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Editorial

The approval by the Vatican of a new English translation of the Order of Mass, announced last July, caused quite a stir—not least because the new translation departs markedly from what in some cases were ecumenically-agreed texts.

The changes issue from an 'Instruction', *Liturgiam Authenticam*, published in 2001 by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. This document set forth 'the principles of translation to be followed in future translations—whether they be entirely new undertakings or emendations of texts already in use', having in view in the latter case 'omissions or errors which affect certain existing vernacular translations'.[1]

Liturgiam Authenticam is well worth reading for its treatment of questions which have been discussed at various times in *Faith and Worship* over the years. Liturgy, the Instruction states, is 'not intended primarily as a sort of mirror of the interior dispositions of the faithful . . . rather, [its words] express truths that transcend the limits of time and space.'[2] Liturgical language therefore

> should be free of an overly servile adherence to prevailing modes of expression. . . . Indeed, it will be seen that the observance of the principles set forth in this Instruction will contribute to the gradual development, in each vernacular, of a sacred style that will come to be recognised as proper to liturgical language. Thus it may happen that a certain manner of speech which has come to be considered somewhat obsolete in daily usage may continue to be maintained in the liturgical context.[3]

On 'inclusive language' the Instruction is firm:

> In many languages there exist nouns and pronouns denoting both genders, masculine and feminine, together in a single term. The insistence that such a usage should be changed is not necessarily to be regarded as the effect or the manifestation of an authentic development of the language as such. Even if it may be necessary by means of catechesis to ensure that such words continue to be understood in the 'inclusive' sense just described, it may not be possible to employ different words in the translations themselves without detriment to the precise intended meaning of the text . . . in particular to be avoided is the systematic resort to imprudent solutions such as a mechanical substitution of words, the transition from the singular to the plural, the splitting of a unitary collective term into masculine and feminine parts . . . .[4]

1 *Liturgiam Authenticam*, 7 & 6. The text may be found at: www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccds/documents/rc_con_ccds_doc_20010507_liturgiam-authenticam_en.html. Citation is by paragraph number. 2 *Ibid.* 19 3 *Ibid.* 27 4 *Ibid.* 30–1

The Instruction does not confine itself to generalities. Specific guidance is given regarding: the preservation in translation of 'subordinate and relative clauses';[1] the full use of 'the varying forms of addressing God, such as *Domine*, *Deus*, *Omnipotens aeterne Deus*, *Pater*, and so forth';[2] the showing of respect for 'expressions that belong to the heritage of the whole or a great part of the ancient Church . . . by a translation that is as literal as possible, as for example the words of the people's response *Et cum spiritu tuo*';[3] and the translation of the Creed 'according to the precise wording that the tradition of the Latin Church has bestowed upon it, including the use of the first person singular'.[4] There is also a most interesting passage prescribing that translations of 'very important texts such as the Psalms and the readings used for the principal celebrations of the liturgical year . . . [should] express the traditional Christological, typological and spiritual sense, and manifest the unity and the inter-relatedness of the two Testaments.'[5]

What then are the texts like which have resulted from these and other notes of guidance? Some examples follow from the great common texts, the currently used version being on the left and the new version on the right, to enable the two to be compared.[6]

Current Text	**Revised Text**
(The Greeting)	
Priest: The Lord be with you.	The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.	And with your spirit.
(*Gloria*)	
Glory to God in the highest,	Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.	and on earth peace to people of good will.
Lord God, heavenly King,	We praise you,
almighty God and Father,	we bless you,
we worship you, we give you thanks,	we adore you,
	we glorify you,
we praise you for your glory.	we give thanks to you for your great glory.
	Lord God, heavenly King,
	O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,	Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God,	Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

1 *Ibid.*57 2 *Ibid.*51 3 *Ibid.*56 4 *Ibid.*65 5 *Ibid.*41

6 The new translation of the Mass may be found at www.usccb.org/liturgy.

you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us;
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

(*Sanctus*)

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory
Hosanna in the highest.

It will be seen that the *Gloria* and the *Sanctus* in the current English Order of Mass are identical to those in *Common Worship* (modern language). This is not true of the Creeds. Where *Common Worship* Order 1 (CW 1) differs from the current Roman Catholic English version the difference is shown in the extracts below:

(Nicene Creed)

We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father.
. . .
For us men [‘men’ omitted in CW 1] and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages
. . .
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

by the power of the Holy Spirit	and by the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. . .	was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
[CW 1 : was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.]	

(Apostles' Creed)

. . . was crucified, died, and was buried.	. . . was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.	he descended into hell;
On the third day he rose again;	on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven	he ascended into heaven . . . .

These large-scale departures from the agreed ICEL/ICET texts were denounced roundly by Bishop Colin Buchanan, writing in *Praxis*:

> The texts turn Rome's back on not only all ecumenical agreement, but also on the last forty years of Rome's own progress in vernacular liturgy . . . the ecumenical texts have been the Church of England's starting point in liturgical revision. . . . The Roman practice has been the reverse: to start by denouncing the ecumenical texts in principle (even if they originated forty years ago in ICEL!), to declare them off-limits to their translators, and to require the translators in the various language groups (not only in English) to keep their noses close to the Latin originals almost on a word-for-word basis . . . the dutiful latter-day ICEL, instructed by the Pope to go 'latinate', is not only *not* ecumenical in its instincts, but distances Roman Catholic texts from all other English-language usage.[1]

Bishop Buchanan's disappointment is understandable—he has long laboured in these liturgical vineyards himself. (As he rightly says, 'My own advocacy of these texts over the last thirty-eight years certainly gives me freedom to comment in my own capacity.') But I am puzzled by his claim that these new translations 'distance . . . Roman Catholic texts *from all other English language usage*' (my italics), for if the reader has got this far he will have noticed in the examples given that where the new versions depart widely from the existing ones they often come closer to those of the Book of Common Prayer—'And with your spirit', 'I believe in one God', 'all things visible and invisible',

1 *Praxis News of Worship*, Issue 19 Autumn 2008, pp 1 & 3. *Praxis* is sponsored by the Church of England's Liturgical Commission among others, but the sponsors 'do not fund Praxis financially.' Its presiding genius seems to be Bishop Buchanan himself, whose regular column is winsomely entitled 'Colin's Column: Not the first word but the last'.

'he descended into hell', 'Lord God of Hosts' etc. Surely these resemblances did not escape Bishop Buchanan? Or is it that he no longer regards the Prayer Book as having any place in English liturgical 'usage'? The latter would be consistent with his own efforts to bury it over the last 'thirty-eight years'.

'Non-Romans might be wise not to forget what Rome was saying but a few years ago,' Bishop Buchanan rather lamely concludes. Perhaps Rome *has* changed its mind. Whether its revised texts will serve to create a new 'sacred style' may be doubtful. The irony is that the translators charged with translating the Mass into English in the nineteen-sixties had already to hand a 'sacred style . . . which had come to be recognised as proper to liturgical language'—the 'style' of the Book of Common Prayer. How sad, in retrospect, that Rome's movements towards the use of the vernacular in liturgy coincided with what Colin Buchanan calls 'the struggle as to whether God should be addressed as "Thou" or as "You"'. There *were* those who looked for something nobler in an English Mass. There is a poignant episode in the biography of Ronald Jasper, describing the first visit of Anglican observers to the Roman Consilium on the Liturgy in 1966:

> I well remember [one of the party recalled] the first such journey in 1966. We had as a companion on the plane a veteran Roman Catholic liturgiologist, Canon R. Pilkington, who was a *peritus* at the Consilium. As the plane approached Rome he was plainly excited, partly at the sight of the city and partly at the prospect of the reform of the liturgy, which he said would soon be so changed as to be almost entirely acceptable to us all. *I think he was envisaging a vernacular version in the style of Cranmer*. Ronald [Jasper] was not to betray much emotion, but I think we all had a sense of making history.[1]

The 'history' that was subsequently made—not least by Ronald Jasper—in the ecumenical ICET texts must have been as disappointing to Canon Pilkington as the new texts are to Bishop Buchanan. When we consider the great affection Pope Paul VI had for the Prayer Book[2] it still seems surprising that the history was not otherwise. I wonder what Pope Benedict thinks?

John Scrivener

1 Donald Gray, *Ronald Jasper: His Life, His Work and the ASB* (1997), p.83 (italics mine)

2 '"I have a great affection for your Book of Common Prayer", he said to a visiting layman, Sir Gilbert Inglefield, who told him about the Series 2 experimental liturgy in England, "you must not abandon it. It is very beautiful poetry."'—see Owen Chadwick, *Michael Ramsey: A Life* (1990), p.317.

The Chairman of the Liturgical Commission on the Prayer Book

(The Rt Revd Stephen Platten, Bishop of Wakefield and Chairman of the Liturgical Commission, was interviewed at the Lambeth Conference by Prudence Dailey, Chairman of the Prayer Book Society.)

Prudence Dailey *The Archbishop has talked about the role of 'common prayer' in fostering unity within the Anglican Communion. How do you see that developing, and how do you see the Book of Common Prayer in that?*

Stephen Platten Let me start with the Book of Common Prayer, because it seems to me to be one of the key starting points. When we ask people to make a Declaration of Assent in the Church of England, when they're being put into a new incumbency or whatever it may be, they say that they are prepared to accept the historic Formularies of the Church of England, which are then enunciated as the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. So it seems to me to be right at the very heart of what we're about, even more so because we are part of that tradition of churches which talks about '*lex orandi, lex credendi*'—in other words, the law of prayer is the law of belief; the two of them are part of the same thing. If you talk to the Orthodox, they'll often say Anglicanism is very close to Orthodoxy, simply because of that same way of approaching belief. We don't have a Catechism in the same complex and ordered way that the Roman Catholic Church does—I'm not criticising that, we just don't have it; nor, indeed, do the Orthodox. Instead, we define what we believe through the way we pray, and therefore the Book of Common Prayer must be of crucial importance because it's one of our foundation documents.

I absolutely agree with the Archbishop of Canterbury about 'common prayer'; but it is difficult, of course. In the Roman Catholic Church, there is a centralised process, and so back in the 1960s a version was made of the *Missa Normativa*, and all you then did was to translate it from Latin into each of the various languages, so you have got 'common prayer' absolutely (although, of course, there are a variety of Eucharistic Prayers and so forth so it won't be precisely the same wherever you go). We don't have that now in the Anglican Communion because each Province has its own sense of autonomy, and understandably—and I think probably rightly—they should be allowed to clothe the liturgy culturally in their own way.

Having said that, during the Conference, we've had a Eucharist daily and we've had Evening Prayer daily. Now I think the Evening Prayer that we've had has been one fixed by the Conference, so let's put that on one side for a minute; but the Eucharist [*which was organised by different Provinces*] has been recognisably the same in terms of its structure to start with, and that's one of the amazing things about the Eucharist. Wherever you go in the World, if you follow Anglican tradition you will know roughly where you are even if you don't understand the language, because it will be clear that you're at the Offertory, or the Creed, or whatever. But more than that, there are some very strong resonances in prayers that have probably originated in this country. Quite often I've noticed, when we've celebrated the Eucharist this week and last week, the rite that we've used has effectively been *Common Worship* with some changes that have maybe been put in for the country from which they've come. Of course the hymns and some of the other things about the service will have been culturally specific. So there is still a sense of 'common prayer'; and I think that we need to be subtle and sophisticated enough to see that what the Book of Common Prayer has done—right through to the present day—is to give birth to a family of liturgies which are recognisably Anglican. So that preserves, I think, a sense of common prayer.

Are you allowed into the worship here? (**PD** *No, we're not.*) **SP** If you'd come to the worship you would have said each day that it was recognisably Anglican, and not only that but very similar (except that sometimes it was in Korean, or Swahili and so forth).

PD *As of course you know, there are a number of Provinces around the Anglican Communion that either use 1662 as we have it, or something very close to 1662, or in some cases 1662 translated directly into another language. We in the Prayer Book Society have had some inquiries while we've been here as to whether we can produce 1662 in French or Spanish and so on, which is something that we hadn't considered before. As far as I'm aware, none of the worship at the Lambeth Conference was actually 1662, which would have been recognisable to many people. Is that impression correct, and do you think there should have been some 1662 worship?*

SP It's certainly true that we haven't had any 1662. It would have been no bad thing, I suppose, to have had something that was 1662—it wouldn't have done any harm to have had one evening an Evening Prayer or Evensong that was 1662. But while it's not up to me to decide—it's up to them to decide—I would just want to put out a couple of warnings about other provinces using 1662 in simple translation, for two or three reasons. First of all, I think one of the great glories of 1662—one of the reasons why I still love the Prayer Book, why often I'll opt for a Prayer Book collect rather than one that's been revised—is the language: it's the rhythm of the language and the cadences of the language. Now they are not immediately

translatable. You can't take Wordsworth and put him into Spanish and expect it to be the same—some of the things he's trying to communicate may well come across, but it won't be the same. So that would be my first caveat.

