gospel. This is taken from John 6 and ends at the end of the Discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum with the solemn and appropriate words, "he that eateth this bread shall live for ever". This effect is overlaid in the 1928 Book by the addition of some of the words spoken by our Lord subsequently to his disciples. The Revisers have continued with the sixth chapter as far as "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"; a solemn reaffirmation of the literal meaning of the previous discourse, certainly, but open to misinterpretation here.

OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

Praise and Preparation	Chrysostom Lord's Prayer	Grace Suffrages Creed	Collects	} Evening
	Nunc Dimittis CATECHISING 2nd Lesson Magnificat			
Peace- Offering	Blessing Gloria Prayer of Thanksgiving COMMUNION Prayer of Humble Access Agnus Dei			} Order
	Pax Lord's Prayer PRAYER OF CONSECRATION (with Prayer of Oblation) Sursum Corda			
Burnt- Offering	PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH (The Great Intercession) OFFERTORY Nicene Creed Biddings SERMON Gospel			} Communion
	Epistle Collect (Comfortable Words)			
Sin- Offering	Invitation Confession Absolution Commandments and Kyries Lord's Prayer Collect for Purity			
Preparation introductory to Sin-Offering, and thus to the whole sequence	Lord's Prayer	Litany Suffrages Creed	Collects	} Litany
	Benedictus 2nd Lesson Te Deum (Benedicite) 1st Lesson VENITE and PSALMS O Lord, open Thou our lips			
				} Morning
				} Prayer

Each synagoga section has a "highlight" At Mattins and Evensong this is respectively the Benedictus and the Magnificat; at the Holy Communion it is the Gospel.

THE PRAYER BOOK LITURGY

IF WE examine the scheme at the end of the last chapter we shall notice two, perhaps three, outstanding points in which it differs markedly from the services as customarily conducted in parish churches. There is only one sermon; there are no metrical hymns; and there are neither Introduction nor terminal prayers to Mattins and Evensong.

The least important of these is the absence of the introductory portions of Mattins and Evensong and the omission of State or other prayers after the Third Collect. Dr Hensley Henson<sup>1</sup> has told us that in the main the Bishops who were engaged in Prayer Book Revision in the late 1920s were not liturgiologists, and felt themselves at an awkward disadvantage on the occasions when experts were called in for advice. Many of the provisions of the 1928 Book seem to have been enacted in the absence of these restraining influences, but with regard to Mattins and Evensong the suggested return to the forms of 1549 would undoubtedly have met with the liturgists' full approval. It is of interest to observe the gradual overlaying of the essential parts of these Orders which occurred in 1552 and 1661. "Mattyns" in 1549 began with the Lord's Prayer in "a loude voyce". The Prayer Book "loude voyce", though sometimes painfully, if not unnaturally, interpreted to mean a shout, would to-day be written "aloud".<sup>2</sup> All the old services began with the Lord's Prayer said silently, followed by the Hail, Mary, but now the Lord's Prayer was to be said aloud, possibly in order to ensure the omission of the Hail, Mary. (In the Communion Order, as we have seen,<sup>3</sup> the Lord's Prayer from the Priests' private preparation is said aloud, but its origin is disclosed by the fact that the congregation does not join in, nor say Amen.) The Order then continued in the main as at present until the Third Collect, after which nothing further was

<sup>1</sup> H. Hensley Henson, *Retrospect of an Unimportant Life*.

<sup>2</sup> We are often over-possessive in the matter of hearing. It is well to remember that hearing does not represent our highest capacities. It is a means rather than an end, and we recognize its limited nature in the proverb, "In at one ear, and out at the other". That which enters the eye, on the other hand, with or without the aid of hearing, goes deeper. This we also recognize, for on comprehending some explanation, we do not say, "Oh, I hear", but, "Oh, I see". "I had heard of thee", says Job, "by the hearing of the ear; But now mine eye seeth thee." (Job 42. 5.)

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 134.

appointed. Evensong was modelled on the same pattern. There is a rubric at Mattins before the first lesson, which occurs also in 1552 but has been deleted by 1661, which runs as follows: "And (to the ende the people maye the better heare) in suche places where they doe syng, there shall the lessons be song in a playne tune after the manner of distincte readyng: and lykewyse the Epistle and Gospell." That is, the connection between Mattins and the Holy Communion Order has not yet been lost. They are close enough for a single rubric to cover both. In 1552 the present Introduction of Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution was added at Mattins, but not at Evensong. It came suitably at the beginning of the day's liturgical movement, but was not interpolated at Evensong into the closing outburst of praise. Both Mattins and Evensong still ended with the Third Collect. They were still dependent, minor Offices. By 1661, dissociation into unrelated self-contained entities was emphasized. The State prayers and the Prayer of St Chrysostom and the Grace were added to Mattins; and Evensong, till now beginning at the Lord's Prayer and ending with the Third Collect, was made a replica of the morning service by adding the penitential introduction and the State and closing prayers.<sup>1</sup> Each Order now existed in its own right, and the historicity of the liturgical rhythm was blurred. The permanent value of these additions is doubtful, as also their superiority over some of the suppressed material. In 1928 the old forms were replaced but with unnecessary embellishments.

The introductory Exhortation in the Choir Offices (Mattins and Evensong) is preceded by a series of Scripture texts, any one of which may be selected by the officiant as the "Opening Sentence". In the old Offices these short Biblical excerpts are called the Little Chapter, and the congregation invariably makes the response, "Thanks be to God". The restoration of the "Thanks be to God" at this point would, one cannot but suppose, commend itself to all parties. The compilers of the old Offices manifested their devotion to the Scriptures not only in the stepping of the whole Liturgy in Scriptural phraseology and thought at the intermediate links between one Scriptural extract and another, but also in the fact that no reading from Scripture and no Psalmody is left without a response. At the Night Office, where the longer lessons from

<sup>1</sup> The articulated unity of the Liturgy being forgotten, the versicle "O Lord, open thou our lips" has been added to the evening Order. It occurs only once in the old Offices, at the beginning of the day, and covers the whole series.

Scripture are read, they are followed, not merely by the short "Thanks be to God", but by a Responsory, usually drawn from the lesson itself, which is designed to bring out the salient point of the lesson and the manner in which it is to be applied.<sup>1</sup> The present ministerial announcement of "Here endeth the First, or the Second Lesson" is a very poor substitute for the old:

℣. "But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us."  
℞. "Thanks be to God."

While speaking of Scripture, we may note again the sacerdotal "Here endeth the Epistle" which has been introduced into the Communion Order in place of the old congregational "Thanks be to God". There was—and is—only one place in the old rites where the congregation failed to respond to a reading from Scripture, and that was at the end of the Gospel. (Paradoxically that is the one place where an Anglican congregation habitually interpolates a response which finds no countenance in any Prayer Book until the abortive one of 1928.) The reason for the omission of a response after the Gospel is not far to seek. In all other cases the readings are addressed to the *ecclesia*, the gathering of the faithful, for their edification and instruction, that God may be glorified both by the grateful recitation of former signs of his Presence and guidance, and by the increased knowledge and understanding gained therefrom by the hearers. But the Gospel is another matter. This is addressed primarily to those outside; those within have already heard and received it. Now for a moment a door is, so to say, opened towards the North,<sup>2</sup> towards the darkness which hitherto has neither apprehended nor comprehended the truth which is enshrined within the Covenanted community. Only within this Covenant is salvation found; and at this solemn gathering of those who are being saved, their exclusiveness proclaims its universalistic intent by this cry into the night. "Unto you, O men, I call; And my voice is to the sons of men."<sup>3</sup> The solemnity of this moment is enhanced and emphasized wherever the Communion Order is celebrated corporately and not merely sacerdotally (as happens when there is no one but the priest, possibly with a server, within the altar rails), through the carrying of the Book of the Gospel by attendants to a point from which the Gospel can be read "abroad". The people rise to their feet to greet this proclamation, and

<sup>1</sup> See A. G. Hebert, *The Authority of the Old Testament*, 1947, pp. 239, 244, 283 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Jer. 3. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Prov. 8. 4.

to signify their willingness to carry the Gospel to the ends of the world. They join in the proclamation by their glad cry at its announcement, "Glory be to Thee, O God" (we note again here the "blessing" of God, not of the book over which the blessing is uttered); but at the end—silence. Joy there must ever be to believers at any contact with the Gospel, therefore the preliminary outburst; but this reading is either for salvation or for condemnation, and the fact of this terrible alternative leads rather to stillness than to openly-expressed thanks at its conclusion. The door to the North closes, we are again the *ecclesia* of God, in token whereof we immediately "cleanse" ourselves from any defilement of unfaith by the recitation of the Nicene Creed. An Evangelical has told us that "temperamentally we [i.e., Evangelicals] find that elaborate ceremonial obscures rather than reveals",<sup>1</sup> and many Catholics would agree most heartily both with the word "temperamentally" and with "elaborate". But an over-reduction of ceremonial can on occasion be far from enlightening. When the Epistle and Gospel are read by the same person in the same position, and indeed in the same breath, so that there is no time to be risen to one's feet between the, "Here endeth the Epistle, the Gospel is written . . .", one feels that sense is not conspicuously revealed. We should be very much surprised if the first and second lessons at Morning and Evening Prayer were thus read together without a break. Ceremonial there must be in any corporate act, and perhaps it is not always realized how much new ceremonial, sometimes, as here, merely of omission, replaces the old "stock" movements which so admirably check individualism. In the old days when the Epistle<sup>2</sup> was ended the Gradual was sung, during which the transition to the solemn reading of the Gospel was effected. These are two distinct readings, to two different audiences, for two different purposes; the first, for the instruction and the building up of the faithful; the second,

<sup>1</sup> We have in the West become so accustomed to a sacerdotal offering of Eucharistic worship that when corporately presented it does strike us as "elaborate". In the East the old pattern has been retained, and about fifty persons are needed for the due celebration of the Liturgy. In the West medieval ideas of sacrifice have led to emphasis on the individual aspect and the value of frequent Communion; in the East the emphasis has remained on the corporate nature of *worthy* worship.

