Prayer Book Revision

1662 EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN NEEDS

By The Rev. Desmond K. Dean, M.A., B.D.
(*Rector of Tooting Parish Church, London*)

WHEN the secretary first talked to me about this conference over the telephone many months ago, I told him quite frankly that I doubted if I was the right person to speak on the subject of 1662 in the light of modern needs, since I am a diehard devotee of the present Prayer Book and probably one of its most rigid adherents in the Church of England to-day, making the very minimum of omissions and deviations, and altogether eschewing the popular sport of verbal emendation. I should only be able to be loud in my praises of a book of worship and devotion which appears to me to be well able to meet the needs of our modern world ; (for whilst one can see certain features in which it might be brought up to date, I have been very happy with it as it is, and so have my congregations in three churches of which I have been the incumbent). He said it might not be a bad thing for this point of view to be expounded in one of the papers ; and I supposed that if it did nothing else of value, it could at all events provoke some discussion. The one precaution I did not take was that of enquiring what other topics had been selected. It was with some misgiving, therefore, that I discovered quite a long time after that what I had (perhaps somewhat foolishly) conceived to be a not inconsiderable part of my subject was to have a paper all to itself, and that no less a giant than my old friend the Principal of Oak Hill College was to deal with it. Taking the view I do, it is almost as if you were going to have two papers on identical or, at the least, very similar themes—except that I would say that the 1662 Prayer Book does not need to be *made* to live in the Parish—it is merely waiting to be *allowed* to do so. It was once said of Christianity that it had not been tried and found wanting—it had been found difficult and not tried. We are in danger of reaching the same situation with regard to the Prayer Book. It is not perfect—nor will it be perfect when all the liturgiologists and all the antiquarians, when all the modernists and all the conservatives, when all the laymen and all the parsons—the bishops, priests and deacons—even the deacons—have done their best and their worst, and have thrown into the sieve all their preferences and all their objections and all their suggestions. The only perfect book is the Bible ; and to hear some people talk you would think they cherish a sneaking suspicion that they could have made a better job of that than the Holy Spirit did ! The Prayer Book of 1662 is not perfect ; and if I throw in a suggestion here and there which might be regarded as of some assistance in recovering uniformity in the use of our standard book of public worship, which every one could happily follow without these irritating deviations, some trifling, some not so trifling, it does not alter the position which I propose to take up : namely, that in the main (pardon my deliberate avoidance of our modern speechmakers' maid-of-all-work " by and large "—what a calamity if it ever found its way into a

" Prayer Book in Modern Speech " !), 1662 will pass with honours any examination in the light of modern needs. If *then* I must wait in agonizing anticipation of the storm which will burst around my innocent head in the discussion which follows, and of the kind but devastating correction which will be meted out to me in papers by the two College Principals which come after, it will only serve to take me back to the night thirty years ago, when I was the only one of a " gang of hooligans ", as we were dubbed, taking part in a college rag who was not quite quick enough to get away when Dr. Gilbert arrived on the scene.

What chance do we give our 1662 Prayer Book to meet the needs of our people ? What chance do they have of even getting familiar with it ? We begin our services of Morning and Evening Prayer with sentences other than the eleven prescribed, frequently to the disturbance of the balance of the penitential introduction ; and we follow this with an exhortation composed only of a head and a tail with all the body missing—if we do not use an entirely different compilation. The Absolution will remain intact, in case we can snatch a crumb of priestly satisfaction out of it, which will be enhanced if a deacon has to give way at this point to his superior ; for, although he may conduct the service, read the Scripture, baptize the infants, publish the banns, instruct the youth in the Catechism, and even preach, if he be admitted thereto by the bishop, he must on no account use this form in declaring God's pardon of penitent sinners. Better no absolution than one with such an obvious defect. So we proceed to the Venite—but only seven verses lest we be reminded of the wrath and judgment of a sin-hating God. The Psalms are too many to be sung in their monthly course ; and in any case they contain inspired imprecations unfit to be uttered by lips by which worse are only muttered against those awful people sitting in the pew over there. So we ring the changes on a few select gems of wonder, love and praise—or substitute a hymn instead (or did I hear of one brother introducing choruses at this point ?). We are back where we were in 1549 when, in Cranmer's words : " Notwithstanding that the ancient fathers have divided the psalms into seven portions, whereof every one was called a nocturn : now of late time a few of them hath been daily said, and the rest utterly omitted." Lessons and Canticles will be included as set, except at our guest or people's services, when they will be cut to half. The Creed will be said, of course, for without it we should not have that little bit of ritual of turning east, which is little enough left to us, seeing that the C.P.-A.S. is so rigid over the north-side rubric of the Prayer Book (why will some evangelicals talk about north end ?) though, for some, there are ways of getting over even that rule. The Lord's Prayer need not be repeated, for we have already exhausted its meaning at its first recitation. Versicles and responses will be followed by the collect *for* rather than *of* the particular day. After the choir or congregational anthem there may be a little walk into the centre aisle with Acts of Devotion or Chain of Prayer across the Ages, or any other collection of prayers which may display our inventiveness or archæological research in prayers dug up from anywhere except the Prayer Book. Bishop Stephen Neill wrote a few years ago of " the practice, now very