My second caveat would be to say that although I've very keen that there should be a sense of common prayer and a sense of common shape to the liturgy wherever you go, I do think it's important for people to be able to clothe it in their own culture, because otherwise you get what I would call the colonial 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' world. There has been a great tradition over the years—I think less so now—of people coming over here and ordering copies of Hymns Ancient and Modern New Standard, the Book of Common Prayer, the Authorised Version of the Bible, vestments that are as Gothic as they can find. Now all of those things I like, but I want to say to other provinces, you must learn to do it in the way that's right for you, otherwise it just looks like us, or them, transferring 'good old England' over there, and sometimes good old England doesn't work very well over there.

Thirdly, if there are good reasons for wanting 1662 to be translated, then fine, but I think it's almost worth putting a health warning on it, saying it won't be the same, because it is the language that is so marvellous. I'm quite a fan of 1662.

PD *We in the Prayer Book Society are just on the point of sending quite a large shipment of copies of 1662 (in English) to Uganda. They use it there, and they're requesting it because their churches are growing so fast that they want a Prayer Book (as well as a Bible) for every new Christian. What do you think is the role of liturgy, including the Prayer Book, in mission—both at home and abroad?*

SP I'm bound to say—partly because I've been involved in a process called Transforming Worship, that it's crucial to mission. It's odd that sometimes people seem to think it's either liturgy or mission. It seems to me that one of the key instruments of mission must be the liturgy, if for no other reason than that the one thing that a church person comes to in the week (or once a month, or whatever it may be) will be the liturgy. And we all know that there are lots of people who are loyal members of the Church of England who never go to a study group, who never go to a lecture or any of those other sophisticated things—conferences, retreats, or whatever—but they do come to the liturgy. So if we get the liturgy right, there should be a process of forming people as Christians to go out and be missionaries in our world. So the liturgy is absolutely essential in that.

PD *And how about the Prayer Book in the context of mission?*

SP Well, it depends on what you're doing—it's horses for courses. I'm quite prepared to believe that the church in Uganda is growing like topsy;

but then that's not unusual, because if you went to Tanzania, it's growing like topsy there, too, and in Kenya. Certainly where I've been in Tanzania they haven't used the Book of Common Prayer. Of course in African culture singing and also rhythm is important, so it's very different from us here. We might not feel entirely at home; but there, you'd want to do what they do, because it feels right—you wouldn't want to be singing, in rather solemn, stentorian tones, 'The Church's one foundation': it wouldn't quite fit in. Africans are much less inhibited than us.

In this country, in terms of mission, I very much hope the churches that still have an eight o'clock said Book of Common Prayer Eucharist will continue to do so. Although it might to some people seem very strange, that in itself is a point of growth, because there are people who have very busy lives and extremely noisy lives, and to be sustained by a quiet Prayer Book celebration at the beginning of a Sunday morning is marvellous, and I hope that that continues.

Also, I am a sort of 'cathedral animal'—I spent fifteen years in two different cathedrals, and I love the cathedral tradition. I sincerely hope that cathedrals continue to use the Book of Common Prayer in the ways they have done, which means usually that at least one Sunday Eucharist a week has been BCP, and sometimes a weekday one, too. Secondly, that Evening Prayer—or Evensong, as it very often is—should be according to the Book of Common Prayer. I think there is no replacement in Cathedral Evensong for the Book of Common Prayer. For seven and a half years in Norwich, and for nearly the same amount of time in Portsmouth, I was sustained by virtually every evening going to Evensong, and being ministered to. I didn't have to do much; I just sat there, and let it happen. Again, amazingly enough, Evening Prayer in cathedrals can, in its gentle and quiet way, be a missionary service. One of the things about Evensong is that it doesn't require anything of people: you don't have to be confirmed (or whatever it may be). When I came back to the church, when I was about seventeen, it was through Evensong. That was Prayer Book Evensong, and I loved it. It's a pity that, as some say, the *Forsyte Saga*, programmed for early Sunday evenings, killed Evensong in lots of our churches, and that people don't so much come out on a Sunday evening, because I think it's irreplaceable.

I think another piece of the Prayer Book that we ought to recover more often than we do—not necessarily always using it in its entirety—is the Litany, because the Litany is one of those gems that the Church of England has given to the wider Church. Again, the cadences, and the rhythms, and the use and the beauty of the words are irreplaceable, and even in their more modern translations they've retained a lot of that. So again, the Prayer Book—not only in its original form but also through what it's given birth to—has been a key part of the process.

And the Collects—things like 'Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility . . . .' You see, I can say the whole thing; and not only can I say it, but the way it's framed is marvellous, and nearly all the revisions to it don't quite come up to the mark. At the beginning, you say: 'Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light.' If you think about that for a minute, it's saying that nothing can happen without God's grace; and secondly, 'put upon us . . . .'—not we putting on. Some of the revisions will say things like, 'Almighty God, give us grace *to* cast away the works of darkness and to *put on* the armour of light…'. They're tiny changes, but there is a significant shift: it makes it begin to sound as if we can do it for ourselves.

PD *Pelagian?*

SP Pelagian—exactly so. The trouble is, we live in a world where people believe that nothing will happen unless we get it done, which of course a lot of the time is true; but that means that they think the same is true about religion, and that it isn't actually God who comes before us. It's the priority of grace which is a key to the whole thing, it seems to me, and the Prayer Book is often good at highlighting that. It's perfectly possible, with modern liturgies—if we've learned from the Prayer Book—not to lose that.

So I'm not an obscurantist: I want to see a rich variety. I want to say that much of what we have to offer, we have had through the Book of Common Prayer.

Interview with Fay Weldon

(Fay Weldon is the author of more than thirty books, including twenty-six novels, most recently The Stepmother's Diary *and* Spa Decameron. *She was appointed C.B.E. in 2001 for services to literature. The previous year she had been baptised and confirmed in the Church of England, and has been a great public supporter of the Book of Common Prayer. Fay Weldon was interviewed by John Scrivener at the Prayer Book Society Annual Conference in September 2008.)*

John Scrivener *Some people here will have read a recent collection called* Why I am Still an Anglican, *a volume of interviews and essays edited by Caroline Chartres, in which a number of eminent people, including you, Fay Weldon, talk about why they are members of the Church of England. There were people from a variety of backgrounds—the late Bishop Montefiore was from a Jewish background for instance. Others were cradle Anglicans. But you were unusual in that your parents were positively not religious—is that right?*

Fay Weldon Well, they didn't have me christened, though they both had been themselves. I think they thought it was immoral to impose a belief system on a child before that child was old enough to make up its own mind. I would describe them as rational humanists. Mind you, in her middle years, my mother became something of a mystic, read St Theresa of Avila, and spent years writing a book on spirituality as it related to mysticism—she was an academic by nature who never went to school, let alone to college. Then she became a Theosophist and I seem to remember I was a young Theosophist for a time. In later life my mother I suppose I could describe as religiously erratic, though she was always motivated by principle. Do what you ought, not what you want, was her principle. My father just went on being a doctor and doing what he could for the sick and unfortunate. She and my father, who tended to do what he wanted not what he ought, were divorced. Neither, as I remember, did anything so simple as going to church.

JS *So you were not in fact baptised?*

FW No. My sister, two years older, was. I was not.

JS *But you had some contact with religion in your childhood. You went to a convent school.*

FW Yes: I was sent there because convent girls were known to be less rough than the state school girls, and were taught manners and decorum. It was run by very neurotic nuns and I spent my time in a state of terror, because they told me I was doomed to go to Limbo, or possibly Hell, and my desk was next to a very graphic painting of St Anthony being tormented by devils in the fiery pit. But the nuns did give me a sense of the Bible, and an understanding of what it is to worship, and how to pray. I

was a great reader and if there was nothing else to read I would read the Bible, even under the bedclothes, and became a great devotee of the Psalms: the mountains bowing down to worship, walking in pastures green, the wicked like the chaff, and so forth, and a certain amount of Ecclesiastes too, I seem to remember. The Pope got rid of Limbo a few years back, thus leaving those of us left with these residual beliefs quite bereft. You can get used to the idea of this featureless endless timeless place, which even as a child I recognised as a formal description of an acute depression. All these heavenly depositaries for sinners which the Church managed to define are reflections of states of mind. Purgatory is the painful process of healing; limbo with its featureless, uneventful eternal landscape is sanity; hell, manic depression. And only the love of God will save any of us. It makes sense to me. There were one or two really nice mothers in the convent but a few really nasty sisters who would rap our knuckles—but you certainly learnt fast! We were given a sense that physical contact was in some way sinful: you were not meant to touch. I always resisted this: I remember standing in line and reaching out to touch the person in front of me when reminded not to—and got into great trouble because of this disobedience. I was shocked, too—being very proper—that the convent girls told lies and stole things from the corner shop and were expert shoplifters, while at my previous secular school honesty had ruled. Even at that age I could see that if you did not give children a sensible framework of morality they would never be able to work one out for themselves; you can't control by a list of rules and punishment for transgressions, especially if those rules are counterintuitive. At the convent you were in worse trouble if your mother had given you meat sandwiches on a Friday than if you cheated and stole.

JS *Your novels have always been open to the idea that states of mind can have a supernatural correlative. Is that something that came naturally to you? Someone said, reviewing your autobiography, that it was full of ghosts and poltergeists and coincidences and that this was true of your novels.*

FW Yes. I suppose that's true: why deny what is your experience? In the past I have seen and felt 'ghosts'. It is a kind of sub-religious thing—to do with superstition, not real religion. Poltergeists and disturbed fifteen-year-old girls go together. Echoes from past and future turn up in ways we do not understand. It is not necessarily an upsetting of the laws of physics. It is just that you do not understand the basic laws sufficiently. If you have no religious base it is the only way you have of interpreting what is happening. What the basic laws are saying is that it is reasonable to think we are all crawling about on a rock in space hurtling along at so many millions of miles an hour. Well, I suppose that's reasonable.

JS *I wanted to ask you about the experience of being baptised and confirmed in later life—it must have been a big step. Did you find it so, or did you take it in your stride?*

FW It was a big step. I didn't speak to anyone much about it beforehand. I'd always liked to go to church weddings, Harvest Festivals and so on, when friends would take me along—I liked the sense of togetherness and common purpose: and I'd looked forward to the hymns we'd sing at school assemblies in High School. I would listen to the words and decipher the often obscure syntax and marvel at the poetry. Then I started going on my own to St John's Church in Hampstead, which is a pretty church. I would just walk up the road on a Sunday morning. It was a Prayer Book service and very pleasant but I could not take communion because I was not baptised. I was very conscious of that. If you were going to do it at all you would have to do it properly. And I just did not like being kept out. This related back to the days at the convent when we had prayers seven times a day and I, as a designated pagan, would have to leave the room with my spelling book every time. I was a very good speller by the time I had finished. I did not mind too much, actually. It's rather like being a smoker today—the most social people and likeable people have to leave the room. We pagans were a companionable lot. All the same it is never nice to be excluded on moral grounds. My mother hadn't let me become a Catholic though I asked—my grounds being that I did not want to go to Limbo. But all she said—and the Pope later agreed with her—was that there was no such place. Six decades later I could do as I wished. So I joined the Church of England, which seemed the most appropriate to where and how I was living. Oddly I remember taking my mother to St John's one Sunday when the Bishop was there—to see if she'd take to it—but she complained that there was too much gold thread in his robes for her liking. She was a very abstemious kind of person. Dr Soper's Methodism suited her better.

JS *I would like to come back to the Prayer Book in a moment but one thing that interested me was whether you got very strong reactions to your announcement that you were now a member of the Church of England.*

FW I did not go out of my way to announce it. One of my daughters-in-law, a committed agnostic, was worried that I would take her children to church. But I convinced her I was not in the business of converting anybody.