<sup>2</sup> The Epistle is read from the South end of the altar because the South is associated in the Christian consciousness with the illumination of God's self-revelation in Christ and with the warmth of faith; the Gospel towards the North, the region of the cold darkness of unbelief. For this same reason the Priest passes from South to North in communicating the people at the altar rails, and the candles on the South are lighted first and extinguished last.

a missionary excursus by the same faithful, proclaiming the Good News of their own experience into the ends of the world. An interval, a change of position, are a part of the means of bringing home the reality of these different aspects. This is one of the situations in which the Reformers' wholesale expunging of the old congregational chants has led to a manifest obscuring of rhythm and intention. A reintroduction of the Gradual Psalm between the Epistle and Gospel would restore both sense and a part of the rite of which the congregation is at present defrauded.

The consideration of the Opening Sentences at Mattins and Evensong has led to the examination of other parts of the Liturgy in which readings from Scripture occur. The rest of the Introduction and the concluding State prayers are ponderous, and the latter in particular suggest that we hope to be heard for our much speaking. In the old Offices we pray for the Queen five times a day, and the same prayer has been retained at Mattins and Evensong.

Ÿ. "O Lord, save the Queen."

Rγ. "And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee."

We have already said this prayer—together, congregationally—in the real body of Mattins and Evensong. Is there need for the Minister to repeat it in a very voluminous State prayer? Perhaps we do not always recognize the Suffrages as prayer, nor realize how wide is their intercessory character. With regard not only to the State prayers, but to the multiplicity of particular petitions which may be offered after "the anthem", we can see that the demand has arisen from the loss of the central focus. Where the Great Intercession, the Prayer for the Church in the Communion Order, is no longer the central offering-up of the needs of all the faithful, of all sorts and conditions of men, the living and the departed, we have to fall back on isolated fragments, offered out of their true context.

By a slight rearrangement of the suggested liturgical scheme at the end of Chapter 10 we have a conspectus of the Anglican Liturgy as it actually stands in the Prayer Book of 1661-2.<sup>1</sup> If we study this diagram we shall find that there is one important particular in which

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 146.

Evensong did not become the double of Mattins. We find that at Evening Prayer between the second lesson and the Nunc Dimittis there stands the word "Catechizing". The regulation on which this insertion rests is to be found in the first rubric at the end of the Catechism, which runs as follows:

"The Curate of every parish shall diligently upon Sundays and Holy-days, after the second Lesson at Evening Prayer, openly in the Church instruct and examine so many children of his Parish sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some part of this Catechism."

That is one side, the Curate's side. We note what is of obligation and what lies within his personal discretion. He *shall*, on Sundays and Holy-days; but the number of children and the points of examination and instruction he is free to decide for himself. And the congregation is to be there to listen. "After the Second Lesson at Evening Prayer" seems clear enough, but there is added "openly in the Church". No other time or place than we find also in the comparable directions for Holy Baptism: "when the most number of people come together".

The Curate, however, is not the only person under rule in this matter. The above rubric is succeeded by the following:

"And all Fathers, Mothers, Masters, and Dames, shall cause their Children, Servants, and Prentices, (which have not learned their Catechism,) to come to the Church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and be ordered by the Curate, until such time as they have learned all that is here appointed for them to learn."

There may be a wry twist to the mouth of present-day Fathers and Mothers at the suggestion that they "shall cause" their offspring to do or not to do, but Christian parents are not left in any doubt as to their duty. Like the Curate, they *shall*. We may note that the children and prentices are to come to the Church "at the time appointed", and we see them filing in after the second lesson. They come fresh for their "bit", a most wise as well as humane provision. There is widespread agreement that the rank and file of Church-goers in this generation are very ill instructed in the fundamentals of the faith, and one cannot but wonder how far the equally widespread disregard of the Prayer Book provisions may not be responsible for this lamentable ignorance.

In the Prayer Book scheme on p. 146 the two outstanding observations are that there is only one sermon provided in the course of the day, which is in the Communion Order, and that there is not a single metrical hymn from beginning to end. The only technical musical provision is an anthem after the close of Mattins and Evensong proper. This

anthem was added in 1661 as a link between the old Office and the new additional State prayers.

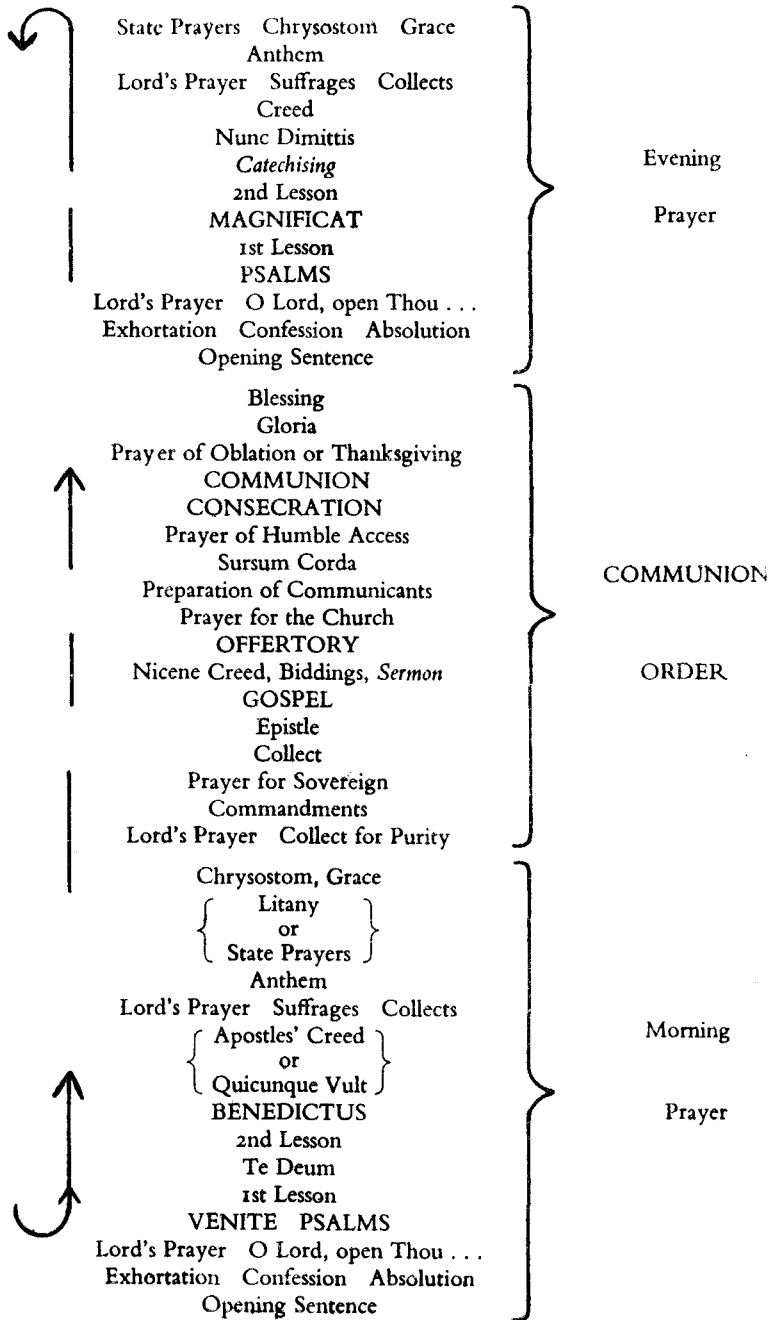
If we consider first the question of the sermon, we see that the Prayer Book assigns to it a place of great honour. It is so important that it occurs but once in the day, and its place is in the Communion Order, the central part of the day's offering of worship; it is of such dignity that it is placed between those two high lights, the Gospel and the Offertory. The relevant rubric, the second of those which follow immediately after the Nicene Creed, runs: "Then *shall* follow the Sermon, or one of the Homilies already set forth, or hereafter to be set forth, by authority." The sermon is thus from its very setting and its compulsory nature, "shall follow" not "may follow",<sup>1</sup> a high light in itself. It is embedded in the movement of the rite as a pivotal point, carrying round from the Gospel its contained treasure to pour it out into the Offertory. It is an integral link between one portion of the drama and the next. Its duty is to illuminate, to clarify, to make oblation of, the main lessons and thoughts of the day's "Proper". We cannot always be confident, however, that the day's provision of Scripture will form the marrow of the day's discourse. Yet this would generally go farther towards building up a sound Christian approach to current problems than is afforded by express mention of passing events. The Prayer Book preacher has not been "appointed to a pulpit", and is not required to please or satisfy the congregation. His responsibility is to bring himself into tone with the service and to preach the Gospel<sup>2</sup> in the light of the day's lections. Nor does the Prayer Book demand the gift of oratory or of originality in those ordained to preach, for in the rubric which relates to the sermon it is expressly stated that one of the official Homilies may be read instead, a provision which can be interpreted to mean that where natural facility is lacking, an orthodox alternative is countenanced.