general, of inserting after the Third Collect any kind of intercessions from any source, authorized or unauthorized, at the discretion or indiscretion of the parson. It is clear that we have come very near to the " Protestant ideal, where the parson is his own pope, and " (note this phrase very carefully) " his only concern is with the immediate needs and interests of his own flock ". We may perhaps permit St. Chrysostom to open his golden mouth towards the end, and with an interesting variation of emphasis and punctuation, whilst to some God gives grace, at-this-time-with-one-accord-to-make-our-common-supplications, to others He will give-grace-at-this-time, with one accord to make the supplications ; and to others again, He gives-grace-at-this-time-with-one-accord ; happy the man whose breathing exercises allow him to dispense with all commas and pauses for breath, and so to leave his congregation to puzzle it all out each according to his ability. Our prayers will be rounded off with the Grace, in the saying of which we shall need the help of the whole congregation—but even here we shall have to amend the title of the Third Person of the Trinity, lest our ignorant people confuse Him with the apparition in the haunted house they were scared by in the play on the television last night ! The story is told of the little girl who asked her mother : " Mummy, what is the Holy Ghost ? " And when mummy, somewhat perplexed as to how to expound so vast a subject to so small a child replied, " Oh, you'll understand better when you're a little older," she was startled at the rejoinder : " I see, I *thought* it was something not quite nice."

The service is now technically over, but we have decided that it is more appropriate to publish the banns after than during the service ; in the course of which publication, having affirmed that these (whatever " these " may be) are for the first, second, or third time of asking, we issue the challenge to any who may know *just cause* or impediment why these persons, *respectively* or *severally* (lest, as someone has remarked, it should be thought that they are to be all tied up in one big bunch in an abode of love) should not be joined together. We can then enjoy ourselves with the notices, and our people can enjoy themselves in their own way during the sermon ; and the whole service reaches its closing stages to the accompaniment of jingling coins, inaccurately described as " the offertory ", to be rounded off with a " Blessing " which is more a hotchpotch of exhortations than a blessing, though mainly from the Bible.

So we could go on. E. J. G. Rogers wrote in *The Churchman*, January, 1946 : " It is impossible to ignore the fact that in many parishes experiments are being made in public worship, in many churches changes and modifications are being introduced into the services. We are lapsing into congregationalism. It is the understood thing to-day that the Prayer Book order will not be adhered to. A licensed reader of my own, going to take a service at short notice for a clergyman who had been taken ill, was greeted by the churchwarden on arrival with the query : " What are we going to leave out to-day ? " And was much cast down when the reader replied : " We're not leaving anything out "—which, if not strictly accurate, conveyed his intentions fairly clearly. Of course, the craze for shortening everything is not a new thing. Dickens, in *Oliver Twist*, parodies " the