JS *I read an interview with you in the Guardian and they asked you about it, and seemed incredulous. They seemed almost to think that you must have been joking.*

FW Many a young person on the left today thinks that to be religious is insanity. That religious belief is what starts wars and if only everyone would be rational and atheist there would be peace in the world. They do not understand that there is another dimension to life other than the one

they see around them; that there are more and different rewards than consumerism. But they are mostly very young and very smart and they will learn. And the reason that particular *Guardian* interview was interpreted thus was because someone had sent me a joke post card that said 'Jesus is coming. Look busy.' It was on my mantelpiece when the interview took place. The interviewer did not see the joke and took me for some kind of Jesus freak and was horrified.

JS *In attending St John's—part of the experience was the liturgy?*

FW Yes. That was the attraction. The beauty of the language, the simplicity and yet the subtlety of the message. I did not understand at that stage how riven the Church was—that there were political factions and bitter emotions ran high. I just thought that you went to church, and wherever you went the service would be the same. But no. The vicar left to become Dean of St Paul's and the new incumbent was a woman who used the Good News Bible, made up her own prayers and practically brought on the bongo drums. In fact the C of E was behaving just like the BBC, who in the interest of ratings were dumbing down their programmes and losing audiences as a result. The more you court popularity, alas, the less you will find it. You alienate the old and embarrass the young. I had not realised how upset you can feel when you have become accustomed to a liturgy and a set of rituals which change to their detriment, and for no good reason. You can see that for a modern audience—as for a congregation—some things might have to shift and change, but the people who have made the changes in the last fifty years had cloth ears and no appreciation of the subtleties of language and meaning. Prayer Book language is precise and says exactly what it means.

JS *That experience of loss—of services being suddenly changed—is something that you would find that most people here have had.*

FW Yes. And if as you leave the church you speak to others, you find that they are all dismayed but do not like to say so. They feel old and discarded and that it's not their place to speak because the world is young and vibrant now. It is not, of course. It is just sad and ignorant.

JS *Yes one thing we are frequently told now is that the Prayer Book is inherently hard for young people and it seems that there is a defeatist attitude among some people in the Church about ever passing this on to the younger generation. Do you feel that?*

FW I feel that young people should make the effort to understand and if they are required to, they will. There should be a division between the child's world and the adult world. The child after all aspires to join the adult world: it is not the place of the adult world to stoop down to that of the child. That's what Sunday school was for—so you could take your

place with adults in the maturity of worship. But what's the point of an adult going to a church now? It has become something for you to grow out of, not grow towards.

This is what has happened to the journalists and young smart people I refer to—they too have been fed this pathetic version of religious ritual and have reacted as you would expect. To them, to have belief is infantile. It seems every time the liturgy is changed you lose a few more of the faithful. What a lack of courage and a lack of faith is here displayed. What a trembling and apologetic Church we have become.

JS *There has been a huge change in civilisation—during your lifetime, and my lifetime—from a country where Christianity was accepted and established as the religion of the state . . . .*

FW All cultures and all civilisations arise out of the religion which the people espouse. Even the atheist Soviet Union used Marxist-Leninism as its belief system, and kept that going for seventy years or so. Our society espoused the New Testament, that extraordinary document which allows for the possibility of doubt, from which democracy has emerged, not to mention science, technology, education, hospitals, a belief in a social framework which looks after the poor and weak. The very civilisation itself that we live in, with its many benefits, has risen out of this religious framework. Although many of us do not adhere to the exactitude of the faith or say they do not believe, nevertheless they are living in a society that still lives, or tries to live, by New Testament values. And when things go wrong in the material world they remember they are a community and turn up at the church.

JS *Do you think it possible or desireable to have a state that is completely neutral?*

FW As I say, they tried that in the Soviet Union. Any country today run on Marxist lines will bring its citizens nothing but trouble and poverty. Its values are imposed from on top by a state which denies history and tries to start from Year Zero, and it can only work, and temporarily at that, by repression and cruelty. There is no such thing as a neutral state: Christianity is the bedrock on which our society is founded, deny it as you will—rendered out of human experience, combined with the landscape, combined with the gospel, mixed in with technology, to produce what we have now. The rational state is what today's government would like to achieve, but will have its work cut out achieving it. People are not rational. The state is doing its best to replace Christian ethics with political correctness and the micro-management of individual lives, but only ends up bringing itself into disrepute. They may urge us to eat five vegetables a day and remove the salt from the school dinner tables but children go on liking chips.

JS *But there is a sort of great fear of appearing to favour one view over another.*

FW Indeed. Although I am now a member of the Church of England, I did start from a neutral base. I could have chosen to be a Buddhist, or a Vedantist, or an Islamist or a Wee Free, but I ended up in the faith which best suits the pattern of ethics that I was reared in, and which gives me a framework for my beliefs and aesthetic understanding. Spirituality and aesthetics are in my comprehension closely linked, which makes the Church of England an obvious choice. It allows doubt: sometimes even its bishops seem to disbelieve more than they believe. Well, faith can fluctuate without ending one up in the fiery pit. The C of E is broad and confident enough to include waverers.

JS *You talked about aesthetics and spirituality and that is something that the modern church tends to be suspicious about. It is often an accusation that is made about Prayer Book Society—that we are too preoccupied with language and the aesthetics of worship, and that these concerns are taking us away from the truth—although you obviously think there is a profound association.*

FW Yes there is for me at any rate a profound association. Beauty of language, music, architecture take us nearer to the truth—how can it possibly take us further away? What do people think beauty is *for*, other than to take us to God? A white tablecloth on a plain table with a jam jar of wildflowers will do, if need be, but if you can do better, do it. Worship needs to be separated out from the mundane.

But it turns into a class divide. People are so frightened of elitism. Because one person likes, say, polyphonic music but it puzzles others, it gets tainted; but everyone can hear the beat of the bongo drums so offer those up to God instead as the best you can do. The trouble is, it's not. And if you are not exposed to aesthetic excellence and aspiration when young I don't know how you will ever find it in yourself. The sheer ugliness and dirt of our concrete cities drives children to crime and despair. We have lived with the cult of the ugly for the last fifty years—remember the first cabbage-patch doll? That horrified my mother: 'What is this?' she asked. 'Why are our children encouraged to love something that is positively ugly? ' And she was very censorious even of Mickey Mouse, although early Walt Disney looks positively beautiful compared to Shrek.

JS *So you think we should be unashamed of making the connection?*

FW Between aesthetics and awareness of God? We should be completely unashamed of making that connection and be sorry for people who do not, or cannot. We should attempt to bring our children up to understand and acknowledge and respond to the aesthetic rather than deny it. To

choose not what is ugly, but what is beautiful. We must not mow down the rat on the motorway, I grant you, but we should still delight in the butterfly. As for the wasp—have you ever seen the inside of a wasps' nest? It's one of the most beautiful things in nature.

JS *One thing you like to say about your process of coming to the Church is that St Paul converted you. You had this task of writing a preface to 1 Corinthians?*

FW Yes. That was before I was a Christian and I was asked to read it as literature—and I thought: why not? It has stood the test of time, after all. And then reading St Paul! What an extraordinary story! What an extraordinary person! What a wonderful way with words—which might have been due to the translation, of course.[1] But it was so persuasive and powerful and to my astonishment, convincing. Supposing it was all true?

JS *You were surprised by what you found?*

FW It worked at so many levels. Here was St Paul all those centuries ago imposing middle-class values like 'don't spit in church' onto a wild and primitive people, and they were paying attention. He was suggesting that good behaviour and propriety was to everyone's advantage, and bad behaviour—sin—was to be roundly condemned. I loved the sheer heroics and energy of his story. Paul is thought to be anti-sex and anti-woman but it didn't seem to me to be quite like that. He was a rhetorician. He got carried away by his own words. It seems that the early Christians in Rome had decided celibacy was fashionable and the birth rate was falling. All religions want as many children as possible to be born in order to increase the flow of souls to God. If he said 'better to marry than to burn' he meant get married and have sex, for God's sake. Or so someone explained it to me.

JS *As St Paul was once thought of as being anti-woman you were once thought of, crudely, as being anti-man but some of the things you have said recently make the feminists think that you have turned your coat.*

FW No I have not turned my coat. The world has turned its coat and I've noticed. It is no good harking back to what made sense forty years ago when the position of women in our society was much as it still is with Muslims today—except that we didn't have to hide our sinful flesh so much. We couldn't earn, we voted as our husbands did, went on their passports, didn't take part in public life, and so on. That protest was desireable and advisable. The myth of the time was that men worked and earned and women looked after the children but the reality was different. I was an unmarried mother and could see it was not so. Increasingly women had to support themselves, and their children (the State had not yet got

1 The series in question reprinted the Authorised Version.

round to doing it), but were not in a position to earn enough to do so. To depend upon the good will of a man was rather foolish because not all men were full of good will. Women married in haste and repented at leisure. The post-patriarchal, pre-feminist world we were living in could not be maintained. So sure, I was pretty anti-man. But the situation has changed. Women are free to marry or not to marry: to have children or not to have children: they can do anything they like. The only thing that they are not allowed to do is not to earn—which has caused a lot of social problems, which no-one had anticipated. Change is a dangerous thing.

JS *Coming to the Prayer Book specifically: obviously you're a writer whose tools are words and language and you are sensitive to words as powerful things, and the language of the liturgy is a powerful use of language. You have commented on how traditional worship conveys a greater sense of awe of God and that the modern forms of worship—which you are scathing about—diminish God. Is that something you feel strongly about?*

FW As soon as you stop calling Him 'Thou', and start to call Him 'You', you are bringing Him down to your level—or attempting to do so. God as one of the lads, one of the girls. A lot of new young clergy seem to see God as made in their image and not the other way round and let you know it, imposing their will, their choice, upon the liturgy. In the Prayer Book every word has significance, every word relates to the word before and the word behind. It was written at the time of the flowering of English literature. Words carried significance and meaning and were not flung around so easily as they are today.

JS *You say you have a church that you worship at and go to Prayer Book early Communion—which you fear is under threat?*

FW Yes I fear it may be under threat. But one must live in faith and hope.

JS *Holy Communion is the service you normally go to but which other parts of the Prayer Book do you value? Do you like Evensong?*

FW Yes I like Evensong—I appreciate lots of hymns—wasn't that service especially devised for the household servants who liked a good sing-song? I even like Matins and enjoy the vain attempt to be able to get to the right note at the right time—it's a learning process as well as an affirmation of what you have learnt already. I do now just about know the Eucharist service by heart—and about time too.

JS *So the Eucharist, for you, is the heart of it?*

FW Yes, that is the heart of it.

John Scrivener then invited questions from the floor.

Question 1 *The questioner described a church where use of the Prayer Book had been discontinued, but where a subsequent incumbent had been persuaded to partially reintroduce it, and told Fay Weldon to 'take heart'.*

FW Thank you very much. It's people power that's needed. It is very difficult if you find yourself in such a situation to speak out. You can feel the whole sanctity of the Church and the word of God is being used against you, and you can get to feel quite paranoid. You sense the iron fist in the velvet glove—soft words are spoken, yet harsh and commanding decisions are made which go against the wishes of the congregation. Authority is saying one thing when people want, and are entitled to have, something quite other. Yet there is hope, because people do not become priests for no reason and are not without spirituality—although nothing in their training seems to do much to develop it. Rebellion at the church gate is what we need.

Question 2 *The questioner commented that in the West Country 'thee' and 'thou' had a familiar use, and that their use in addressing God might have a valuable element of intimacy as well as of transcendence.*

FW Yes—I think that since the use of 'thou' has in most places now gone, but was once reserved for God, that is the element that I am responding to rather than the companionable *tu-toi*-ing found in French.

Question 3 *The questioner suggested that the use of the singular 'thou' might be theologically helpful, as suggesting the oneness of God.*

FW Well I am not sure about one God. Certainly 'God' is what mankind agrees we all aspire to, getting rid of the chains of the flesh and attaining perfect spirituality, marking us off from the brute beats and awarding ourselves souls. But I tend to think our God is better than other Gods. You are not meant to say that these days. Nevertheless I'd maintain that the God worshipped by Christians is superior to the God other religions hold in esteem. Otherwise I would not have become a Christian. Looking around societies of the world born out of various religions I think that currently ours shows itself to be superior. We should all be allowed to say, as we look around at other people's countries, 'Frankly, ours is a better God than yours otherwise why do you come to here to benefit from it, and our culture. Why else? It can't be the climate.' This is a very obvious fact but people do have difficulty in saying it.

JS *That statement is, in a way, an undercurrent in a number of things you have said—that what people think and feel they are not saying.*

FW Yes but we should have the courage to say what we believe. As a congregation we may well have to say to those we are trained to hold in respect but no longer do—sorry, we have had enough.