We notice that in the Making of Deacons the Bishop presents to them, not a complete Bible, but a New Testament, with the words, "Take thou authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same, if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself". Thus

<sup>1</sup> "May" is provided in 1928. The Liturgy is made to conform to current practice. "May" is a parvenu in rubrical life. The usual "shalls" are directive rather than peremptory in nature, and to-day we should say, "Here follows the sermon". The rubrics are of importance, for they deal largely with changes from the old services.

<sup>2</sup> The Gospel as committed to and transmitted by the Church, not his own version of it. It is in this connection that the Articles are operative.

LITURGICAL SCHEME OF 1661—2



THE PRAYER BOOK LITURGY

every deacon receives commission to read the Gospel in the Communion Order, and it is within the Bishops' discretion to allow him to preach the subsequent sermon. This explicit mention is evidence of the unique position of the Gospel in all Scripture reading "in the Church"; at that corporate worship in which the *ecclesia* finds its highest self-expression in the momentary, here-and-now actualizing of her eschatological focus and hope. Even if the deacon has not the Bishop's licence to preach an original sermon he may read the Homily, so that he is not debarred by immaturity from officiating at this crucial point in the liturgical movement.

There is an important reference to the sermon at the end of the Baptismal Order, the full significance of which is largely unrecognized at the present day, partly because Baptism has so seldom in the recent past been administered "when the most number of people come together"; partly also because the multiplication of addresses, miscalled sermons, at other times than in the Communion Order, has completely overlaid the fact that in the Prayer Book no provision is made for a sermon at any other time. The reference occurs in the solemn Exhortation to the Godparents made in the face of the congregation when the Baptism has been completed. They are admonished to remember that it is "their parts and duties" to see that the infant is brought up to know "what a solemn vow, promise and profession" has been made by them on his behalf. They then receive specific directions of the actual steps they are to take in the matter. "And that he may know these things the better, ye shall call upon him to hear Sermons; and chiefly ye shall provide, that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, in the vulgar tongue. . ."

It is plain that the Godparents are made responsible for seeing that the children are regular in their attendance at the Communion Order and at the Catechizing at Evening Prayer. No provision is made in the Prayer Book for the dismissal of a part of the congregation in the middle of the Communion Order. The only time when so-called "Table Prayers" are authorized is if there is no one in the congregation who proposes to make his Communion. Then only may the service be brought to a conclusion after the Prayer for the Church, with an additional Collect and the Blessing. The rubric says, "Upon Sundays and other Holy-days (*if there be no Communion*) shall be said all that is appointed at the Communion, until the end of the general Prayer. . .". And since the children are expected to learn about their religion from

sermons, it is evident that they are to be present at the Eucharist, and that "sermons" are to be concerned with "doctrine, duty and devotion".<sup>1</sup> When we have recovered our vision of the dignity and meaning of the Liturgy we may hope that the word "sermon" will be restricted to its liturgically-appointed place in the Communion Order, and never be used for addresses at other times.

A fresh examination of the liturgical scheme on p. 146 makes it evident that in the Prayer Book ideal public exhortations, in spite of their importance, are made subservient to the explicit praise of God. We have noticed the key position of the sermon, but it furthers a greater end than itself. There is no opportunity here for imagining that the edification of man is a worthy object for church-going: his edification is wholly devoted to the more worthy worship of God. At Evensong also the Catechizing ends with Simeon's thanksgiving for illumination; and the Creed is recited, with the increased intelligence and insight which have been received, to the greater glory of God. In both instances the instructional interludes have had God as their true object: perhaps interlude is a not inapposite word to use with regard to them. They are a definite break in the proceedings, and they are primarily addressed to the congregation, not to God; but they do not, as in the pendants at Mattins and Evensong, think man a very good place at which to stop. They lead back to God.

So much for the Prayer Book sermon and Catechizing. If we now look at Mattins and Evensong we see that they end with the Prayer of St Chrysostom and the Grace. The Grace is the end of the service, after which the congregation is expected to go away. The Prayer Book has nothing further to offer, unless Mattins is immediately followed by the Holy Communion. When the Prayer Book Order is followed by a hymn, a so-called "sermon", a hymn (prayer or prayers), and a blessing, this forms a second service, complete in itself and concerned with man. In some churches the blessing used at the end is taken from the Communion Order, which is the only place in the Prayer Book where this blessing with its preceding "Pax" is found, and there is considerable liturgical impropriety in using it elsewhere. The Pax, "The Peace of God", is a solemn and integral part of the Communion rite, lying as it does in its primitive position between the Consecration and the Communion, the explicit link of the activity of the Holy Spirit doing "wondrously" as the effective agent in this twin mystery; and it

<sup>1</sup> G. H. Midgley, *Doctrine, Duty and Devotion*, 1950.

is indecorous to wrest it from its context in order to round off a wholly non-Prayer Book addition after Mattins or Evensong. The Prayer Book blessing has already been given in the form of the Grace, and this is made meaningless by adding another after the "sermon". Indeed, very many people do not realize that the Grace is the blessing provided for that service, and the added Communion Blessing is looked upon as the true finale. The Prayer Book, however, reserves the solemnity of the Trinitarian blessing for the day's climax, at the end of the Communion Order. Beyond this it occurs in the formula of Baptism, at Confirmation, and, in slightly different form, in the Marriage rite. Even at the Visitation of the Sick only the Aaronic blessing is employed. Where "extra" blessings are needed, it is in keeping with the spirit of the Prayer Book to reserve the Trinitarian blessing for private ministrations; and in public to use either the Grace or the Aaronic blessing in its threefold form as it occurs in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick. The solemnity of the Trinitarian form is then seen to belong to the Dominical sacraments, and to the well-named "Solemnization" of Matrimony, the sacrament of separation for, and special dedication to, a participation in the Divine creativity, the counterpart on the physical plane of the spiritual realities inherent in the Dominical sacraments. The Trinity is "life"; and is "named" only upon that which expressly gives life.

The addition at the end of Mattins and Evensong of this extra-liturgical appendage thus introduces two grave errors: it stultifies the Prayer Book close, and it leaves man in the ascendant. These two evils could be avoided by having the address at the beginning instead of the end of the Prayer Book Orders. It could there become something in the nature of a Prone, enabling the ensuing Prayer Book Order to be more intelligently rendered. The congregation might be encouraged to bring their Bibles in order to have the text before their eyes, since this greatly helps concentration. To sit and *look* is also an important aid for the opening of the Scriptures to the understanding. The younger members might prefer to take notes as a means of ensuring attention, and this has the added advantage of providing headings for meditation during the coming week. A period of silence after the address, 5, 10, or 15 minutes according to the capacity of the congregation, would give an opportunity for that "inward digesting" without which the most illuminating address remains someone else's religion and not our own. If this Introductory Exercise were recognized as a separate service, it would be wholly in order to swell it with hymns and end it with a

blessing, so that those who were not disposed to remain for the liturgical Office could leave.<sup>1</sup>

If we turn once again to the liturgical scheme we see that the Quicunque Vult and the Litany are included within the framework of Morning Prayer. This is the natural interpretation of the relevant rubrics. With regard to the Quicunque the rubric at its head directs that on thirteen specified days in the year "shall be sung or said at Morning Prayer, instead of the Apostles' Creed, this Confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called the Creed of Saint Athanasius". In the Books of 1549 and 1552, the rubric directed that it "shall be song or sayed immediately after Benedictus". It was an additional exercise and did not supplant the Credal statement, for which purpose it is not designed. It was not till 1661 that the direction was inserted that it was to be said "instead of the Apostles' Creed". Its separate printing, doubtless, is a matter of convenience.