reverend gentleman who read as much of the burial office as could be compressed into four minutes ". Some of us are getting so accustomed to the recognized departures and abbreviations that we are all-unconscious of them. I listened to an earnest plea from an evangelical speaker at a Conference, that we should be loyal to the 1662 Prayer Book and be faithful in our adherence to it. Within minutes he was conducting a service of Holy Communion in which he used the summary of the commandments instead of the decalogue, although there could hardly be a plainer instruction than is contained in the words : " Then shall the Priest, turning to the people, rehearse distinctly all the TEN COMMANDMENTS. . . ." There are congregations who never hear the Ten Commandments, who never hear a sermon at the early service of Holy Communion, who never witness a Baptism during Morning or Evening Prayer—who never even hear the terms " Morning Prayer ", " Evening Prayer," " The Lord's Supper," who never recite the Quicunque vult, never have the Litany, never hear the Prayer Book prayers after the Third Collect, and who have to have every word which might be found a little difficult translated to suit their low intelligence or to save them the trouble of using their brains to think.

The Preface to the Revision of 1662 gives us a very useful outline of the motives which lay behind the changes made. Against the background of the avoidance of extremes, whilst paying due regard to changing circumstances, the general aim is given of :

Preserving Peace ;
Procuring Piety ;
Putting an end to Protest ;

and we may summarize the alterations as having to do with :

The Direction of Worship ;
The Modernization of Language ;
The Adoption of the A.V. ;
The Addition of Prayers and Thanksgivings ;
The Provision of a service of Adult Baptism.

All this left our Prayer Book virtually that of 1552 ; and three hundred years later we might well follow the principles laid down in the Preface of 1662. But I regard it as no part of my duty to-day to embark upon detailed proposals for Prayer Book Revision. My task I take to be the examination of the Prayer Book we already possess, and the judgment as to how far it really meets our needs to-day. I must say here, however, that I find particularly interesting the Lambeth proposal for a revised service of adult baptism, in which are listed twelve elements which in the opinion of the committee ought to find liturgical expression in such a service. With a little reserve in the matter of No. 5 I should expect these proposals to receive the enthusiastic approval of all evangelicals, and they could lead to an enrichment of our service of adult baptism in the light of our situation to-day.

" 1662 Examined in the Light of Modern Needs." What are these modern needs, and does our Prayer Book meet them, or does it not ?

I suppose that, fundamentally, modern needs are ancient needs too.

Basically, men's needs have always been the same everywhere. They are :

1. The Need of Spiritual Life ;
2. The Need of Scriptural Worship ;
3. The Need of Intelligible Forms ;
4. The Need of Practical Regulation (Rubrics) ;
5. The Need of a Universal Outlook;
6. The Need of a Personal Response ;

And all geared into this mid-twentieth century streamlined, labour-saving, strike-ridden, T.V. saturated, jet-propelled, sputnik-encircled, moon-aspiring, nuclear-war threatened, self-centred world in which we live, to bring us face to face with perhaps the greatest need of all—to *know* and to *fear* and to *love GOD*.

As I say, I must leave to liturgiolists the finer points of the concrete proposals of how, if 1662 has failed to satisfy the examiner, all this can be secured in the compass of a Prayer Book which is to combine the wealth of the past with the well-being of the present. I see that the Lambeth Conference commends Cranmer's aim to lift worship in England out of the liturgical decadence of the late Medieval Church in western Christendom, and to recover as much as possible of the character of the worship of what he called the Primitive Church. As he had not at his disposal all the material we now possess, it is suggested that we may now add or replace certain elements in order to make our Prayer Book services truer to the ideal towards which he is said to have been feeling his way. It all sounds very nice till we remember that Cranmer makes it clear that he was no less aware than we are that error is primitive as well as truth ; and if he speaks strongly against " innovations and newfangleness " he also points out that it is where the old may be well used that they cannot reasonably be reproved only for their age. And when we read a little further on in the Report that in the Eucharist :

> " we offer our praise and thanksgiving for Christ's sacrifice for us, and so present it again, and ourselves in Him, before the Father,"

we may be excused if we feel we are breathing a different atmosphere from that of Cranmer in 1552, and that, far from feeling his way towards this conception, he was deliberately making his way in the opposite direction.

Let us look in a little more detail at these modern ancient needs which we have listed, and examine 1662 in the light of them.