JS *You have had the experience of finding yourself in quite an exposed position . . .*

FW Yes. I was described as an Islamophobe in 1999—rather to my amazement because actually I was all for the rights of the immigrant community, more of a phile than a phobe. I was exposed in a document written by the Runnymede Trust Society—which you would have thought from its name was a Christian organisation rather than an Islamic pressure group, but no. An Islamophobe, because ten years earlier, at the time of the Salman Rushdie affair, I had written a pamphlet, *Sacred Cows*, sympathising with the feelings of a Muslim community trying to live at peace in what to them must seem a horrific, anti-religious, corrupt society. But I had also, in the course of writing the pamphlet, said that I did not think that the Koran was a sensible poem on which to base a contemporary society—which seemed to me a perfectly reasonable thing to say. In those days you could talk about the Koran quite freely but now you avoid the subject in case someone attacks you or calls you racist. The answer is for more people just to read it. Then you can talk about it without being at a loss. It is not so long or so difficult. It is a rather odd document to my mind, being arranged in length of the passages, not of the date when Mohammed came back from the desert and reported what Allah had said to him. So the long statements are at the beginning and the short ones at the end, and it gives endless work for the scholars. But, you know, you cannot be afraid of the truth. If you believe your God is better than someone else's God—and nobody is going to kill you yet for saying so, although people are getting slightly nervous—it is your moral duty to say it. Otherwise we risk our whole Christian society being swept away because we are too polite to defend it.

JS *I would like to ask you about divisions in the Church and problems that vex the Church.*

FW When I first started going to St John's I had assumed the Anglican Communion was more or less the same everywhere: I was soon to realise how wrong I was, and that an attempt was being made to render unto Caesar what was God's, turning services into group therapies, happy feel-good occasions, demystifying the Holy Ghost, denying the function of the intellect, addressing the congregation as if they were a class of eight-year-olds, in denial of original sin, lost to the Pelagian heresy, skimming the surface of human nature and ignoring its more terrible depths. What is all this 'not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table' that the old folk murmur? Don't they realise that we have entered the age of high self-esteem? No Hell now, no Satan: yet if pure evil does not exist, how can pure good?

It all seemed so simple once. An hour a week spent considering something other than your own comfort on a Sunday morning, instead of just going to the shopping mall—thinking about something other than yourself, singing hymns, praying for the sick, being conscious of the community and conscious of the changing seasons and the advance of the Christian year, sticking to rituals refined over centuries—what could be wrong with that? Lots, apparently. Part of the trouble, paradoxically, is that everyone is working out of the goodness of their hearts, often for free, and passions abound. It's like the Board of Governors of a school where the only sensible person is the paid official, the one who deals with practicality not principle. Strong leaders are required but where do you find them? By their very nature archbishops tend to be intellectual people with nice natures trained in forgiveness and reasonableness. Bring back John the Baptist!

JS *Do you have strong opinions yourself?*

FW No. I am not entitled to. I am conscious I am new to this. I can only give my amateur comments—the Church is an organisation of amateurs. You would have to become a professional and go to Synod and spend your life arguing and I am a writer who goes to church, not a churchgoer who writes.

JS *Yes, but it is interesting to speak to someone who has just come upon it recently.*

FW You only realise what's happening when you find yourself upset when the liturgy changes without your consent or knowledge. The ground shifts beneath your feet, yet you were scarcely conscious you were standing on it. You have become used to something and you assumed rashly it was stable. In a life where everything changed the one thing I had at last found, or so I thought for a month or two before the incumbent changed, was the regularity and timelessness of the Church. Forget it. The theological colleges manage to produce a breed of me-me-me young priests who believe that they were born into the year zero, that custom and practice are there to be changed and simplified and they are meant to bring their own personalities to bear upon the congregation. They lack humility. They have no idea what is meant by God's wrath. They'd like to be bishops because that's promotion and a better salary.

JS *Are there any prayers that you especially value?*

FW One of the good things about the convent was the way they taught you to understand and concentrate on the Lord's Prayer. They made you think about it every time you said it, and not just say it automatically but focus upon what you were saying—and that has always stayed with me. And the '. . . meet and right so to do. It is very meet, right . . . .' I just like the sound of it. I once wrote a TV play called *Meet and Right* and another called

Comfortable Words. The young fail to get the resonances, of course, and are the more impoverished. I always like the reference to 'gathering up the crumbs under thy table'. It is so visual.

Question 4 *You were talking about the relationship of aesthetics to morality—can you tell us more about that?*

FW I suppose because I deal in words and language I see aesthetics as a matter of form—of taking the trouble to get it right and not just slapping down any old thing. If you are trying to do anything, from building a cathedral to writing a TV play, a skilled craftsman does it for its own sake, not just for money. I go back to George Herbert's verse:

Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and th' action fine.

I always loved that trimming of the 'e' to make the tune fit. It's attention to detail as much as anything else that turns craft into art, the painstaking effort with small things that adds up to something that has aesthetic qualities that are recognised by everybody. God does this in landscape and I see religion and landscape as closely aligned in some way: a gift from God.

Question 5 *You are renowned for 'go to work on an egg'. Since Anglicanism has been reduced to the level of a TV dinner in most churches, is there a slogan we can use?*

FW Dinner is better than nothing, I daresay. But rather light on shock and awe. There was 'the family that prays together stays together' slogan for a time. But then it was the old not the young who wanted togetherness. For generations young people have been trying to get out from under. But things may begin to change. The bubble that was the cult of consumerism has burst, suddenly and painfully for many of us. The age of the Golden Calf, which the Israelites bowed down to and worshipped in Moses' absence, looks as if it's over. Family ties, rather than possessions, may begin to feel important again. Perhaps 'Back to the one true God—find him in Church'. Yes, how about that—?

The Making of the Book of Common Prayer

GEORGE TOLLEY

For those of us who know and love the Book of Common Prayer, it has long been part of our lives. Although we treasure it, too many of us I suppose take it for granted. The 1662 Book of Common Prayer has a complex and stormy background. It was bought at great cost and out of much turmoil. Some lost their lives for it, many their livelihoods; many rejected it and they too suffered for their principles. Twice banned, for five years under Mary Tudor, and for fifteen years under the Commonwealth, the Prayer Book has a background of unforgiving bitterness. Yet it has also been the rock of unity of the Church of England and the glory of her magnificent liturgy. The story of its making needs telling again and again.

The first Prayer Book of 1549 had its roots in the movement for the use of the vernacular in worship, a movement going back to Wycliffe and others in the fourteenth century. That movement steadily gained momentum from a variety of causes: the growth of education, which was encouraged and strengthened by the spread of printing; the continental reform movement gave impetus to doctrinal change; and the decline of monasticism gave a new significance to public worship. Yet there was much argument about the use of the vernacular. Tyndale was, as always, robust in his assault upon those who stuck resolutely to Latin: 'They will say it cannot be translated into our tongue, it is so rude'; but he came back with force: 'It is not so much rude as they are false liars.' Sir Thomas More, no supporter of Tyndale in other respects, nevertheless spoke out for the English language: 'For as for that our tong is called barbarous, it is but a fantasye. For so is, as every learned man knoeth, every strange language to other. And if they would call it barayn of wordes, there is no doubte but it is plenteous enough to expresse our myndes in anye thing whereof one man hath used to speke with another.'

Early in the 16th century the appearance of successive translations into English of the Bible marks a cultural shift. Tyndale's New Testament in 1526, the Coverdale Bible in 1531, Matthew's Bible in 1533, the Great Bible in 1539. And in 1538 came Henry VIII's edict that an English Bible should be placed in every parish church in the kingdom. In 1538 the Gospels were read in English at Mass and in 1543 came the resolution from Convocation directing that a chapter of the Bible be read in English at every Sunday service. Liturgically there was a great step forward in 1544 with the publication of Cranmer's English Litany, which was not merely a

translation from the Latin, but involved extensive adaptations and additions. In 1545 came the King's Primer containing the *Te Deum*, *Benedictus*, *Magnificat*, *Nunc Dimittis* and Lord's Prayer in English virtually in the form in which we now have them.

But the adoption of a thoroughgoing English liturgy had to await the death of Henry VIII. This iconoclast, so ready to throw over the significant ecclesiastical and social structures of the past, was in liturgical matters essentially conservative and traditionalist. Not for nothing had Pope Leo X conferred upon him the title, Defender of the Faith. Even Thomas Cranmer had to overcome certain scruples. Whilst pushing for the use of English in worship he entered the caveat: 'except in certain mysteries, whereof I doubt'. But with the accession of Edward VI, the gates were opened. Radical change could now follow. Planning for the new services got under way immediately and was given a flying start by all that had gone before. A new English Order of Communion was ready by March 1548 and this was fed directly into the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, which came into general use on Whitsunday, 9 June 1549. Cranmer was the driving force behind the new Book and much of it derives from his pen. But the sources and influences which shaped the Prayer Book are many. Cranmer himself was a skilled adapter and selector, an unashamed plagiarist, but of undoubted and incomparable genius in the making of liturgy. Cranmer's skills in editing and rendering into clear readable English the work of others had been developed and finely honed in the years he spent in the 1530s scouring sources in support of Henry's divorce. As Diarmid MacCulloch has said: these skills 'would bear the most lasting fruit in the greatest editorial task of his life, the Book of Common Prayer.'

Influences upon the Prayer Book

The influences which made their mark upon the 1549, and subsequent Prayer Books, fall under four main headings:

1 **The ancient, mostly Latin, liturgies**. Cranmer and others were steeped in traditional worship. They could no more discard it than they could forswear their Englishness. The Latin Sarum Use was in their bones, and, although they were to make much radical change, the words and structures which had been in general use since the thirteenth century lived on. There were other ancient influences too. The Mozarabic liturgy has echoes in the Baptism service and Eastern Orthodox liturgy gives us the prayer of St Chrysostom and an epiclesis in 1549, but subsequently removed. Like most of the English reformers, Cranmer was keen to establish the validity of liturgical and other change by reference to ancient sources.

2 **Reformed Latin liturgies.** In 1535, Cardinal Quiñones produced his reformed Latin Breviary, commissioned by Pope Paul III, the bitter enemy of Henry VIII. Cranmer made much use of this book. It was to have much more influence upon the liturgy of the Church of England than upon the church of Rome. Cranmer's Preface to the 1549 Prayer Book is a substantial crib of Quinones' Preface. Reformed versions of Latin hymns also influenced Cranmer.

3 Of greater significance than reformed Latin liturgy were the **Protestant Reformed service books** of Northern Europe. The year which Cranmer spent in Germany and the Low Countries in 1532, not only gave him a wife (Margaret, his second wife—from Nuremberg) but also a considerable experience of Lutheran liturgies, and it was perhaps during this year abroad that his interest in liturgy was aroused. There were two influences at work here—one, the adoption of the vernacular, and the other, more significant, doctrinal, in the rejection of the Roman Mass and its substitution by an order for Holy Communion in which the memorial replaced the sacrificial. The Lutheran Churches had quite early developed regional orders of service. The Orders for Brandenburg and Nuremberg were particularly influential on Cranmer; Hermann von Wied, Archbishop of Cologne, and Bucer also made their considerable marks. In our own Book of Common Prayer, the Exhortations, the Comfortable Words and the shape of Matins are but three examples where Cranmer followed the reformed Protestant orders of service.

4 The use of **vernacular English** was itself a considerable influence. Cranmer and his co-workers translated, adapted and added new composition. It is important to remember that the issues and problems here were very different to those facing the translators of the Bible. There, the task was to render into English the original writings; but with the Prayer Book there were no pre-existent models of English formal liturgical prose.