The rubric which introduces the three State Prayers, the Prayer of St Chrysostom, and the Grace (called "these five Prayers") at Morning Prayer, says, "Then these five Prayers following are to be read here, except when the Litany is read; and then only the two last are to be read, as they are there placed". On turning to the Litany we find that they are "there placed" as at Mattins, at the end, and the Litany very manifestly replaces the three State Prayers. The introductory rubric to the Litany itself, however, introduces a slightly different note. "Here followeth the Litany, or General Supplication, to be sung or said after Morning Prayer upon Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and at other times when it shall be commanded by the Ordinary." Here we have the Litany less an appendage to Mattins than a separate exercise; and we remember that it was in course of translation from 1544 onwards, and was used separately before its incorporation into the Book of 1549; and that it was in origin associated with the Communion Order. It was always used in Procession (so the words Litany and Processional are interchangeable); and in some instances, as on Rogation days, there might be an outgoing Procession to some other Church where the Communion Order was sung, and then a returning Procession. Our

<sup>1</sup> With the re-establishment of the Religious Life among us the Opus Dei is being adequately rendered in our Communion. It seems reasonable to provide a popular service for the bulk of the laity and to release them from the obligation of the Opus Dei, for which 400 years' experience has shown them to be unfitted. The liturgical Offices as they are provided can then be offered by the liturgically-minded. (See below, p. 152, footnote.)

Litany is compounded out of older Processionals with further additions from various sources, and there is a telescoping of penitential and festival processions so that one form serves for both. The old Wednesday and Friday Processionals were penitential, but on Sundays and Holydays the Procession consisted of Anthems and special Proses proper to the particular feast. Our present Litany is mainly penitential, though the Anthem "O Lord, arise . . ." recalls the form of festal anthems; and it is directed to be said not only on Wednesdays and Fridays, but also on Sundays, bringing feast and fast to the same level.

Here again there has been a ruthless truncating of the congregational contribution. In the old forms the petitions were so short that the responses were frequently as long as, or even longer than, the petition: the Cantor had barely chanted his, "from all evil" before the response thundered in, "Good Lord, deliver us". There was only time to take breath from this before it was time to sing it again; there was movement, life, impelling and importunate; something was being urged. Cranmer made an end of that. Not the congregation, but the priest, is now the ruling tone. It is the substitution of a chariot and eight with postilions and outriders—beautiful and lovely in itself—for a jet plane, when catastrophe looms, and speed alone can save.

Perhaps there may be a reconsideration of the spiritual value of a single Litany for penitential and festival use. The "miserable sinners" are fitting on Wednesdays and Fridays, on Ember and Rogation Days, but it seems a poor welcome to the risen Lord. When a puppy has been rescued from drowning, it is a distinct anticlimax if the little animal persists in skulking round with its tail between its legs instead of slobbering (even if disgustingly) about one's person with excess of joy. "Hail, festal day" on the glad feasts would seem appropriate.

An even greater distortion of the Prayer Book Order than the addition of "sermons" at Mattins and Evensong has been the introduction of metrical hymns. With the abolition of "Anthems, Responds, Invitations, and such like things" not only was the congregation deprived of its own particular contribution to the service, but even more important perhaps, from a psychological point of view, all the "colour" was wiped out, leaving only a dull uniform grey. The stark monotony that was imposed could hardly be better exemplified than in the title and the grim rubric at the end of Morning and Evening Prayer. "Here endeth the Order of Morning [Evening] Prayer throughout the Year." The dreariness of that "throughout the Year" has a very institutional ring



about it. The form of our Offices is admirable, but human nature demands variety if fatigue is to be avoided. Perhaps only those who are familiar with the old services can fully appreciate the difference in atmosphere between Lauds and Morning Prayer or Vespers and Evening Prayer, with the Prayer Book concentration of responsibility in the hands of the minister and the prolonged periods of ministerial monologue. In the old Offices it is a continual give and take, and the minister, *qua* minister, does most of the listening. So little has the congregational nature of Mattins and Evensong been realized that they remain unsaid in our churches even on Sundays if no priest, deacon or lay reader is available to conduct them. But Cranmer made the laity jointly responsible for the *Opus Dei*, though one wonders whether this can be rendered adequately without special training.<sup>1</sup>

There is no reason to suppose that the Reformers objected to metrical hymns on principle. It seems to be more probable that there was no one at that epoch who had Dr Neale's facility for translation. The one example of a translation which the Prayer Book affords is to be found in the Ordering of Priests. The "Veni Creator" added in 1661 from Cosin's *A collection of private devotions* is followed by a 1549 version, "Come, Holy Ghost, eternal God". It is not certain that this latter is Cranmer's personal work, but at least he recognized his own, or his colleagues', limitations in this direction, and the Office hymns were wholly omitted. The Office hymns, however, were as strictly God-centred as the rest of the Office, and in this respect they differ very considerably from the bulk of the hymns at present in popular use. They were concerned with the Church's liturgical year, and thus brought the lesson and thought of the moment into the memory and emotional receptivity of the ordinary man. The Church, in historical

<sup>1</sup> Before the Reformation the bulk of the laity were not expected to take part in the *Opus Dei*, the eight daily "Hours" of psalmody and Bible reading. Their worship was confined to the Mass, the specifically Christian act ordered by our Lord himself. Our Reformers conceived the wonderful idea of so simplifying the Offices that these as well as the Mass should be offered by everyone and not only by the clergy and Religious. In the event, what largely happened was that the synagogal services, divorced from their Temple-centredness (see p. 133, above) supplanted the sacramental worship which is their focus. It is of the first importance to realize that there was no break between Jewish and Christian worship, except that at our Lord's express command the Eucharist replaced the Temple sacrifices which it fulfilled. Similarly, there was no break at our Reformation, and our daily Cycle is identical in essence with, however different in appearance from, the old services. See also footnote, p. 150, above, for the responsibility now laid on the laity for offering not only the Mass, but also the *Opus Dei*.

fact, owes her metrical hymns to the activities of her schismatics. The heresiarchs discovered that doggerel was a far more effective means of spreading their tenets than elaborate reasoning. Miss Sayers has presented us with a sample<sup>1</sup> of the productions which carried conviction when set to a popular tune; and, faced with this artifice, the Church evolved her seasonal Office hymns, with their lovely tunes. Largely ascribed to St Ambrose, they each deal with a special facet of Redemption's history, and are sung day by day till they hand over the Office to the following season. This use of a hymn is very strange to the average Anglican Church-goer—"Why, we had that hymn last week"—but that is the secret of their power. In rhythmical easily-remembered form they tell creation's and redemption's story, from Advent's "Hark the glad sound, the Saviour comes" to "O Trinity, most blessed light" throughout Trinity. Though many are included in the hymn-books in common use, there is not always an indication of their origin; and as they are not intended for use except in their own season, they are, for the most part, not very familiar.

The rhythm of the Church's Year underlies the whole of her Offices; and it is of first importance that some, at least, of the hymns should suit the season. Such infelicities as Christmas hymns in Advent put everything out of gear. Even children in the street teach us the need for self-discipline and respect for tradition by the strict rules which govern the incoming and outgoing of such momentous matters as marbles or hopscotch. It is admittedly a very difficult matter to select hymns, but we find them grouped under suitable headings, and if the section of "General Hymns" far exceeds that of all the rest put together, we must resist the temptation to begin there. The first consideration is the colour of the frontal. That will tell us whether we have to deal with feast or fast. If the white frontal is on, then there must be at least one "white" hymn. Thus each of the five Sundays after Easter should have at least one Easter hymn; else what is the object of having an Easter season with Sundays expressly dated from Easter? We have only to ascertain what the Sunday is called to know in which part of the hymn-book we have to start. It may mean having the same hymn several Sundays running—if it is the Office hymn this will be the case—and when we have accustomed ourselves to this seeming monotony, we shall find how very

<sup>1</sup> Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Emperor Constantine*, 1951, p. 149:

"Arius of Alexandria, I'm the talk of all the town,  
Friend of Saints, elect of Heaven, filled with learning and renown;  
If you want the Logos-doctrine, I can serve it hot and hot:  
God begat Him and before He was begotten, He was not."

greatly our understanding of the liturgical year is strengthened. It will enter into us and draw us into its rhythm in a way which we had not before experienced or imagined. We shall then begin to realize how dreary and uninspired is the sameliness of arrhythmic eclecticism.