1. *The Need of Spiritual Life*

The greatest need of man, now as ever, is to be born again. Not only do dead men tell no tales ; they also offer no worship. Perhaps one of our mistakes to-day is the attempt to accommodate the worship of God's people to those who are not alive in Christ. By all means let us have evangelistic services. Evangelism is the fashion to-day ; some of us who are still desperately clinging to the description of " younger men ", remember when it was not so. But evangelism must

be something entirely other than the worship of Christ's Church. Many of us—myself included—have used, and do still use, especially the occasional offices, as means of evangelism. But we do so largely by virtually denying their forthright declarations of faith to those who use them so casually. And so we begin to doubt their application to anybody, and to think that their language should be modified a little to suit the condition of the godless majority. It is arguable that an evangelistic or mission form should be added to the Prayer Book; it is not arguable that this should be a substitute for the worship of the Church. Are we to abandon, as Canon Bezzant proposes in yesterday's *Times*, the principles, not only of the New Testament, but of the whole Bible, upon which our service of Infant Baptism, for example, is built, and confess that the Baptist position has been right all along, simply because we have run into difficulties with the non-churchgoers who are feeling after something better for their children which they dimly perceive that the Church has to offer? Or do we need an "Evangelistic Baptism Office", a "Gospel Burial Office", a "Mission Marriage Service", a "Churching with a Challenge"? If some rubrical direction could be added in the case of Baptism and Matrimony at any rate, requiring normally a course of preparation of the parents of the infant and of the parties to the marriage, as is universally recognized as a necessity for Confirmation, would not this go further to meeting the need than either having dual offices for insiders and outsiders or, even worse, robbing Christian people of their rightful heritage in a service book which lifts them to the highest level of faith, for the sake of those who misunderstand and misuse them? Some of our Free Church brethren use our forms without really comprehending their meaning. I have heard more than one keen evangelical Free-Church minister remark that he always tones down the words of committal in the burial office, "... in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ," in the case of those of whose salvation he has not been at all certain; and I have taken the liberty of pointing out that the resurrection to eternal life is a sure and certain hope whomsoever we may be burying, and that it is this objective truth to which we bear witness at every burial. Is there nothing in the Prayer Book, then, which will meet the need of lost sinners? Does our Prayer Book take it for granted that every worshipper is a true believer? Well, if it does, it still contains plenty of saving truth in its formularies to stab to the very heart of the unsaved, guilty sinner. Think of the Comfortable Words in the Holy Communion Office, and of the closing prayer in the Burial Office; in Morning and Evening Prayer it is stated that "He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel". The battle of the Reformation raged around the sufficiency of the atonement wrought out on Calvary's cross and man's justification by faith alone in the Saviour Who died there for him and rose again. And the clear and precise language of Article XXXI concerning the sufficiency of the offering of Christ once made as that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, is reflected and applied in many places in the Prayer Book services, and presupposed and understood in others. It crops up in

unexpected places, such as in the General Thanksgiving : " But above all for Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. . . ." The Te Deum : " Help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood ". The Litany ; the Ember Collect : " Our heavenly Father, Who hast purchased to Thyself an universal church by the precious blood of Thy dear Son ; and of course it is constant in the Holy Communion service. The Prayer Book is not an evangelistic handbook, but the evangel is there ; and the spiritual tone of its worship is, in itself, enough to convict any unsaved sinner of his alien state, and to lead him to cry : " What must I do to be saved ? "

So we come naturally to question two.