The 1549 Prayer Book

The processes of compilation of the 1549 Book and of its approval by the civil authorities are instructive. Convocation appointed a committee to 'consider and ponder a uniform, quiet and godly order', with terms of reference 'to draw and make one convenient and neat order, rite and fashion of common and open prayer and administration of the sacraments . . . having as well eye and respect for the most sincere and pure Christian religion taught by the Scriptures, as to the usage of the primitive Church'. Clearly, the wind of reform was intended to have behind it both the power of Scripture and of tradition. The Committee, under Cranmer,

met at Chertsey Abbey on 9 September 1548 and they worked for no more than three weeks. All the materials for a new Prayer Book were to hand. Their work was one of securing agreement to final editing and compilation. Whatever agreement had been reached at Chertsey was blown apart when the Lords debated the Book for four days in December. For it appears that there had been some surreptitious tampering with the agreed book before its presentation to Parliament. Tunstall (Durham) and Thirlby (Ely) angrily declared their objections, centred upon 'the doctrine of the Supper'. Whatever had been agreed at Chertsey had been changed in the direction of the Reformers and away from Roman doctrine. Although the Bishops were divided (eight voting against and ten for), the Book was approved by both Lords and Commons. The Book had been taken up by some churches, notably by St Paul's in London, before it came officially into use. But it was not universally welcomed. The resistance of some respected bishops had already been made clear. Bonner, Bishop of London, went to the Tower, courageously protesting to Cranmer: 'three things I have, to wit; a small portion of goods, a poor carcass and mine soul. The first two ye may take, though unjustly; but as for my soul, ye get it not.' In the West Country, in particular, the introduction of the new Book brought rioting. Ten thousand rebels of Devon and Cornwall laid siege to Exeter in August and rebellion broke out also in Kent, Norfolk, Essex and Suffolk. Troops were recalled from France and Scotland, rebellion was put down, with some 4000 rebels killed in battle, ringleaders hanged at Tyburn and parish priests hanged from the steeples in their parishes. Not an auspicious start for a 'quiet and godly order'. The people of the West country wanted no truck with new-fangled reformed religion. They stated what they wanted in a petition to the King: communion in one kind; holy bread and holy water; palms and ashes; images restored to churches; the discontinuance of the English Bible. The new service in English they likened to 'a Christmas game'. Cranmer's message to the rebels was somewhat disingenuous: 'It seemeth to you a new service and indeed it is none other but the old; the self-same words in English, which were in Latin, saving a few things taken out'. By and large, the new Prayer Book was imposed upon an unwilling population. The old Mass books had to be called in under an Act or Parliament and a Royal Proclamation, diligently enforced, and this action spilled over into wanton destruction of treasures of ancient libraries. Punishment for clergy who did not use the new Book was severe, with life imprisonment upon a third conviction.

Yet the new Prayer Book was indeed conservative, a pointer to change rather than radical change itself; that was still to come. The 1549 Prayer Book was regarded by Cranmer and others very much as an interim rite

and planning for change was already under way at the time of publication. So what did the 1549 Book achieve?

1 A uniform service book to replace the various rites previously in use. It was a book, also, that was complete, in meeting all the requirements of the prescribed services of the Church, although not yet having the Ordinal.

2 Everything was in English. It is worth quoting A.L. Rowse: 'It is difficult . . . to appreciate fully the astonishing audacity . . . of such an action as the substitution of the English liturgy for the age-long Latin rite.'

3 There was a much more comprehensive reading of the Bible and the Psalms (although the Psalms were not initially bound with the Prayer Book). Cranmer in his Preface makes much of the need for a comprehensive reading of the Bible throughout the year.

4 It was a people's Prayer Book, for use by congregations assembled in Church, unlike the Mass Books and Breviaries previously in use. In this, the simplification provided by the replacement of the old monastic routines by Matins and Evensong was a masterly stroke.

5 It established the seat of authority in the Church as residing in the King advised by Parliament, Bishops and Convocation. This was no mere procedural matter. The manner in which the 1549 Prayer Book was approved emphasised that the break with Rome was now complete, that the Church of England was an established constituent of the State and that the bishops were guardians of the Church under the aegis of the State.

6 And, most significantly, the Roman Mass had gone. For the ordinary people the most significant changes here were a service in English and receiving communion in both kinds. But doctrinal change was significant, too. Let us turn to what was to be the continuing battleground.

Central to the work of the English Reformers was their belief and claim that they were restoring primitive, and therefore, true, practices and interpretations. There had been, in their eyes, accretions of error. The Reformers claimed to go back to the early Fathers and early Christian practice. Transubstantiation was not decreed until the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Communion in one kind was not universal throughout the West until the thirteenth century. But the battle was equally about the consequences of accepting the doctrine of the sacrifice of the Mass—and with that went the power and authority of the priest and overlays of so much traditional superstition and misuse. Although the Continental Reformers were insistent in rejecting the sacrifice of the Mass, there were substantial differences between Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, for example, about the meaning and outcome of consecration of the elements. Scholars continue to argue about the precise beliefs of Cranmer. He made contradictory statements; he changed his mind; he responded to various influences. With good reason he was accused at his trial: 'You, Master

Cranmer, taught in this high sacrament of the altar three contrary doctrines'. 'Nay,' said Cranmer 'I taught but two contrary doctrines in the same'. But let us concentrate upon what is in the Prayer Book.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the 1549 Communion is the preservation of the shape of the Roman Canon. Certainly there were significant changes, but, unlike their continental counterparts, the English reformers stuck with what they knew. Yet, doctrinal change there was. The emphasis was upon celebrating the perpetual memory of Christ's death, not re-enacting it. The rubric is clear and firm: there shall be no 'elevation or showing of the sacrament to the people'. The word 'oblation' comes in, but only in reference to Christ's 'one oblation of himself, once offered'. The sacrifice is of praise and thanksgiving, of ourselves, our souls and bodies and our Lord on the cross, not our Lord on the altar.

What was being attempted was difficult indeed. Satisfying the Reformers by suppressing the Roman Mass, conciliating the conservative-traditionalists and providing sufficient common ground for all to feel reasonably comfortable. It was, of course, an impossible task. Even a moderate was forced to say: 'the Book speaks very obscurely, and however you try to explain it with candour, you cannot avoid great absurdity.' The conservative Bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, learned and astute, could argue with conviction that the 1549 Book expressed doctrinal truths that were directly in opposition to what Cranmer himself was claiming. At the beginning of the Lords debate on the Prayer Book the Protector Somerset had ordered the Bishops to stick to the question, 'whether bread be in the sacrament after the consecration or not'. They had not resolved that question. Indeed, it can be said with truth that the Reformers were more adept at saying what the Lord's Supper was not, than what it was.

The 1552 Book

The shape and form of the Holy Communion service is both the strength and the weakness of the 1549 Book. Strong enough to support and sustain a claim of being both Catholic and Reformed, its ambiguities encouraged controversy. It represented undeniably unfinished business. And in the 1552 revision there was an attempt to finish the business by pushing firmly in the direction of the Reformers. The Act of Uniformity of 1552 strikes a hypocritical note. The 1549 Book, which was to be mangled, is referred to as 'a very godly order, agreeable to the word of God and the primitive Church, very comfortable to all good people and most profitable to the state of the realm'. Hardly a case here for revision. It goes on to state that it had been 'faithfully and godly perused, explained and made fully perfect'.

Out went the words of administration 'The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ' and in came 'Eat and drink this in remembrance that Christ died for you'. Out also went the manual acts of consecration, the mixing of wine and water in the chalice, the presentation of the offering and vestments. Out went reference to the Virgin Mary, Apostles and Martyrs, as did prayer for the departed. In came the Ten Commandments in place of the nine-fold Kyrie. In came the order for administration of communion into the hands, not the mouths, of communicants and what had been commonly practised—kneeling to receive communion—was ordered by rubric. That order was to cause much controversy, being denounced notably by John Knox who fought hard to have it removed. It was not removed, but, at the very last minute, there was inserted the 'black rubric', declaring that no adoration of the sacrament is intended and that the bread and wine 'remain still in their very nature and substances'. The *Gloria* was moved from the beginning to the end of the service, so emphasising the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

There were other changes. Communion at least three times a year instead of one; a new introduction to Matins and Evensong; new occasional prayers; more congregational participation; and the inclusion of the Ordinal, in which ordination was to the office of a minister appointed to preach, teach and conduct worship, not that of a priest offering sacrifice. The service of Baptism was changed beyond recognition. Three-fold immersion, anointing and the chrisom were all dispensed with, as was the exorcism. In the visitation of the sick, anointing was omitted and reservation for use in the communion of the sick was discontinued. Alongside liturgical changes, there were significant changes in the churches. Walls were white-washed, obliterating ancient wall paintings; the Ten Commandments and Lord's Prayer were prominently displayed on the east wall and wooden tables took the place of stone altars.

The 1552 Book was authorised for use from All Saints' Day. Edward VI died on 6 July 1553 and one of the first acts of Queen Mary was to ban the Prayer Book and restore the Mass. It had to wait five years before returning.

The 1552 Book had moved very significantly in the direction of Continental Reform. In addition to the liturgical changes, provision for music had been virtually abandoned. Chancel screens, retained in the 1549 Book at least as the location for the Churching of Women, lost their function and stood ripe for demolition. Cranmer had certainly responded positively to critiques he had sought of the 1549 Book from Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr, and also to pressure from some bishops, notably Ridley of London and Hooper of Gloucester. There were influences also in the direction of Zwingli from John Laski (Johannes a Lasco), who had founded the Strangers' Church in London. Yet the reformers remained far

from satisfied. There were other influences of a political nature. Somerset, the Protector, and the Council, were all for radical re-positioning of the Church of England, to bring it into line firmly with the Reformers' camp. It is as well to remember that the plunder of the monasteries by Henry had been succeeded by the plunder of the cathedrals and parish churches under Edward. The dissolution of chantries and the seizure of endowments, the breaking of altars and images, the pillage of church plate, the dismantling and selling of organs—these were the context for liturgical change under Edward. Some thirty grammar schools were endowed under Edward VI—a positive outcome of the plunder of the churches, but in no way was this a justifiable excuse for plunder, nor for the suppression of University professorships and lectureships and the scattering and burning of College libraries. Somerset himself had wanted to build his new palace on the site of Westminster Abbey; this sacrilege was averted by the Dean bribing him with half of the Abbey's estates. There was to be persecution of a different kind under Mary, but we might remind ourselves that when she came to the throne, there was widespread rejoicing in the streets, especially in the North. A contemporary account records popular celebrations in Doncaster and Rotherham and in many other Northern market towns, 'whereat the whole commonalty in all places in the north greatly rejoiced, making great fairs, drinking wine and ale and praising God'. Such rejoicing was to be short-lived. Very soon, the fires of Smithfield were to be lit and three hundred died for their faith, including sixty women. If they did not die directly for the Prayer Book, they died for what it stood for.

The Elizabethan Book

Elizabeth at her accession faced enormous problems. There was a tide running in favour of continuing Protestant Reform, a European cultural movement, aided by returning Marian exiles and reaction against the extreme policies of Mary. None of the Marian Bishops, save Llandaff and Sodor and Man, would take the oath of allegiance to Elizabeth, and the new bishops were of Puritan sympathies. The restoration of the 1549 Book would have created considerable unrest. Elizabeth plumped for the untried, untested 1552 Book. As a result, fourteen bishops, twelve deans, fifteen Heads of Colleges and between 200 and 300 clergy who refused to use it lost their livings; the number would probably have been much greater if the 1549 Book had been insisted upon. But some changes were made to the 1552 Book. The words of administration in the Communion service combined those of 1549 and 1552; the black rubric on kneeling was omitted; the prayer against the Pope was omitted and the ornaments

rubric was changed to allow use of some of the old vestments. All these were changes of a Catholic nature. A prayer for the Queen was added, the oath in the Ordinal was changed from 'the King's Supremacy' to the 'Queen's Sovereignty' and the Queen became 'Supreme Governor' of the Church, instead of 'Supreme Head'. An apparently slight, yet significant, change was made as to the place of saying Daily Prayer. The 1552 Book had directed 'such place as the people may best hear', a recipe for another surge of demolition. The 1559 Book had 'the accustomed place of the Church'—and added, significantly, 'and the Chancels shall remain, as they have done in the past.'

After three revisions in ten years, the shape of the Prayer Book was essentially as we now have it, although controversy was not stilled, especially in regard to Holy Communion and Baptism. In 1572 came the first Admonition to Parliament, strongly condemning the Prayer Book: 'an imperfecte book, culled and picked out of that popish dunghill, the Masse Booke, full of all abominations'. Such changes as had been made were as much matters of state and politics as they were of religion. Public order and overseas alliances could so easily be disturbed and jeopardised by changes in the liturgy. It is the paradox of the Church of England that a book which has engendered so much controversy, some of it terrible and violent, should, at the same time, stand as the core of unifying public worship. And it was Matins and Evensong that provided the essential stability of this core. For Holy Communion became less and less common. Cranmer's vision of a daily Communion service in parish churches was never realised. In many it was, at most, monthly, and for perhaps the majority of a congregation, once a year was the norm. For nearly four hundred years it was Matins and Evensong that provided for the great bulk of worshippers the substance of their Sunday worship. Only recently has that pattern changed with the Eucharist now being the main service at so many churches. Together with the occasional offices of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and Burial, Matins and Evensong gave a durable framework for public worship, which was both respected and honoured. This framework had been given added strength by the addition in the 1552 book of the requirement that the minister was to say Morning and Evening Prayer daily in the church, with the bell to be tolled, so that 'such as be disposed may come to hear God's word and to pray with him.'