When we have passed through the first half of the year with its alternating violet and white and red, we shall come to the Trinity green, and with it to the Generality hymns. At this season they fall naturally into place, and can sustain the seasonal rhythm if they have not been over-driven by untoward use in the first part of the year. It is during this long level stretch between Pentecost and Advent that the second principle of hymn selection comes to the fore. The colour, except for the occasional red Saints' Day, is green, and we have to fall back more particularly on the material provided by each Sunday's Proper, the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, and the first and second lessons at Morning and Evening Prayer respectively. Frequently we are at a loss to find an appropriate hymn, in spite of the several hundreds which most of our Hymnals contain. In such case, apart from the invariable Office hymn, the Trinity season affords ample scope for what may perhaps be called irrelevant hymn singing, so that there is the more reason for avoiding it in the first half of the year. There is little doubt that a great deal of our hymnody does more to obscure the Church's year than to reveal it; the more so because the hymns mean so much to us. Many, if not most, of them, are indeed excellent theologically, but so frequently out of tune with the occasion. Mgr Knox says somewhere to his co-religionists, "You cannot conceive what a dominant place hymn-singing occupies in the English Church", or words to that effect, and the criticism is just. But we sing hymns because their Scriptural prototypes have been taken away from us.

Here, as everywhere, it is the finishing touch that makes the difference. The best-dressed woman is a dowd if she carries the wrong bag or wears the wrong shoes; and neglect even of minutiae within the framework of the Church's worship makes a gap in the offering.<sup>1</sup> Such

<sup>1</sup> A rubric at Mattins expressly directs that the Gloria is to be said in alternate verses "at the end of every Psalm throughout the Year, and likewise at the end of Benedicite, Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis", yet this may be the one part which is said by Minister and congregation together, the rest having been said in alternate verses.

The rubric which follows the Apostles' Creed at Mattins and Evensong directs that the ensuing prayers are to be said "all devoutly kneeling". Many congregations stand till the words, "Let us pray", when they belatedly betake themselves to their knees. But "Let us pray" does not mean "Let us kneel". After the Lord's Prayer a further rubric directs the Priest to stand up before the Suffrages which

things may seem petty and unworthy to some temperaments, and meticulousness can on occasion miss the spirit by absorption in the letter. Perhaps it was just such problems of detail with their finicking exasperations which drew from Goodier a way of escape by constructive approach. "Fidelity in all things is the most precious and delicate flower of love, to which nothing is little."

Metrical hymns, as Mgr Knox points out, so dominate the average Anglican service that most people have forgotten the fact that the Church's hymnal is the Psalter. Hebrew poetry does not depend upon lines of equal length, but upon a subtle alliteration and play of meaning, together with a fundamental rhythm based upon parallelism. This convention is that the two halves of each verse are complementary. The second half is either synthetic, that is, it develops the thought of the first part with a further germane consideration; or antithetic, it introduces the opposite conception, light, darkness, good, evil; or it is synonymous, it says the same thing in different words. This type of rhythm lends itself easily to memorizing, which was a matter of considerable importance when books were few. Both in the Psalms and also in large tracts of the Prophets the colon and semi-colon are used as rhythmical signs, and Psalms and Prophets attain a dignity and grace when rhythmically read which is often lacking when they are treated as prose.

The colon, in fact, in the Psalms is an important landmark. This has

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introduce the three Collects. The reason that the Priest (though not a deacon or a layman) stands here is because he stands for the Collects in the Communion Order. In the old rite the number of Collects varied, being usually unequal in number, one, three, or five as a rule. In our Prayer Book for Morning and Evening Prayer three is the fixed number. The Suffrages take the place of those in the old Communion rite, and to stand for these but to kneel for any or all of the Collects is an act of purposeless ceremonial which might conveniently be omitted. In the 1928 Book the rubric about the Collects concludes with the words, "the people kneeling".

The three Exhortations in the Communion Order are not designed for daily use, but do our congregations hear them, even before the great Festivals?

The rubric before the Confession expressly directs that it is to be said by one of the Ministers (not by the Celebrant) "in the name of all those that are minded to receive the holy Communion". A parenthetical addition adds that he and all the people are to be kneeling (a necessary direction in view of the Puritan distaste for this attitude), "and saying". These words refer back to the body of the rubric, which becomes meaningless when the people say the Confession themselves. In the Book of 1928 the rubric has been retained with alterations to suit current practice.

perhaps been too little realized because it is a grammatical stop used for a rhythmic purpose. In the Psalms, however, it has no concern with the grammatical propriety of the English words, but indicates that in the Hebrew thought a break occurs at this point. The length of the pause depends upon the pace of the recitation, and is equal to the time taken to say two syllables (and get one good breath). At the end of the verse a pause of one beat is made, the time needed to prevent over-lapping when the Psalms are recited from side to side in alternate verses. Over-lapping, by cutting in before the last syllable has been cleared, is very dear to many Englishmen; and there may be much murder not only in cathedrals in this respect. The Victorian steeplechase through the Psalms is a well-loved sport, especially in academic circles, and it dies hard. The officiating minister only too often sets the tone in parishes where he recites the verses alternately with the congregation. When he crashes through the colon like a lorry through the gates of a level crossing, the effect on the spiritual plane is very similar to that on the physical one. When, instead, the Psalms are recited in alternate verses with due regard to their rhythmic and poetic character we have a very characteristic result; for the full close, to use this term, occurs in the middle of the verse, in the course of the performance on one side, not at the end of the verse, between the two sides. This keeps the vitality of the flow in being without giving a sense of hurry. There is a definite rest in the course of the singing on one side, but no gap between the two sides.

If the Psalms are to be understood as poetry, they must be rhythmically treated; but they are not only poetry, they are also hymns, and they are therefore not adequately rendered unless they are sung. The singing of the lessons "in a playne tune"<sup>1</sup> which brings out the meaning of the words is also necessary for the Psalms. The original forms which were admirably adapted for this purpose have been unfortunately superseded by Anglican chants which, written in metre instead of rhythm, destroy the form of the Hebrew poetry which the Prayer Book version of the Psalms not inadequately reflects. The poetry is there, and some of the simpler "Anglicans", sung rhythmically and not in time, are capable of revealing it. It is to be borne in mind that the Psalms are the offering of the congregation, not primarily of the choir, so that tunes with small compass are requisite. The settings given in some of our Psalters are far from edifying, and especially deplorable is the disfiguring provision of double chants for Psalms with an uneven number of verses. This dis-

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 140.

courteous treatment is meted out to the Magnificat with distressing frequency; and a somewhat similar disregard for structure is found in some pointings for the Te Deum when a triple chant is used. The Te Deum consists of two hymns and an addendum. The first, "We praise Thee, O God. . . . Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter" is a hymn, with a doxology, addressed to the Father; the second, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ. . . . Make them to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting" is addressed to our Lord; the last eight verses, "O Lord, save Thy people . . . let me never be confounded" may, or may not, have been added in honour of the Holy Ghost, the Lord. They are all versicles taken from different Psalms, and were added, perhaps at the beginning of the fifth century, from Jerome's revision. Whenever added, they are in any case a stanza of eight verses, not of four; and reverence and seemliness are observed if the chant changes at the words, "O Lord, save thy people", but it is wholly confusing at, "Vouchsafe, O Lord". The Te Deum has been printed accurately in three paragraphs in the Accession Service at the end of the Prayer Book of 1661; but it is unfortunate that in 1928 the Revisers introduced a preliminary fourth paragraph both into the Te Deum and the Benedicite. They have, however, left the correct paragraphing in the Accession Service.

Three rubrics follow the Nicene Creed, dealing respectively with the notices, the sermon, and the Offertory. These three matters follow each other here, in this order, and they occur nowhere else in the Daily Cycle. They belong to the central act of the Church's worship, and their intrusion into, or in connection with, Morning and Evening Prayer, has no sanction in the Prayer Book. We may notice in this connection the first rubric in the form of Solemnization of Matrimony.

In 1549 and 1552, it ran: "First the bannes must be asked three severall Sundayes or holy daies, in the service time, the people being present, after the accustomed maner." There was no form added. In 1661 it had been expanded into the following: "First, the Bannes of all that are to be married together, must be published in the Church three severall Sundayes, or Holy-dayes in the time of Divine service, immediately before the Sentences for the Offertory: the Curate saying after the accustomed manner [I publish the Banns of Marriage . . . This is the . . . time of asking]."