2. *The Need of Scriptural Worship*

A lifelong Free Churchman said to me after attending our Prayer Book services for some time : " I defy anyone to produce a service with more of the Bible in it than the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church of England." I could not have agreed more ! All our services are models of Bible-inspired forms. Wherever you look the Scriptures are there in both word and content. " The Scripture moveth us " stands at the very beginning of the book as the keynote to all that comes thereafter. We are so familiar with it that we hardly realize it. On the two Sundays last past I have timed by means of a remote-control on a tape recorder the proportion of Scripture in our ordinary Prayer Book services. The Order for Morning Prayer from the opening sentence to the Grace took exactly forty minutes, out of which the very words of Scripture occupied a shade under twenty minutes. Evening Prayer lasted thirty-three minutes, and included nineteen minutes of Scripture. The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper I read through slowly on my own, without the presence of communicants in twenty-four-and-a-quartər minutes (including the Long Exhortation) and my tape recorded eight minutes of direct quotation of Scripture. It was only recently that I noticed for the first time how that, in the Burial Office, the whole of that portion which is provided to be taken in the church is Scripture and nothing else ! If, in these modern days of many voices, there is a need for approaching God in the very words of Holy Writ, the 1662 Prayer Book must surely be awarded full marks for its answer to question two. And this Scriptural worship of which we speak is not confined to the exact words of Scripture : the Bible standpoint permeates the whole, whilst there are few situations to-day in which the Prayer Book has no word from God. If its language here and there is a little old fashioned (and we shall speak of this in a moment) its ideas are very modern. The Ten Commandments, for example, leave us with no illusions about God's standard for His people, and the Marriage Service does some very plain speaking which was never more needed than it is to-day. Cranmer could hardly be blamed for not having included air travel in the Litany ; and there are those who hold the opinion that the petition against the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, dropped in 1559, was never more relevant than at the end of a period of barely more than one hundred years which has seen the

addition of three more " detestable enormities " to his creed. They think there is nothing unscriptural about condemning Christ-dishonouring error. Amongst such additions to the services contained in the 1662 Book as should extend its application to modern situations, we might well have a form of reception of Roman Catholics into the Church of England, as well as services of institution and induction, of licensing of lay men and women for fulltime work in parishes, of licensing of readers, a commissioning for evangelistic missions, etc. What we are anxious about is that these additional offices shall maintain the Scriptural standard of the 1662 Prayer Book.

3. *The Need for Intelligible Forms*

If we appear to spend more time on this question than on others of apparently greater significance, it is partly because it is at this point that all kinds of private revisions have been made, and partly from the recognition of the fact that, however wonderful a service book may be in itself, its value is going to be gravely diminished if the worshipper cannot comprehend its meaning. The issue of the Book of Common Prayer was based on the assumption that Christian people would find in worship their highest spiritual activity and that they should, therefore, be able to understand what was going on and to take part in it. One of the aims of alterations in 1662 is stated as follows :

> " for the more proper expressing of some words or phrases of ancient usage in terms more suitable to the language of the present times, and the clearer explanation of some other words and phrases, that were either of doubtful significance or otherwise liable to misconstruction ".

But do not let us make more of this need to-day than the facts warrant. To liken 1662 with its few archaisms to the use of Latin in public worship, as some have done, is hyperbole bordering on hysteria ! It may take more trouble, but it may also prove more profitable, to teach our people the meaning of unusual expressions, rather than engage in an inter-church competition in the race for clever synonyms. I must quote again from Bishop Stephen Neill :

" A fixed liturgy, from its very nature, should be the expression of a wide range of not very simple theological ideas, and it will always tend to be exalted, noble, and therefore unusual in expression. Liturgical language may be understood of the people, but it is very unlikely that it will itself be the common people's speech ; but when the liturgy is in the vernacular, the common man cannot be set free from the effort to understand it and to pray according to it. This makes upon him very heavy demands ; and, when we remember what the level of education and intelligence is likely to have been in the sixteenth century, we cannot but be astonished by what Cranmer believed to be within the capacity of simple people, illumined by the Word and the Spirit of the Lord. It is clear that he never imagined himself to be creating a book of worship for the elite ; his ideal was that of Erasmus, that the ploughman and the weaver at their work should sing the songs of Zion and the traveller beguile with them the tedium of his journey ; he did not hesitate to take the ideal as being also the possible."