The crowning glory of that framework is surely in the Collects, both seasonal and occasional, which the most recent biographer of Thomas Cranmer refers to as 'jewelled miniatures'. If we would learn something of the treasures contained in the Book of Common Prayer, we should turn to the Collects. There is a wealth of ancient devotion here. Eliot wrote in 'Little Gidding': 'You are here to kneel, where prayer has been valid.' That is

certainly true of the Collects. In using them we have our minds and hearts focused upon eternal truths and we are led into a large room of prayer of which we may use George Herbert's words—'the Church's banquet'. Most of our Collects are translations from the Latin of the fifth century Sacramentary of Pope Gelasius, but these translations bear the marks of the felicitous genius of Cranmer. Whatever the criticisms of Cranmer the theologian, churchman or politician, there can be no denying his true genius as a composer of liturgy, an 'adventurous connoisseur of words'. Twenty-four of the 1549 Collects are original compositions of Cranmer. They have enriched and embellished the store he garnered from ancient sources.

On to 1662

The Prayer Book now moved into a century of relative, but far from complete, tramquillity. With the accession of James I in 1603, the Puritans pushed hard for change, no doubt thinking that a King from Presbyterian Scotland would be amenable to their cause. The Millenary Petition demanded a list of reforms including abolition of the sign of the cross in Baptism and the ring in Marriage and bowing at the name of Jesus. The cap and surplice should not be used; rest on holidays should not be so strictly urged; popish opinion should not be taught or defended; and the 'longsomeness' of services lessened. James responded by referring matters to the Hampton Court Conference in January 1604. Eight bishops, seven deans and two doctors of divinity were set against four Puritans. The 1559 Prayer Book emerged unscathed from the debates, with meagre concessions only to the Puritans. Forty years later they had their revenge when, in 1645, both the Church of England and the Book of Common Prayer were declared abolished.

The Prayer Book was not, however, dead during the Commonwealth. Clandestine use continued, with offenders facing fines of £5 for the first offence, £10 for the second and a year's imprisonment for the third. Some emulated Robert Sanderson (later Bishop of Lincoln and author of the Preface to the 1662 Book), who continued to use the Prayer Book services, with abbreviations here and variation of a phrase there—enough to claim that the Prayer Book, within the meaning of the Act, was not being used. Sanderson, and others like him, were forced to endure the attention and the challenges of snoopers determined to eradicate any such practice.

With the Restoration in 1660, the nation, having looked into the abyss and not liking what it saw, had no stomach for Puritan extremism. In the minds of many, regicide, civil war, the rigours of kill-joy Puritanism, the defacing of churches, the wordy meandering of Puritan preachers, the

banishment of Saint's Day's holidays, the sparse barrenness of worship—all were lumped together. The restoration of the King, bishops and the old liturgy were similarly conjoined, representing a restored hope in a tranquil, peaceful country free of extremes. But factions were still strong. Puritanism had strengthened under the Commonwealth, with the Presbyterians now dominant, and was ready to fight re-imposition of the Prayer Book with its associated ritual and ceremony. The 16th-century fear of Popery had now gone, but deep distrust of Roman Catholicism remained and an ordered liturgy, to a Puritan, spoke of priest and Mass, of the stifling of individual conscience. In the opposing camp were those who had, for their own safety and conscience, fled the country. For the second time in a century returning exiles were significant in the Church. In Elizabethan times, exiles from Germany favoured reform and the Puritan cause. In Charles II's time, exiles from France looked for revenge upon those Presbyterians who 'had pulled down the walls and bulwarks of Zion.'

The Restoration was a brilliantly managed affair, executed with remarkable efficiency and with conspicuous smoothness. There was no bloodshed and, for the most part, a chapter of violence and deep, uneasy division was closed peaceably. Religious differences were high on the agenda and centred largely upon the restoration of episcopacy and of the Prayer Book. Before Charles left the Continent he had been lobbied strongly by the Presbyterians to abstain from personal use of the Prayer Book. He had given a strong signal in his reply that he thought that form of service the best in the world and would continue to use it privately. But they took heart from the Charles' Declaration of Breda: 'We do declare a liberty to tender consciences.' The resolution of the Prayer Book issue was to be managed largely by politicians. The Earl of Clarendon, now Lord Chancellor, was the leading protagonist of orderly, peaceful transition. Around him were a group, largely of Oxford men, mostly members of the Falkland circle who had gathered regularly at Great Tew in Oxfordshire before the Civil War. Clarendon himself had little interest in liturgy. Against the Laudians, he declared that 'ceremonial was not in itself of that important value to be either entered upon with that resolution or carried on with that passion.' Against the Puritans, he uncompromisingly stated that 'no reformation is worth the charge of a civil war.' But amongst the common people there was no great love for the Puritan Directory which had replaced the Prayer Book after the Civil War.

The Worcester House Declaration of October 1660 promised a commission of learned divines to review and amend the Prayer Book. The Declaration was profuse in its promises to Presbyterians, but an attempt to give it the force of law was defeated in the Commons. The Savoy House

Conference followed, meeting from 15 April to 24 July 1661. There were twelve Commissioners plus nine Assessors on each side. The Archbishop of York, Frewen, was the nominal President, but Gilbert Sheldon, Bishop of London, took the lead on the bishops' side, with Cosin of Durham and Sanderson of Lincoln his heavyweight supporters. On the Presbyterian side, Richard Baxter and Edward Reynolds, Bishop of Norwich, were the leaders, with Baxter holding centre stage.

From the start, the Conference was doomed to failure. The argument was tedious, legalistic and fractious, with no spirit of compromise. The Presbyterians were routed, 'bluffed out of their senses', says Norman Sykes, 'by apparently favourable portents and promises, whilst their adversaries were taking possession of the church by stealth.' The consequences were far-reaching. The hope of a comprehensive, all-inclusive national Church, was gone for ever. Thereafter, non-conformity was to go its own way and make its own mark upon the culture and traditions of the nation.

The bishops had loaded the dice in the terms of reference of the conference, which were

> to advise upon and review the said Book of Common Prayer, comparing the same with the most ancient liturgies which have been used in the Church, in the primitive and purest times . . . . And, if occasion be, to make such reasonable and necessary alterations, corrections, and amendments therein as . . . shall be agreed upon to be needful or expedient for the giving satisfaction unto tender consciences and the restoring and continuance of peace and unity . . . but avoiding, as much as may be, all unnecessary alterations of the forms of liturgy wherewith the people are already acquainted, and have so long received in the Church of England.

Baxter did not manage the case well. He came out at the beginning with a new, alternative liturgy and a list of objections to the Prayer Book, ninety-six 'Exceptions' as they were called, a jumble of the significant and the trivial. Most were dismissed by the bishops and only fifteen rather trivial concessions were made. Three months of wrangling gave no joy to the Presbyterians, but none could have been given without virtual destruction of a common liturgy and desertion of the Church's Catholic heritage. For its part, Parliament would have preferred no revision. A new Bill for Uniformity passed through the Commons during the Savoy House Conference and had annexed to it the Prayer Book as printed in 1604. But revision there certainly was. Following the conclusion of the Savoy Conference, the real work of review and amendment got under way in Convocation. Over a period of twenty-two days Convocation worked at great speed and to great effect. About 600 changes, both minor and major, were made.

Two books had considerable influence upon the revision. One was the 'Advices' of Wren, Bishop of Ely, who, during his years in the Tower and banishment from office, had devoted most of his time to a meticulous, scholarly revision of the Prayer Book. John Cosin of Durham, upon his return from exile in France in 1660, worked up his own proposals, spurred on, no doubt, by Wren's 'Advices'. The outcome was the 'Durham Book', a carefully annotated and revised Prayer Book which reflected also the ill-fated Scottish Prayer Book of 1637. During and after the Savoy Conference William Sancroft, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and subsequently Archbishop of Canterbury, amended the 'Durham Book' with the intention that this should be the revised Prayer Book. In the event, the 'Durham Book' was not adopted. Sheldon, together with Sanderson and Morley, in particular, preferred something less Catholic.

The new Act of Uniformity finally received the Royal Assent on 19 May 1662 and to it was annexed the revised Prayer Book. The new Book of Common Prayer was accepted without debate but only by a narrow margin of ninety-six to ninety and with a carefully worded reservation of the right of the Commons to debate it if they so wished. That right was to be exercised with devastating effect in 1928. The Act of Uniformity required clergy to give 'unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and presented in and by' the new Book. It was to come into use by St Bartholomew's Day, 24 August 1662. The Act contained a prohibition upon all persons who had not been episcopally ordained by that date. The outcome was the ejection of about one fifth of all clergy from their posts. Many had not even been able to obtain a printed copy of the Prayer Book to which they were required to give assent. Nearly 2000 clergy were deprived of their livings in the two years following the Restoration. The Church lost many learned and devoted ministers. Some moved into non-conformity, thereby ensuring the sturdy growth of a new plant; many saw out their lives in obscurity and poverty.

Let us look at some of the more significant changes in the 1662 Prayer Book. In the Communion service, the declaration on kneeling was restored, together with manual acts of consecration and a thanksgiving for the faithful departed. A rubric was added for consecration of additional bread and wine and for reverent consumption of unused elements. (But there is no specific provision for reservation.) The phrase 'accept our alms and oblations' was included in the prayer for the Church Militant giving rise to great argument as to what is offered as an oblation. The Authorised Version of the Bible was used for all Epistles and Gospels, but not for the Psalms, the Comfortable Words and the Ten Commandments. There were changes in the Burial and Confirmation services and in the Litany. A new service of Adult Baptism was introduced and also Forms of Prayer to be

used at Sea, based, interestingly, upon the Puritan Directory. John Cosin's lovely translation of *Veni Creator Spiritus* was used in the Ordinal.

A number of Collects were changed considerably and many new Collects appeared, including those for Advent 3, Epiphany 6, Easter Even, and St Stephen's Day; and the occasional prayers were greatly enriched by Collects for the Ember Weeks, for Parliament, for All Sorts and Conditions of Men and by the General Thanksgiving. Cosin contributed much here. The General Thanksgiving came from Edward Reynolds, Bishop of Norwich, and was based upon a prayer of Queen Elizabeth; All Sorts and Conditions came from either Robert Sanderson or Peter Gunning, Bishop of Chichester.

Of singular importance is Sanderson's Preface, from which two sentences only will be selected here.

> Our general aim . . . in this undertaking was . . . to do that which to our best understandings we conceived might most tend to the preservation of peace and unity in the Church; the procuring of reverence, and exciting of piety and devotion in the publick worship of God. . . .We have good hope that what is here presented . . . will be also well accepted and approved by all sober, peaceable and truly conscientious sons of the Church of England.

I believe that we can say that, by and large, these high aims were achieved, inasmuch as for the next 300 years the 1662 Book remained the sole authorised Prayer Book of the Church of England, and, moreover, provided order and continuity and received general respect and approval. That is not to say that all controversy was stilled or that adherence to the discipline of the Prayer Book was perfect. Manifestly, this was not so, but the Book did indeed provide a clear and sound framework for common prayer which gave strength and stability to the Church of England and spiritual nourishment to its people.

Let me conclude by considering the issue of common prayer and what a book of common prayer provides. There are three major justifications for common prayer, by which I mean those standard forms of service covering all the major offices of the Church that are accepted and agreed and are in regular use as the norm of worship. One is that common prayer gives a known, familiar order, immediately recognisable wherever one may go to church. Familiarity is important for at least three reasons. That one should feel at home with, comfortable with, an order of service, not having to refer to a variety of changing instructions; that one should be able to call upon well known material as an aid to prayer and spiritual reflection at any time; that there should be a continuing, recognisable context for fellowship, not only in a single congregation, but generally

throughout the Church. Local variation has its merits, but it can go too far in helping to create a collection of discrete congregations, a congregational, not a national Church. A well-constructed framework of common prayer will allow for local variations, whilst prescribing the essentials of common structure and practice.

The second reason for common prayer is that it should provide a standard of quality in the riches and ordering of its material so that what is offered is a storehouse of spirituality. The quality of that material will encourage worshippers to explore and use its treasures. It will be a constant aid to our own prayers and to the development and sustaining of our spirituality.