The wording of this form is the same as to-day. The banns, together

with all the other notices, are given out at Mass.<sup>1</sup> If we turn to our present Prayer Books, however, we shall not find the 1661 rubric, but one which has been adapted to our liturgically-fallen state. "First the Banns of all that are to be married together must be published in the Church three several Sundays, during the time of Morning Service, or of Evening Service (if there be no Morning Service) immediately after the second lesson: the Curate saying after the accustomed manner, "I publish. . ." This rubric has only the authority of the printers. In the twilight religious days of the early Georges, when there were few services, and they only rarely the Communion Order, Acts were published authorizing the publication of Banns at the Evening Service if there were no Morning Service. The printers read this to include "Morning Service" and altered the Prayer Book without warrant. This is an instance where a rubric is properly disregarded, wherever it is found in a different form from that in the Book of 1661, noted above.<sup>2</sup>

To return to the rubric concerning notices. We find that there is a strict regulation of the matters that are to be given out in church. Nothing is to be announced except by the incumbent (or his deputy), and by him nothing which is not provided for in the Prayer Book itself, or ordered by the King or the Diocesan; that is, any particular matter must be officially endorsed by civil or religious authority. One wonders whether Mothers' Meeting outings and whist drives for the heating apparatus come under any of the above heads.

The notices which are to be given out every week concern "what Holy-days, or Fasting-days, are in the week following to be observed. And then also (if occasion be) shall notice be given of the Communion." It is not uncommon for such notices to be omitted at the Early Service even when there is no further celebration in the church later in the day. Notice should be given here of the liturgical season, so that the orderly flow of worship is not interrupted by instruction before the Collect.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This word sometimes causes distress as a result of confusing certain theories with the word itself. This means neither less nor more than "Communion Order", and has the advantage of including all aspects of the rite, Lord's Supper, Eucharist, Communion, etc. It binds us to no theory or doctrine, and was retained in 1549 at the head of the Order of Holy Communion, thus completely disposing of the suggestion that it is a sectarian *Roman* Catholic word. It remains in our Prayer Book and in common speech in the word Christmas. Michaelmas also is in general use.

<sup>2</sup> The proposed new Canon XL perpetuates the present dislocation of the Prayer Book rhythm.

<sup>3</sup> If the congregation is very immature an announcement can be made before the service begins regarding the Proper (Collect, Epistle, and Gospel) that will be used.

In many churches notice is given of Holy- but not of Fasting-days. We may be told of Christmas Day, but it is less usual to hear at the same time that Christmas Eve is a Vigil appointed to be kept as a Fast-day. Ascension Day may be announced without any mention being made of the three preceding Rogation Days, of which the Monday and Tuesday are to be kept as "Days of Fasting, or Abstinence", but the Wednesday as a day of Fasting, being the Vigil of the Ascension; we may hear of Saints' days, but all-too-rarely of their Vigils. Yet it is but a maimed feast for which we have made no preparation. When we invite friends to tea we do not wait till their arrival to put out the cups and bake the cake.

The Prayer Book has omitted any commemoration of the Saints in the Eucharistic Canon. (A general phrase was added to the Prayer for the Church in the 1928 Book.) Such omission would have been incomprehensible in the Early Church when the Communion of Saints was an imperative reality with the protracted delay of the expected Parousia. Possibly these memorials were added for the very purpose of asserting that the dead in Christ, so far from being at a disadvantage, would come with him in That Day. The fact that we keep Saints' days is, however, a challenge to remember them. In this respect we are very unfortunately placed in comparison with our Jewish forbears, since our heroes are more likely to be Drake or Wellington than Alban or Columba. There was no such double standard for the Jews, for to them no mundane success had any value apart from its religious content. The Jewish worthies *were* the saints. The hero-worship comes out on nearly every page of the Old Testament, and the New Testament expects us to be equally familiar with them, and to guide our own way by the light of their example. *Time* failed the writer of Hebrews to speak of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, but it is inclination that fails ourselves to sing of Mary, highly favoured, Peter and Paul, Stephen and Athanasius, and all the myriad saints of our own land. They are our blood-relations, and it is our pious privilege to keep their memory green. Perhaps the word "prayer" to describe our intercourse with the Saints is misleading. Having left their mortal bodies behind they are as inaccessible to sensible approach as the rest of our brethren departed, and they must await the final reunion of soul with the functioning medium of the immortalized body for means of direct contact with others. Not till the Lord makes up his jewels is the heavenly state of complete intercommunication realized.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 49.

Yet since all those who depart in Christ are in him, they are in their degree present with him in our worship. This is the point of contact. Here in this sacramental ordinance we are linked with both living and departed, not only by ties of natural affection with those whom we love, but by the imperishable bond of his charity with those whom we heartily abhor. Independent of our feelings and unperceived by our senses the "majority" are as truly accessible in him as the living are. Perhaps "Pray for us" is not so irrational as it seems, for all the Exchanges lie open here. Our intercessions are joined with those of our Great Intercessor, our Head and High Priest, and with all the company of the Triumphant and Expectant and with those still Militant in earth, as we pass forward with Angels and Archangels to join in the endless Ter Sanctus which is the acme of all intercession. We sing without a qualm "Crown Him with many crowns", "Onward, Christian soldiers", or "All people that on earth do dwell", addressing all our fellow-Christians still in this world. Our *prayer* to them rings through Christendom, and the impulse is felt by all who are struggling to "fight the good fight", whether they hear with their ears, or feel the appeal supra-sensibly alone. Our call to those beyond the veil to "pray for us" is less a drawing-down of the Saints to our necessities than a strengthening of our own hold upon the reality of the heavenly life, an examining of our Alpine rope to make sure that it has not frayed, and that we are still securely linked with those in front.

There can be very few churches now in which there will no "occasion be" that "notice be given of the Communion". It is, in fact, the revolution that has occurred with regard to Communion in the last hundred years which has contributed largely to the dislocations of the Prayer Book Order with which we are confronted to-day. When there were no "Early Services" and Communion was administered quarterly, there was less difficulty about Mattins, Litany, and Table Prayers at 11 a.m. It is a matter of great thankfulness that all parties are more liturgically-minded than was the case after the first World War, for our Liturgy is the expression of our faith, and any sanctioned changes which are liturgically inferior can never finally be anything but derogatory to the Glory of God. There are provisions in the proposed new Canons which seem unfortunate in this respect.<sup>1</sup>

The Offertory is not synonymous with the alms, though these are

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the express permission to wear a hood when celebrating, the display of a personal adornment when acting for the congregation. We should not expect an officer on parade to sport a button-hole on his wedding-day.

collected at the time that the Offertory is made. The Offertory is the bread and wine which are to be used for the Communion, and are offered before God in token of our total self-surrender. They are the gifts of the people, so the alms which are collected at this stage represent the people's contribution. A habit has grown up in some quarters for the priest to take the people's alms to the altar and to recite a prayer over them. There is no prayer provided here in the Prayer Book, because the alms are specifically offered with the oblations in the course of the Prayer for the Church. The recitation of a private benediction while the collectors stand solemnly at the Altar rails is one of the pieces of interpolated ritual and ceremonial which is being advocated. If this is authorized, it would be better to alter the Prayer for the Church by deleting the offering of the alms with the oblations (where, however, their juxtaposition demonstrates their relationship). To offer them twice over is needless, and introduces an unreality into a solemn part of the service. Alms collected at other services, as well as moneys from boxes in the church, might very suitably be saved and offered at the next celebration. The pomp and circumstance introduced with the collection at other services obscures the real significance of the offering; whereas the setting aside of such collections to be offered later at the proper place in the liturgical movement is an object-lesson in itself of the incomplete nature of Morning and Evening Prayer.

Whereas on most occasions, in all but the larger churches, there is usually no difficulty about the quantity of bread<sup>1</sup> which is to be taken for the Offertory, some priests find more difficulty in judging the quantity of the wine. The rubric at the end of the Communion Order says, "If any of the Bread and Wine remain . . . of that which was consecrated". That is to say, that there is no more need for the chalice to remain half full than there is to take seven wafers when there are

<sup>1</sup> By a slight adaptation of the first rubric in the Communion Order, the need for reconsecration should never arise. Instead of sending in their names beforehand, intending Communicants in large churches can make a mark on a paper at the door when they enter, the vergers taking up the total with the alms. The principle could be extended for the relief of those priests who serve several churches, and may celebrate twice or oftener every Sunday. By means adapted to each locality the communicants at, say, two latter churches could make known their intention (such discipline might be wholesome) in time for the priest to consecrate enough for the three celebrations at the first church, and according to primitive practice to carry the consecrated elements from his "bishop's" Mass to the other localities. As our Prayer Book stands, the only omission at these places would be the Prayer of Consecration. Our Prayer Book, when followed, is wonderfully primitive in its possibilities.

three Communicants. It is unseemly for the priest *habitually* to consume a much larger quantity of consecrated wine at the ablutions than he took for his communion.

There seem to be two ways of withholding the Chalice from the laity in the Anglican Church. The first is practised by a minute minority, those who consider that the laity should only be communicated in one kind. This is obvious; but the other way is no less real. It occurs where the mixed chalice has been adopted without due appreciation of the necessary safe-guards. The matter for Communion is wine, and nothing else; and the protecting convention when water is added is that it must not exceed one-eighth of the total quantity. If more than this is added, the cup no longer contains wine, and the diluted fluid is not proper for Communion. Yet frequently water is poured into the chalice in quantities very far exceeding the "little water" mentioned in the 1928 Book. Better far the unmixed chalice than the watered one. The number of churches in which the Chalice is withheld because it is not consecrated with the proper matter must be very great indeed.