But in these days of the advance of education we have taken up the position that every parson must become a self-appointed interpreter of words and phrases which we think might possibly be misunderstood, with the consequence that we have made confusion worse confounded. We are in danger of becoming a Church of idiosyncratics, and our congregations are becoming the victims of all sorts of local oddities. Every parson is doing that which is attractive to his own desires. And where are we going to stop in all this? For the verbal alterations could soon become legion; and when made might well not eliminate all the ambiguities. Thus it must be "bishops and clergy"; but some are insistent that it be "bishops and other clergy"; in either case we must not let anyone think the vicar too modest to pray for himself, or too proud to think he needs prayer! "Impartially" must replace "indifferently"—as though anyone could seriously think that we are praying for a "couldn't-care-less" attitude in the administration of justice. Are the common people so stupid? Where is it all going to end? We shall have to do something about the Catholic Church, the descent into hell, and "world without end"; sporadic protests have already been made about the phrase, "Lead us not into temptation"; and there are those who must pray, "Our Father *Who* art in heaven," "Thy will be done *on* earth," "As we forgive *those who* trespass against us". I have heard instead of "Dearly beloved brethren" both "Dearly beloved", and just "Beloved"; I have yet to hear plain "Brethren"; but "Comrades" might be an idea! I have heard "saying after me" altered to "saying *with* me". We must not be so vulgar as to speak in the vulgar tongue, neither must we be lively any more; whilst fully-filled will sound so much better than fulfilled. Did not somebody once think that the quick and the dead had something to do with the two classes of pedestrians crossing the road? But it was a fellow-student of my own to whom the Greek Testament study of Mark ii. 3 brought the flash of truth he had never known before (wild horses will not drag his name from me—and I am pretty sure many of you would recognize it!): "Oh sir," he exclaimed, "I always thought 'borne of four' meant that he was one of quadruplets—and I have given a talk on those lines." One of my Sunday School teachers in Manchester was so surprised that the two or three firkins which the six waterpots of stone contained were not little things like cucumbers. My printer made what he thought was a correction of an obvious typing error in my copy and sent me back the heading of a paragraph in my parish magazine: "Far from the maddening crowd . . . !"

How many of our hymns contain words or phrases not understanded of the people who sing them. A member of my choir asked at a recent practice what a guerdon was, and another immediately said, "I've never understood that myself." "O grant the consummation of this our song above"—they call it consume-ation and really think it is something to do with consuming joy. "The sun that bids us rest is waking" was suggested by one man to be a poetic reference to the moon. How shall we amend "Anoint and cheer our soiled face"? I was astonished one day to find that a line we have often smiled over, "Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love," had literally been under-

stood by some of my people as referring to their faces. Which reminds me that that very hymn is sometimes misquoted even by clergy as " Like a river-glorious, is God's perfect peace ". My sister was present at a cathedral service in West Africa and noticed that many Europeans in the congregation found no difficulty in singing word for word the misprinted lines :

" O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobody fought of old " ;

though what they thought it meant remains a mystery. Well might we envy the simple faith and spiritual understanding of the class of African children whom this same sister heard being instructed in—of all things—the Athanasian Creed, by a student on School Practice, as follows :

Student : Now the Father is incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible : and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible ; And yet there are not three incomprehensibles, but one incomprehensible. Do you understand ?

Class (with one voice) : *Yes.*

Are we much better than they ? Do our people really stop and think of the meaning of the rich and beautiful forms they use every time they come to church ? Is it unreasonable to ask and expect them to take a little trouble to find out what it is all about ? They love to parade their knowledge of the technical terms of other subjects. Take medicine, for instance. People talk quite naturally to-day about a fractured femur, carcinoma, schizophrenia, disseminated sclerosis, coronary thrombosis, pheno-barbitone, sulphonamides, streptomycin, rehabilitation, because they're interested enough in the subject to enjoy learning the language. And it is no argument against this position that there will always be those who will fail to grasp the exact significance of the terms they delight to use, as when a man described his infirmity to me as a " cardiac heart " ; or a dear old woman in my Tooting congregation (she is now in heaven so she won't be offended) who told me that her husband had had an attack of " serryble emeridge—in 'is 'ead " !

I am not opposing verbal changes. If they are going to be really helpful to intelligent worship, let us have them by all means, but officially, and uniformly and, relatively speaking, finally. And then let us all renounce the private emendations of which some of us seem so fond and so proud. And the very greatest care needs to be taken in this matter. We might well destroy that which is beloved and familiar, and still not gain all that freedom from ambiguity, all that clarity of expression, all that simplicity of presentation, which would be its only justification. Having observed how some attempts to bring the Bible language up to date have stripped it of its beauty, its charm and its familiarity, I tremble to think of the havoc which some well-meaning precisionists could wreak upon our lovely Prayer Book.