The third reason is the most important. A book of common prayer encapsulates the doctrine upon which is built the integrity of the Church. Doctrine is the foundation of liturgy, not literary form, nor aesthetics, nor the creation of shared emotional experiences. Essentially, a book of common prayer must provide (together with the Bible) the foundation for the teaching function of the Church; and without lively, inspired teaching the Church dies. At bottom, a book of common prayer is about declaring doctrine, not sharing fellowship. The old dictum, *lex orandi, lex credendi* remains as true now as ever—as the Church worships, so it believes.

It has been the strength of the Church of England that its doctrine has been so richly expressed in its forms of public worship. There remains, of course, a paradox, a tension, at the heart of our Church. In claiming to be Catholic and Reformed, that tension will continue. The battles that were fought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not, and could not, reach a final conclusion. They live on today. It is precisely because the essence of the Church of England is to be both Catholic and Reformed that we need a book of common prayer. Without it, the aim of the Church of England to be a Church serving all the people cannot be realised. Without it, styles of worship will determine membership, not of a national Church, but of individual congregations and those different styles will reflect doctrinal positions which, in some cases, are irreconcilable. That way lies weakness, not strength.

The whole Church of Christ is built upon history and tradition. Supremely, upon that moment in history we call the Incarnation and upon the traditions handed down to us in the Gospels. We are not free to dispose of history and tradition. For the Church of England, the Book of Common Prayer is one abiding outcome of history and tradition, one, moreover, that reflects a literary genius as rare and precious as that of Shakespeare. We cannot, however, allow one particular outcome of history and tradition, however precious, to stand in the way of enrichment of our liturgical heritage. Neither must we allow a spiritual treasure to become a fossilised

remains, of curiosity value only. That is unlikely. There is enough truth and beauty in the Book of Common Prayer to ensure that it will continue to provide a standard of liturgy that will inform and inspire the Church as it faces its eternal task of witnessing to Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

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Andor Gomme 1930–2008

Regular readers of Faith and Worship *will have been saddened to hear of the death last September of one of our regular contributors, Professor Andor Gomme. His obituary in the* Independent *gave a clear account of his academic career as a teacher and critic of English Literature and as an architectural historian, but finally emphasised 'the remarkable breadth of his accomplishments, whether of his writing, his absorbed and passionate interests (he reconstructed and published in 2004 a Performance edition of the* St Mark Passion *for the Cambridge Baroque Camerata), of his anxious commitment to the common good which so movingly transpired in his activity on behalf of a dozen third-world causes . . . '. He was a firm supporter of the Book of Common Prayer, and his widow Susan writes of the Prayer Book being 'a great stay and continuing source of inspiration to him'.*

For an editor he was the ideal contributor, always providing a 'clean' and error-free script, and open to suggestions even from one much his junior. His most distinctive contributions to this magazine were close readings of the Prayer Book text which cast a wide illumination: he never lost sight of the wood for the trees. It seems an appropriate tribute to reprint two characteristic pieces dating back some years (from nos. 51 and 52), both of which appeared during the editorship of my predecessor, Mr A.C. Capey.

How to Get Wed: A Note on Quantities

Sitting often through the familiar phrases of the Solemnisation of Matrimony, I have found myself pondering the order of the words as the groom puts the ring on his bride's finger (and now, of course, normally *vice versa* as well): 'With this ring *I thee wed*, with my body *I thee worship* [or (1928) 'honour'], and with all my worldly goods I *thee endow*'—or (1928) 'all my worldly goods with thee I share'. In the 1928 version the last phrase hath something of a dying fall; the worldly goods get the weight and the voice will naturally droop a little on the last four words, as if their impact were somehow secondary. Ian Robinson has pointed out the rather sheepish ambiguity in the 1928 formula: in all the versions up to 1662 the groom makes an endowment of everything; now he is merely prepared to share—to split equally or 5:1? Who knows?

I'm not now, however, concerned with the semantic shift. In the first two phrases of commitment the only change is from 'worship', which was presumably thought to be either dangerously near to idolatry or, since the etymology of the word has long been obscured, simply peculiar, to the anodyne 'honour', which is open to any interpretation you want to put on it. But the familiar, and yet unfamiliar, order of the words remains. 'I thee wed . . . I thee worship' (or 'honour'). These little sentences, with the (pronominal) object coming between the subject and the verb, as it would

in French or Italian, don't suggest a normal English order, and I don't think they ever will have done. 'When snow the pasture sheets': that sounds obviously poetical, and not only because of the startling use of 'sheets' as a verb. So why this order in the solemn moment of the marriage itself? Isn't there even something a bit ungainly (heavy-handed?) about 'I thee wed'? Why not 'I wed thee . . . I worship thee'?

Nice and natural (except of course that, quite apart from the archaic 'thee', outside the marriage service it's only in tabloid journalism that people 'wed' one another). Here, if one speaks the phrases as I think one would normally, it is the verb that takes the stress: 'I *wed* thee'. And this may seem proper: the three crucial words—*wed*, *worship*, *endow*, identifying or describing what is happening—get the emphasis. But there's the rub: the phrases sound more down-to-earth, more matter-of-fact, seem indeed rather to be *describing* what is happening (perhaps the bride needs to be instructed?) than *performing* what must be their intended function, namely to make a commitment. 'Wed' in this context is what J.L. Austin called a performative word; to say 'I thee wed' at this point in the service, in whatever order of words, is to enact the 'wedding'. Similarly with 'endow': though the groom doesn't actually hand over his goods in the church, from the moment he speaks the word they *are* the bride's endowment. 'Worship' or 'honour' don't, I think, have quite the same performative force, but they do much more than describe or inform, they promise. And so an order of words in which the conviction of something acted or promised is not felt will not do.

How about 'Thee I wed . . . thee I worship, and with all my worldly goods thee I endow'? That last phrase is now quite close to 'with thee I share' though the word order is no more the normal English one than that in the Prayer Book. It may, however, sound a little more flowing, a little more comfortable, simply because once again one word in each phrase has a dominant stress. Here it is the pronoun object: '*Thee* I wed'. The stress need not be insisted on, but the voice will naturally fall to the end of the phrase. And while it may seem fitting that at this moment the bride should be uppermost in the groom's mind and hence in his words, she has no pride of place in the wedding: *he* is wedding *her*, but the wedding is *their* union.

So after all, as usual Cranmer was right. The unusual order of words—perhaps the unique occasion on which the couple are likely to use it—has in the first place a solemnity appropriate to this unique moment in their lives and draws appropriate attention to it. But more importantly, one cannot say 'I thee wed' without giving a very nearly equal stress to each word. (Or rather one can, but to do so is very obviously to be making some kind of contentious or at least oratorical point, totally alien to the moment—or if it isn't the couple have no business to be coming to church together.) And this equality of stress—which it is again worth emphasising is quite exceptional

in an English sentence—both slows the voice (hence the impression of proper solemnity) and, most importantly, marks the three elements in the act of union as being of equal significance; for there would be no wedding without I and thee and the word whose very utterance makes it.

A Problem of Magnification

'My soul doth magnify the Lord.' *Magnify*: I wonder if we're all sure of just what we mean when we sing that exultant opening—particularly since, a few verses later, we meet the word again: 'For he that is mighty hath magnified me.' Ho ho! He magnified me, I magnify him. How polite of Mary to return the compliment; to a cynical outsider it might suggest a two-person mutual admiration society. Since plainly it is neither this nor a question of swapping courtesies, how should we understand the word, and how did it come about that, alone in the Prayer Book version of the *Magnificat*, there is this duplication?

For in all the three translations of the Gospels which preceded the Prayer Book of 1549 (including of course Cranmer's) Luke 1.49 is rendered, 'For he that is mighty hath done to me great things'; and the three later versions up to the Authorised repeat this word for word with only a trifling change of order in Rheims. Interestingly therefore all these translations encourage us to make what we may think an appropriate distinction between the Lord's doings and Mary's by making use of the wonderful flexibility of English deriving from its dual origins—Latin for 'magnify', Teutonic for 'great'. (How different would be the effect if they had written 'hath done to me magnificent things'!) Neither the Greek nor the Vulgate (whose version the Latin *Magnificat* precisely follows) can do this; yet both, using different words of the same root, do nevertheless maintain a distinction. In the Greek, Luke 1:46 reads, '*Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχή μου τὸν κύριον*' and 1:49, '*ἐποίησε μοι μεγάλα* [in some texts '*μεγαλεῖα*'] *ὁ δυνατόσ*'; in the Latin, 'Magnificat anima mea Dominum' and 'Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est'. Of both Greek and Latin of 1:49 the *biblical* English versions can be regarded as an exact translation; and no one will have any difficulty with 'done to me great things'. But what to do about '*Μεγαλύνει*' and 'Magnificat'?

The problem, it might be said, has only arisen in comparatively modern times, for, according to the O.E.D., 'magnify' in the sense of 'exaggerate' first appears in 1759 and in that of 'produce an enlarged image of' in 1665. Before that it could apparently only mean either 'to speak or act to the honour or glory of [a person or thing], to glorify, extol', or 'to praise, render honour to [God]'. If God can be the 'person or thing' of the first of these, the two merge into what was clearly the intention of the early

translators; and it is simply our bad luck if we are in difficulties because these meanings have dropped out of use and been replaced by ones that in the context obviously won't do. And yet, in the Prayer Book *Magnificat* we still have the obvious problem of the same word's being used to mean what are surely two different things. Liddell and Scott give not only 'to extol, magnify [!]' as translations of *μεγαλύνειν* but also 'to make great or powerful'. This indicates that Luke could have used the same word twice over, first for Mary's act of homage, then for her statement of how she had been 'made great'. Surely wisely, he chose not to; and the biblical translators (including Cranmer) followed his lead.

Why then did Cranmer not do the same in preparing the version to be sung or said during Evensong? The Latin *Magnificat* had of course been sung for centuries during Vespers in the English Church as throughout Christendom. (It is not to the point here that, especially in the post-Tridentine Roman Church, the *Magnificat* has had a particularly significant place in *Marian* Vespers; but it is an interesting reflection that, though for example 'Paternoster' for the Lord's Prayer would not since the Reformation be common form in the English Church, we still use the Latin names for all the canticles—*Venite*, *Te Deum*, *Benedicite*, *Jubilate*, *Magnificat*, *Nunc Dimittis*, *Deus Miseratur*.) And even those without Latin would by sheer repetition have come to notice the similarity between 'Magnificat' and 'magna'. If they had had the benefit of a Lewis and Short to hand they would have found a remarkably relaxed definition of 'magnificare'—'to make much of, set a high value on'. I am not enough of a Latinist to be able to say whether this is how those in the sixteenth century or earlier would have understood the word in the Vulgate. Did Wycliffe really think that Mary was saying that she set a high value on God?—which no doubt she did, but it would sound uncharacteristically impertinent to put it in just those words. And the O.E.D. gives no licence to believe that such a reading of 'magnify' would be entertained in the sixteenth century. Was Cranmer, whose Prayer Book for the Reformed Church kept notably close to a literal translation of the Latin liturgy which it was designed to replace, consciously or not influenced by the remembered sound of the familiar Latin in creating a canticle to be sung by those in whose ears the old would still resound and to those who could certainly not yet be counted on to be familiar with any English Bible? Or—since it survived the thorough going-over of 1549 into 1552—is it meant to register at the very least a *likeness* between Mary's adoration of God and his tribute to her as a woman found worthy to bear his son (which is surely something different from 'regarding the lowliness of his hand-maiden')? That sounds an improbably mariolatrous intention to attribute to Cranmer, especially in the revision years. Is there a better explanation?

Sacred and Secular:
Perspectives on the Spirituality of the Book of Common Prayer

ANDREW HAWES

Here we are in the party conference season: so I take the opportunity of beginning by saying 'Conference—by the time I'm finished you will realise that the Prayer Book Society is in fact a political organisation.'

I am sure many of you will recall this statement by a Cabinet Minister this June: 'we live in a secular democracy. That is a precious thing. We don't live in a theocracy.' The speaker was Hazel Blears—the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government—speaking in response to *Moral, but No Compass*, a report by the Von Hügel Institute on the current state of relations between the British Government and the Churches. The present government, of which Mrs Blears is a minister, introduced the teaching of citizenship as part of the Schools Curriculum, and also a test of citizenship for immigrants.

All this talk of secular democracy and citizenship is profoundly wrong. We are all subjects of an anointed monarch—and she is the source of all authority in the United Kingdom and supreme Governor of the Church of England by whose Primate she was anointed and crowned. That is (as philosophers say) in fact the case.

Aidan Nichols, the Roman Catholic theologian, has explored this theocratic basis of English society in his book *The Realm: An Unfashionable Essay on the Conversion of England*. He observes that 'the bonds of the social covenant in England have been made under God in the light of the Gospel.'