THE END OF THE MATTER<sup>1</sup>

THERE IS NO single development of the past hundred years for which we can give greater thanks than the miracle which has transformed us so nearly into a Communicant Church. The number of Communion made in this country every week in comparison with those, shall we say, in any corresponding week during the 1851 Exhibition, would at that date have seemed as frankly incredible as radar-guided air travel or television. And if we glance at some of the religious lampoons of that mid-century we shall realize that the atmosphere of religious controversy has undergone as profound a change as our methods of mundane travel. It seems not irrational to connect this growth of Christian courtesy with the present widespread Communicant life, a return to primitive custom which our Reformers envisaged with such truly prophetic insight. For, after all, the express work of the Spirit within the Church is the bestowal and replenishing of its life by the sacramental means which our Lord ordained for this purpose. In our Communion we are taking, not Episcopacy, but God, into our systems, and thereby give him a greater and greater facility for manifesting his Will through his Body for the world. Not infrequently we think of the Spirit's guidance as a sudden inspiration, but unless we are making him the receiving agent through the sacramentally-conditioned Life within us, we are more likely to misinterpret than to obey his leadings. We may say, then, that each one of us can make a constructive contribution towards reunion with every Communion that we receive. A direct flight to the apex of the triangle (which is God) enables us to see with his eyes and from his point of vantage the angle of the base opposite to ourselves, and we gain a truer perspective of our respective values in that upper air. Perhaps we may even have a passing glimpse of the possibilities, in God's eyes, inherent even in ill-regulated excess. There may be very value in extremes for the maintenance of a mean. In any case we may be sure that the more freely his life is able to move within us, the more supple our spiritual joints become through regular and frequent exercise, the more easily will he be able to make use of apparently irreconcilable attitudes. And in this every member of the Body is of importance; and we rejoice that during this century

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. 12. 13.

Communicant life has been sown into our Church and is springing up, we know not how,<sup>1</sup> in the tangible fruit of courtesy, the precursor and the manifestation of charity.

In our own Branch of the Church Catholic we may perhaps add to the fruit of our developing Communicant life the increased interest in, and appreciation of, things liturgical that is showing itself. This is a matter of very real moment, for our Liturgy rises up within the four safeguarding corners of our Quadrilateral as the enshrined expression of their meaning and intention: what we think of God is made plain by the manner of our worship. If we can rethink our ideas of sacrifice, realizing how greatly we have been hampered by the medieval mentality which has been bequeathed to us all, it should be but a step to the formulation of the principle that the Dominical injunctions are the centre of our worship as in Apostolic days. The Eucharist at which the greatest number of people normally make their Communion in any given parish will then be the climax and centre of each Sunday's worship, where the Prayer Book places it, and we regain the pattern and rhythm that has been so largely lost; as also the key to alterations and adjustments. We shall then see our Communion as the great climax of praise at "the" service of the day, instead of a very private, individual and secret affair transacted before breakfast;<sup>2</sup> we shall not be so afraid of "non-communicating" attendance, knowing that the evil which we fear is not an essential accompaniment of obedience to our Lord's command.

But if true ideas of the Holy Communion are to be maintained we must also rescue Baptism from "private" administration not unlike our Early-Service Communion. Both are public acts, and both need to be restored to the central place appointed in our Prayer Book. Only so shall we retain a true sense of balance, for there is real danger otherwise of an exaggerated emphasis being laid on the Holy Communion. As Father Benson wrote:<sup>3</sup> "In Western Christendom the Holy Eucharist has so entirely overshadowed Holy Baptism, that the food of our life is made to be a gift greater than the life which it sustains. Without a full acknowledgement of the supernatural change wrought at our Baptism, our spiritual life becomes a metaphor. . . ." These two Sacraments, and they alone, have been Dominically ordered for our worship.

<sup>1</sup> Mark 4. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Service and breakfast will still follow each other in this order, but the service will no longer be relegated to a corner to suit the usual breakfast hour.

<sup>3</sup> *Further Letters of Richard Meux Benson*, p. 44.

Do we really believe that anything can do instead? Let us remember also that they are life, and therefore exhibit movement, for which reason they both retain the interest and attention of children. Our Lord did not forget the children when he ordained our public worship.

This mention of the children encourages a digression, though, indeed, our whole Godward life is so closely integrated that one aspect inevitably leads to another as our exchanges become unblocked. There are certain landmarks in the history of our search for God which stand out in retrospect as clearly as though they had but just occurred—which perhaps they have, for a timeless experience cannot be pigeon-holed into days and years. One such experience was the discovery that we do not know God with our intellect. We can no more touch him with our brain than we can harpoon a whale with a veil or a violet. We can learn *about* him, indeed, but our intellect together with our senses makes up our equipment for our intercourse at a rational and sensory level with all our natural surroundings, and though God is in them, he lies beyond them. Our intellectual comprehension is of value when it feeds and increases the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which are our means of direct contact with God. In the unsophisticated and in childhood they are easily evoked; and children are so quick to see the Burning Bush that they will invent their own pantheon if they are not given true theocentric help. Our own need is to become as little children if we would see him. It is very humbling, but very gladdening too. The sacraments are offered to us as a looking-glass. They may only reflect that which we can see; or they may become for us, as for Alice, the very stuff of which we receive the capacity to enter into fourth-dimensional relationships otherwise wholly unimagined and apart from their supernatural use unimaginable. And of the homely means selected by our Lord, water, bread, wine, it is noteworthy that water alone is a natural product. In Baptism there is nothing that we can offer, we can only receive; but once having received, we can only remain in that life by the reciprocity of giving which is its essence. Therefore in Communion the matter is bread and wine, not wheat and grapes. Of our labour and our natural sustenance is fashioned the glass of testing, wherein we either see—bread and wine, or pass with Manoah's wondrously-working angel towards heaven in the flame of the altar.<sup>1</sup>

We come here to a real difference between godliness and holiness. Godliness (the goal of the 1552 Confession) is largely based upon and is

<sup>1</sup> Judges 13. 19.

exercised within the limits of the human intellect. It can reach a very high degree of perfection of conduct, but it dreads anything which appears to it unworthy of its own ratiocination (and we do well to bear in mind the warning that in clearing away errors and abuses there is a possibility that what finally remains ceases to be religion).<sup>1</sup> Holiness passes beyond this stage into a new atmosphere where sacramental means are used for the fusion into one of two lives dissimilar in kind, by developing the supernatural life within the confines of the tangible. It is essentially a double life, and therefore more difficult than a religion bounded by natural endowments which remains on one plane. Sacramental life thus opens up the possibility of a lower attainment in conduct, which is sometimes a stumbling-block to the non-sacramentally-trained, who feel that sacraments are a failure if faithful communicants are not manifestly more righteous than their neighbours. But this is to equate sacraments with magic. Grace is not a conjuring trick, but goes down to the roots and works unseen. Saints do not spring, Minerva-like, full-haloed at their birth, and though we should expect and look for fruit, we must await its season. By expecting results prematurely we may force a precocious show of leaves, compelling the subject of our care to misapply grace to superficial appearance, instead of leaving him to grow, quietly, and possibly annoyingly, during the long formative period of youth and middle life.

As Anglicans we have largely replaced sacramental by intellectual worship. But we have become a Communicant Church in this generation, even if still very far from primitive Christian practice. Which of us would care to be the one to invite St Paul to join us at Choral Morning Prayer as our idea of Sunday worship, or to endure his comments on our satisfaction with the evening congregation? Our High Anglican services have their stately place; and when they occupy that, and not another, our Prayer Book will not only render fitting service to God, but also draw back again the classes which were lost when the transcendental, which the simple and unlearned are so skilled in comprehending, was removed. We cannot have too glorious a rational and godly worship; but at its centre let us replace the homely, humbling mystery, where we cast our intellectual crowns upon the ground in simple adoration of loving faith and thankfulness.

When we have firmly entrenched the sacraments, the two central figures of our scheme, we can proceed to fill in the framework. The first essential for Morning and Evening Prayer is to regain for the

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 83.

Psalter the position of dignity which it ought to occupy. Mr Harold Riley's<sup>1</sup> translations and regrouping would afford much help here, giving a fresh approach and outlook. This matter of the Psalms is a serious one, for until they are restored to a place of central importance in our services we have gravely disturbed the balance and meaning of our Prayer Book Offices. The recitation of the Psalter is the object of our *service*, and it is doubtful whether we have the right to employ that word when we sing four hymns and one Psalm. Our Lord's use of the Psalms as the means of his own worship of the Father is the overriding reason for keeping them intact; and in his company some of them, which to spiritual immaturity may seem un-Christian, will be found capable of conveying Christian import.

