

Project Canterbury

The New American Prayer Book: Its History and Contents

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Preface

The Book of Common Prayer is the common heritage of all the churches in the English speaking world. The issue of a new Book therefore is of more than passing interest.

The purpose of this little volume is to outline the evolution of the American Prayer Book by sketching its origins and development through the years. For in truth it is the heir of the ages. Parts of it are drawn from the devotions of the faithful in the early days of Christianity; parts of it are the product of that great religious upheaval known as the Reformation, and parts from modern and even contemporary sources. Its successive changes and additions mirror the changing thoughts of the times. Its history is here sketched because today is only intelligible in the light of yesterday.

The large story is of necessity severely compressed and many things of surpassing interest have been omitted. It is hoped, however, that this outline will stimulate interest in the field of liturgics.

"Who faulteth not, liveth not," but pains have been taken to ensure accuracy, and on doctrinal matters the author has striven to be fair and impartial. His one aim has been to provide a help to

an intelligent understanding of the new American Prayer Book.

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