I have just read that Jesus said to the impotent man at Bethesda : " Rise, take up your pallet and walk " (R.S.V.). My son, aged eighteen, with a fine disregard for spelling, remarked that it sounded as though the man had dropped his false teeth.

I round off this section with the observation that I must maintain :

(a) that with a little care and trouble 1662 would be found entirely intelligible ; and
(b) that we shall find it extremely difficult to choose a vocabulary which will not before very long need further revision.

4. *The Need of Practical Guidance and Regulation in Worship*

The number and hardness of the rules called the Pie of which Cranmer complained, so that to turn the book only was so hard and intricate a matter, that many times there was more business to find out what should be read than to read it when it was found out, made inevitable a careful and simple system of instruction in the Prayer Book to both minister and people in relation to the ordering of their public worship. The rubrics (which I suppose we must no longer call by this archaic name—how did our forefathers, Latin scholars as they were, ever bring themselves to speak of a Black Rubric ?) can doubtless do with some revision and simplification ; and a few preliminary rules might be helpful on such matters as the addition to services of hymns, sermons, offerings, notices and the like ; what abbreviations to services may be permitted, when and why—if, for example, ante-Communion may on occasion be taken into Morning and Evening Prayer, and how to deal with situations such as those in the Forces and in hospitals, when only a very short time is available. I suppose somebody some time will have to do something about the Ornaments Rubric, and it might not be all loss if we cleared up the question about the Daily Service. A real attempt is being made now to regularize and universalize the lessons we read ; and since all semblance of the monthly course of Psalms is fast disappearing, a yearly course might be devised in which it is ensured that every Psalm will be used at least once in the year. Some provision might be made, too, for periods of silent prayer during services. I have sometimes wondered if it would not be a good idea, since the rubrics cannot be printed in red, to print in bolder type, especially those which should guide the people in finding their way about the Prayer Book. As they are they look as though they are not worth bothering about.

5. *The Need of the Universal Outlook*

It is there all right, though it may not lie on the surface quite as much as we would like. We have a prayer for all conditions of men : " that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations ". This should be used whenever the Litany is not appointed to be said, and you could hardly have a more Catholic orison than the latter. A number of our canticles sound the missionary note. One of the duties of the clergy, according to the Ordinal, is " to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever ". The Good Friday Collect and the Whitsun Proper Preface and the Collect of the Third Sunday in Advent have all a missionary outlook, and this is not absent from the General Thanksgiving. All the same, we would welcome one or two specifically missionary prayers for the harvest field at home and

abroad. There are few of us who would not be happy at the addition to our 1662 Book of a collection of prayers for special occasions and subjects, as for Harvest Thanksgiving and other festival days, for the work amongst children, youth, men, women, the sick and aged, hospitals and their staffs, for industry, for social, industrial and international relationships; and some prayers suited to use in family gatherings in the home, as in the American and Canadian revisions. But their literary and devotional standard must not fall below that of our present prayers. Gordon Rupp quotes T. S. Eliot's words that " Great prose can only be written by people with great convictions ", and adds, " It is even more true of great prayers." Neither must this be used as an opportunity to re-introduce unreformed elements. And further, it should then be agreed that unauthorized compositions are no longer to be considered necessary or permissible as part of the Prayer Book service.

Perhaps I may here remark that I am very jealous for the retention of a separate prayer for the reigning sovereign as distinct from other members of the Royal Family. Our Queen bears a personal burden which, if different from that of Elizabeth I or Charles II, is no less exacting; and the very least we can do, it seems to me, is to lead our people constantly to uphold her individually and personally, in the beautiful and untelescoped form in Morning and Evening Prayer, as well as in those other services in which such petitions occur.