When the Psalms are recognized as the substance of the service, the next matter of importance is the Lessons. A brief and judicious explanation at the beginning has sometimes been advocated,<sup>2</sup> and if allowed to take the place of the customary final address, would have much to commend it. Further, the synagogal origin of our choir Offices would be emphasized if a devotional Commentary<sup>3</sup> were openly consulted in this connection. This practice might in time lessen the demand for two or more original discourses every Sunday, a grave and unreasonable tax on any priest at any time, and quite contrary to the spirit and explicit directions in our Prayer Book. The replacement of the one and only sermon in its one and only place could thus be effected with a minimum of psychological strain. In ordinary churches to-day, for children and young people especially, the present lessons are a real austerity unless the time is frankly set aside for day-dreaming, which is perhaps not infrequently the case with many of us. Experience in listening has shown that a high degree of self-discipline and power of concentration are needed if the lections exceed ten to fifteen verses in length.<sup>4</sup> The Epistles and Gospels are on an average very well suited to congregational attention, but the lessons are usually double this length. The same ground could be covered by subdividing each lesson; but the

<sup>1</sup> Harold Riley, *The Revision of the Psalter*, 1948.

<sup>2</sup> It has the grave drawback of interfering with the flow of worship if practised within the Liturgy, but would be suitable in a preliminary Prone. (See above, p. 10.)

<sup>3</sup> We come to church to *worship*, not to hear a lecture on O.T. origins. That is for the Parish Hall, or the magazine. The Church's method of exposition was by Responds, which, pedagogical in effect, remain worship.

<sup>4</sup> The Church practised psychology long before this subject attained ological status. The old lessons are short, and as soon as attention is liable to wander the congregation is brought to its feet for a Respond. Having "shaken itself" with singing, it subsides reawakened for the next lection.



ancient pattern would be restored by having only three. In such a case the seasonal Office hymn might follow the first lesson.

The change which would most greatly affect the aspect of the usual Morning<sup>1</sup> and Evening Service would be that which restores them to their appearance in the Prayer Book, by removing the address at Mattins (if it must be delivered) to the beginning of the service, and by substituting for it a catechetical instruction after the second lesson at Evensong. There is no doubt that for those of us who have always been Church-people such changes as are suggested would be in the main repugnant. But at the moment the Church is faced with a large influx of persons who have no particular background. There was an inter-war period in which it was no longer necessary to go to church in order to establish oneself socially, with the result that church-going showed a notable decline; and those who are beginning to refill our churches have, so to say, an open mind in the matter. It is a singular opportunity for returning to the Prayer Book as it stands. When we have grasped the principles upon which our Liturgy is based we shall probably find less to alter than seemed at first to be the case; and this should help us to avoid the main defect of the 1928 Book, whereby the Catholic interpretation became a merely permissive alternative use, instead of being the foundation as it is of the present Book. And the truly Catholic interpretation is uncompromisingly Evangelical, so that we do well not to tamper with our present basis of unity till we have had time to revise our own ideas and to disentangle ourselves from our medieval heritage. In the meantime we could restore some of the lost colour by having a supplement to be used with it, as are the present various hymnals.

Such a supplement might contain a short introduction drawing attention to the great change in balance which occurs when Morning and Evening Prayer are treated as ends in themselves with terminal addresses unprovided in the Prayer Book. A scheme of Service, such as that suggested on p. 169, might be used as an illustration of adaptations which would not disturb the Prayer Book pattern, as happens when

- (i) the Prayer Book Grace is superseded by another blessing;
- (ii) a "sermon" is appended as a climax;
- (iii) a collection is offered at the Altar.

<sup>1</sup> The hour of 11 a.m. is an outstanding problem of present Anglican worship. We can be confident that it has neither Scriptural nor primitive precedent. In a Norfolk parish an old deed leaves money for the bells to be rung "before nine of the clock", an hour admirably suited to country folk.

The body of the supplement might contain:

1. A festal Litany or, better, a series of Processionals such as those planned by Cranmer, though preferably not of the Cranmerian type. The present Litany would then be only appointed for ferias and special penitential occasions. It would be definitely excluded from ordinary Sunday use.
2. A revised Psalter, perhaps after the pattern of the Riley version. Special Sunday Psalms may be needed for an interim period, but the ideal would be for the Sunday congregations to become familiar with the whole Psalter, as their forbears were.
3. Some of the Canticles given in the Riley Psalter might very profitably be included, together with other short congregational anthems for singing between the multiplied lessons.
4. It should contain the old "Propers" for the Communion Order (the Psalmody which occurs at

- (a) the Priest's entrance,
- (b) between the Epistle and Gospel,
- (c) at the Offertory,
- (d) at the Communion),

restoring the Biblical chants which are at present usually replaced by hymns.

5. A skeleton Prone might be included as suggested in Chapter 2.
6. The seasonal Office hymns should be included, since they are not found complete in many of the ordinary Hymnals, and the Office hymns, being a part of the *Opus Dei*, have their rightful place in a Book of Common Prayer.

*A suggested Morning Service*

Introductory Hymn (of the Season)

Address

period of silence

["Let us confess our sins before God."]

Confession and Absolution of 1661.

*People.* "We confess to God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that we have sinned exceedingly in thought,

In Advent  
and Lent.

At other  
seasons.

word, deed and by omission, of our own fault. Wherefore we pray God to have mercy upon us."

*Minister.* "The Almighty and merciful Lord grant unto you pardon and forgiveness of all your sins, time for true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit."

*People.* "Amen."

The Confession and Absolution are omitted at the greater Festivals.]

"Our Father. . . ."

Ÿ. "O Lord, open Thou our lips. . . ."

Venite

PSALMS

(in complete number, sung standing or sitting)

1st Lesson (10—15 vv. and so throughout)

(at the end of the lesson, in place of "Here endeth. . . .")

Ÿ. "But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us."

RŸ. "Thanks be to God."

(and so after every reading of Scripture)

O.T. Canticle or Office hymn of the Season

2nd Lesson

TE DEUM

3rd Lesson

BENEDICTUS

Creed

[Lord's Prayer, Suffrages]

Collects

[Intercessory prayers]

Chrysostom. Grace.

Lord's Prayer and Suffrages are omitted.

One Collect only is said (all standing during Eastertide<sup>1</sup>).

A hymn of the Season after the Grace.

In penitential seasons and times of special necessity.

At greater Festivals.

<sup>1</sup> This provision rests upon an unrepealed Canon which forbids kneeling in Eastertide. The proposed new Canon XVIII allows kneeling or standing when prayers are offered, but requires standing for the Psalms and Canticles.

The Collection is made at the door, and taken straight to the vestry.

It is placed in safety until it can be offered at the next Eucharist.

The Service begins at the Confession or at the Lord's Prayer, according to the Season.

The suggestion, then, is that certain variants should be introduced in an appendix to mark the changes of the seasons. Much of our present confusion is due to individual attempts to lessen the strain of rigid sameness imposed by our Reformers. Monotony is as soul-destroying spiritually as industrially; and the escape should be provided for us in our worship by the *ordered* rhythm of the Church's year reflecting itself in the ordered variations in the Church's public worship.

There remains the answer to the problem set at the outset. How far does the Prayer Book provide us with worship that is pure praise, and to what extent does it make provision for the frailty of fallen man? The answer seems to be that there is a glorious God-centredness in the whole of our Liturgy. If the Prayer Book pattern is followed, God reigns supreme. All compartmental definitions break down when over- logically pursued, for there are no isolations in God, and all our dismembered conceptions do in reality partake somewhat of each other, since all are mediated by the Holy Spirit. Yet as we consider those twin mysteries, the Word and Sacraments, those living entities dispensed by the appointed ministers within the safeguards of the Creeds, we cannot but remember that when the Creator communed with un-fallen man, the Word of his mouth sprang forth in unveiled immediacy of glory. When self had slain its own capacity for seeing God, a veil was thereby drawn before the eyes which now can only dimly discern the Deity when himself veiled in fleshly form. The Word remains, both hidden and revealed, in written records; and by express command of that same Word in his Redeptor's rôle, in sacraments. It is the same Word that sprang of old unmediated from the Father's mind, but not, alas! the same man. And so we find ourselves continually seeking ways of ease in our worship. But God himself has found the means of ministering to our weakness without derogating from his own due. Our specific offering of Psalmody, austere to the natural man, is brought within our limits by the reaching-down to us at Redemption's level of God's own life in the sacramental focus given us by our Lord himself. Old and young, wise and witless, can grasp the means and meaning of the cleansing water, the sustaining bread and wine. This is the Life eternal and the Way to it is this.

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