In speaking of the universal outlook, I cannot avoid a word about our relations with other Christians of communions in which episcopacy does not obtain. " Intercommunion " is a word which has changed its meaning in our time; but I mean by it that joyful experience of gathering with the Lord's people of other denominations around His Table. What a thrill it would have been if the bishops at Lambeth, in their findings on the subject of the Holy Communion or in the report on Church Unity, had dispelled some of the anxieties raised by the misapplication of the Confirmation Rubric in the proposed Canon XXI. What is to be said of a " family of churches " in which children of the other members of the family are seldom to be allowed to come to supper with us (and then only if the Ordinary gives a quite extraordinary approval); whilst our children are never to be allowed to go to supper with them—unless it be on some quite exceptional basis in which we must regretfully point out that it is not a real supper at all, but only a snack? We have restricted rather than enlarged the vision of our 1662 Book, and then blamed its narrowness on other grounds. Is there a way through this vexed question in a revived form of Agape, i.e. of communion following a common meal in an unconsecrated building, in which all Christians and members of their families, too, could share?

6. *The Need of Personal Response*

John Taylor wrote in *The Churchman*, June '49:

> The English Prayer Book has always been the layman's handbook rather than the priests' manual; and, following the lead of Cranmer, the Church still expects that all its members will be able to share in one liturgical action. Even in the worst days of the

eighteenth century the majority of Anglican worshippers followed the services closely in their books and, in fulfilling the people's part, were able to share the common prayers of the Church.

All of us who have had any parochial experience must often have been cheered in visiting the sick and aged, who have known and loved and remembered and been able to quote by heart the Prayer Book services, its collects, and passages from its Epistles and Gospels. We have witnessed the evident joy and comfort which they continue to derive from them, though cut off from public worship. They have told us how they have followed the services in their own rooms whilst we have been in church; they have joined in when we have read to them, when their sight has been too dim for reading.

There is so much for those who are present in church to take part in with audible response. We have only to think of the constant demand made on the congregation in Morning and Evening Prayer, the Litany, the Service of Holy Communion, to recognize how adequately the need of personal response is being met in the services themselves.

It is not only while people are in church, however, that their personal response needs to be made. How far does our Prayer Book call forth the inward response of the hearts of our worshippers in such wise as to affect their workaday lives amongst their fellows during the week? Again and again the people are reminded, in exhortations said by the clergy and in prayers uttered by themselves of the obligation to bear witness without to the blessing they seek and profess to receive within. One of our greatest needs is to give the lie to the world's jibe that the people who do not go to church live better lives than those who do. With the inevitable exceptions, that simply is not true; and no church does more to drive home the Keswick message of Scriptural holiness or, if you prefer it, the ethical implications of the Christian profession, than does the Church of England in its regular forms.

M. and E.P.: And grant O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name.

Abs.: That the rest of our life may be pure and holy.

Litany: To endue us with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to thy holy Word. We beseech thee . . . and evermore serve thee in holiness and pureness of living.

General Thanksgiving: That we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days.

Invitation: Ye that . . . intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways, Draw near with faith.

The call to holy living is there wherever you look—in the services of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Burial, Churching of Women, The Commination, the Catechism, the Collects. What did we pray last Sunday?

> Grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the same thy Son Jesus Christ.

The words might have been written to-day ! Full marks for 1662 on question number six !

7. *The Need to Know and to Reverence and to Love GOD*

There is a very lighthearted approach to spiritual things abroad to-day. I am not opposed to youth rallies, to catchy choruses, to jolly houseparties, to humorous asides. I have smiled at times during a quaint prayer by a simple believer, and been happy and uplifted thereby. But there is a danger in this modern world of wanting to make our appeal popular, of trying to attract folks on their own level, of using carnal weapons as a substitute for those of the Spirit which alone are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Almost all of us in our less reflective moments are in danger of thinking, or of giving the impression that we think, that the object of worship is to give people a comfortable feeling inside, rather than to bring them face to face with the *God* Who is the *holy God*, His name a *holy name*, His love a *holy love*. To this subtle and widespread temptation our dear old Prayer Book comes as a most precious and valuable corrective. Look where you will, you are brought face to face with the holy God, before Whom you are called to bow in penitence, in humility, in reverent praise, in deep thanksgiving, in utter dependence, in simple faith, in complete obedience, in full surrender. All other needs, ancient and modern, pale into insignificance beside this one ; and it is just here that our incomparable Book of Common Prayer rises supreme, sovereign, superlative. Writ large in letters of fire over all its pages are the solemn words of the prophet Habakkuk :

The Lord is in His holy temple :
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.