This is a very neat summary of the theology and spirituality of the Prayer Book, which was produced to enable the English people to live together under God in the light of the Gospel. The Preface to the Prayer Book reminds us that the version of 1662 is a 'product of his majesty's happy restoration' after the late 'unhappy confusions' of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. The shadow of regicide still hangs over these opening pages—a regicide that destroyed all natural and divine order in society, producing the religious and theological anarchy much beloved by Marxist historians. But as the Preface reminds us these were 'vain attempts' and 'impetuous assaults': the 'main body and essentials' of the Church 'yet stand firm and unshaken.'

The Book of Common Prayer is a religious book in the true sense of the word—its purpose is to bind individuals into community and the community to Christ under one Monarch who by Divine Right is the

source of unity and authority. In the Prayer Book the Preface reminds us that 'His Sacred Majesty' had permitted revisions out of 'his pious inclination to give satisfaction (so far as could be reasonably expected) to all his subjects of what persuasion soever.' In the person of the sovereign as supreme Governor any barrier or division between sacred and secular has been erased—religion is politics in the Church of England. The Collect for the Queen in the Order for Holy Communion reminds us 'that we and all her subjects (duly considering whose authority she hath) may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey her, in thee, and for thee, according to thy blessed Word and ordinance, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

The social and political vision of the Prayer Book is crystal clear—it is of parochial communities, gathered together about the Word of God, under His authority, subject to Him through a Divinely Appointed Monarch. The Prayer Book was and is a key tool and resource in the creation of a Christian Society. It might be argued that the continuing vitality of monarchy in England owes more to the Prayer Book than anything else. We might remind ourselves of the primacy of the monarchy in the Prayer Book. There are the State Prayers for the Queen's Majesty and for the Royal Family to be prayed twice daily at Morning and Evening Prayer; there is the Collect for the Queen after the Commandments in the Order for Holy Communion; there is the precedence of prayer for the monarch over intercessions for Bishops and Curates in the Prayer for the Church Militant; and there are the 'Forms of Prayer with Thanksgivings to Almighty God for use in all Churches and Chapels upon the anniversary of the Day of the Accession of the Reigning Sovereign'. The monarch is the keystone for the building up of Christian Society. The monarch is upheld by the Common Prayer of the people.

The concept of a Christian Society was one pursued by Anglo-Catholic writers in the 1930s. In March 1939 T.S. Eliot delivered three lectures at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, which became his essay *The Idea of a Christian Society*. His conclusion was that England could never become a Christian Society without the Church of England—and he explored the creative dynamic between Church and State which he found to be far healthier than the growing separation between spiritual and secular life he observed in Germany. We might remember that the American Eliot made a deliberate choice to become a High Church Anglican and a Monarchist. He wrote thus—'the term Democracy, as I have said again and again, does not contain enough positive content to stand alone against the forces you dislike—it can easily be transformed by them. If you will not have God (and He is a jealous God) you should pay your respects to Hitler and Stalin.' The Prayer Book emphasised the primacy of God whose servant the monarch is.

So said Eliot, when the lights were going out again all over Europe.

With the publication of the Prayer Book in 1662 a light was ignited for the people of England. It was a welcome response of beauty and order to the iconoclasm of the previous twenty years. The Prayer Book is the product of a profound need for peace and stability and for the healing of bitter divisions and jealousies, and an expression of hope that the Restoration would develop community and bring prosperity. This seeking and pursuing of peace is the seedbed for Anglican spirituality—its innate tolerance and walking of a middle way.

This spiritual hunger and this political manifesto are most eloquently expressed in the Prayer for Unity in the Accession Service.

> O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly Union and Concord: that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

This is a prayer that can be heartfelt and urgent today in twenty-first century England. It is a prayer that reminds us that the Prayer Book's purpose is to be a constant invitation and vehicle for intercession for the Body Politic. In this 175th Anniversary year of the Oxford Movement it is worth reminding ourselves of John Keble and his call to the Church to renew its mission to the nation. The 1830s were times of cataclysmic change in politics, society and economy. His ministry was set in the context of bitter controversy surrounding the use of secular power in matters of Church order and doctrine. In the 1850s he wrote in a pastoral letter to his parishioners:

> These present distresses should be a reason why we should all try to be more than usually attentive and devout in what may be called our State Prayers. By State Prayers, I mean our prayers for the Queen, the Royal Family, the High Court of Parliament and the like. In these prayers many of us are, I fear, too apt to be negligent, as if they were just matters of course, needing no special lifting up of our hearts; and who can tell how much our negligence may have to do with the present unhappy state of things? He who heareth prayer would either have turned the hearts of such as have power in the state, or He would have given power into the hands of others who know better the true meaning of the Kingdom of God. Perhaps He might have turned their doings otherwise than they meant. Anyhow we have great encouragement and surely we have great need to pray.

That need is even greater in our own day.

The Prayer Book is essential in meeting that need. The *Common Worship* resources do not give the same urgency to the secular as the Prayer Book. It is a product of the synodical system, which tends by its nature to be inward-looking and clerical in its agenda. It does not wrestle with the real political and social questions with the immediacy of the conference that produced the Prayer Book. The State Prayers have been removed from the text of Morning and Evening Prayer and placed in a separate section. There is no Collect for the Queen in the modern language Order for the Eucharist. There is no Accession Service.

This means that for those who love and use the Prayer Book there is an added responsibility and vocation. Some may object to the nationalistic sentiments of the State Prayers, and in a contemporary sense they offend political correctness; but they have theological correctness and they are of the utmost importance in the life and death struggle for the conversion of England. We might reflect on the conclusion of T.S. Eliot after the 1930 Lambeth Conference: 'It is easier for the Church of England to become Catholic, than for the Church of Rome in England to become English.'

We are a peculiar nation with a peculiar Church, but we are called in this peculiar way to witness the Grace of Christ. No Bishop, no King. No King, no Church. No Church, no Gospel. That is the story of the last four hundred years. This has been God's gift to the English; let us not let it go for nothing. Despite the many profound changes in English society since 1662 some constants remain which ensure that the secular can be seen as being sanctified and sacred.

The Constitution remains the same—it is still a political and legal fact that authority is vested in the Monarch.

The Church of England is still a national church and is probably in a better shape (even with its present confusions) than the church of 1833. It is certainly in a better state than in 1662.

The parochial system despite its stresses and strains, with the crucial involvement of laity in its government in every place, still exists—and with it an integration of Church and community which for huge tracts of England remains intact.

The Book of Common Prayer is still the basis of worship and doctrine in the Church—and that will always be the case.

There are three vital questions for us to consider as people who value the Book of Common Prayer.

Firstly: Do we recognise that for the Church of England the secular can be sacred and that we must be mindful of creating real and imaginary barriers between Church and community? Can we renew the vision of the Prayer Book, of the Church Militant being the whole community gathered about God's Word?

Secondly: Are we willing again to use the Prayer Book as an encouragement and aid to prayer for the healing and conversion of our nation? Are those of us who officiate giving due weight to the State Prayers and the Litany, and do we keep the Anniversary of the Accession in a fitting manner?

Finally: Can we seek from the Lord a deeper desire to pray and intercede for all sorts and conditions of men, that we may be so 'godly and quietly governed' as to pursue our faith in peace?

(The Revd Andrew Hawes is Rural Dean of Beltisloe and Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House. The address reprinted above was delivered at the Prayer Book Society Conference at Cirencester in September 2008.)

Reviews

Signs, Sacraments and Reality

Gordon P. Jeanes, *Signs of God's Promise: Thomas Cranmer's Sacramental Theology and the Book of Common Prayer*, T&T Clark, ISBN 978-0-567-03189-6 £24.99 paperback

This important book is of particular interest to members of the Prayer Book Society. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer is commonly reputed to be a liturgist of genius, but a second-rate theologian, without much of a mind of his own, and over-influenced successively by Rome, Lutheranism and more radical Reform. How this squares with the dictum *lex orandi lex credendi* and the status of the Book of Common Prayer as a formulary is a good question, for if the theology of the Church of England is that of the Book of Common Prayer, a certain theological status is surely accorded to the Prayer Book's presiding genius? Dr Jeanes takes Cranmer seriously.

He argues that Cranmer's theology of the sacraments is clear and, however influenced, the work of an independent mind seeking, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to get it right. He demonstrates, to my mind conclusively, that the traditional view of Cranmer's shilly-shallying about the nature of sacraments, depending on which influence happened to be in the ascendant, is untrue. Cranmer's one and only great change of mind was the result of conviction and thought. Jeanes also convincingly shows the close similarity of structure of the two Sacraments of the Gospel in the Edwardian prayer books. The Church of England traditionally thinks of Baptism and Holy Communion as so close as almost to overlap. In both, grace is shown to those who have faith in the redeeming death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The theological questions about which there were serious differences amongst the Reformers are *how* questions. *How* is the grace present to and recognised by the faithful?

It has to be said that *Signs of God's Promise* could have been improved by concentrating more single-mindedly on the subject expressed in title and subtitle. The work has a number of the marks of the thesis not quite turned into a book. With academic thoroughness, for instance, Dr Jeanes goes back to the Sarum Baptism rite and commentaries on it; he devotes a number of pages to documents not known to have been Cranmer's, and to the Commonplaces, which seem to be notes and extracts organised by Cranmer himself but which in themselves will not reliably tell us what he thought. The book might have been better organised around themes and

problems rather than chronology, for the painstaking progress through Cranmer's opinions at different stages of his life tends to weaken the sense of what parts of the argument need most attention.

Signs of God's Promise rightly includes *Signs* in the title, for the concept of the sign is central to Cranmer's understanding of sacraments. Our own Catechism, though the phrasing is not his, is thoroughly Cranmerian in its well-known definition of a sacrament as an 'outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace'. But what is a *sign*? Dr Jeanes is thoroughly the master of the literature and knows his way about the works of Osiander, Bucer, Peter Martyr, Zwingli and the rest. But he does not press far enough with the question why the taking of the sacraments as signs and figures can be a recognition, not a denial, of their reality.

When He said, 'This is my body,' the usual understanding is that the demonstrative 'this' pointed to the bread they were all eating at the Last Supper, Jesus included. It makes no sense to say he was eating his own body. So right from their origin 'This is my body' and 'This is my blood' are figurative expressions. In the Eucharist, *body* is simultaneously used in another New Testament figure, the body of Christ which is the blessed company of all faithful people. This raises the question what sort of reality and truth the figures may have.

There is absolutely no doubt that after Cranmer's realisation that transubstantiation is untrue he continued to believe in the Real Presence, and argued accordingly. He usually qualifies *real* with *spiritual* and brings in *faith*: but not always. For instance in the 'old and primitive church . . . upon certain days there was a common table of the Lord's Supper, where a number of people did together receive the body and blood of the Lord . . . .'[1] Cranmer's position (and that of the Church of England from his time at least into the eighteenth century) was that if we receive the sacramental bread and wine with faith, the Lord is truly present, dwelling in us and we in him, and that there is a specialty of the Presence not altogether covered by, though it must assume, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' But how can this be if the bread and the wine are 'only' figures?

Questions about reference and meaning are crucial. As the Reformers rightly and unanimously pointed out, if 'This is my body' is taken literally, 'body' refers to the earthly body of the Lord, which is not present in the Eucharist but is seated at the right hand of the Father. God is omnipresent, but a body cannot be, though a sign can be in a number of places at once. The referent is elsewhere. Moreover numbers of the Reformers also

1 Thomas Cranmer, *A Defence of The True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ*, re-ed. Henry Wace, 1907, from the edition of Henry Jenkyns, Oxford, 1833. In this review Cranmer is quoted from this edition, abbreviated *Defence*. This is p. 253.

pointed out that if the consecrated eucharistic bread *were* somehow physically ('substantially' in the dialect of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) His body, in the sense of that body which was crucified once for all for our sins, to eat the bread would not be to receive the grace of the sacrament, but an act of nearly unimaginable cannibalism.

The meaning of a sign can indeed sometimes be in its reference to an absent object. For instance, in a Christingle service, we are told that the orange *stands for* the earth. It is certainly not the same as the earth, but is made to signify the earth, and the orange is present in the earth but not the earth in the orange.

If the meaning of a sign is always its referent, and taking *sign* as it was understood by both the Roman theologians and Zwingli, Cranmer's position of steadily affirming a belief in the Real Presence while equally steadily denying that that presence is natural or physical—by way of transubstantiation, consubstantiation, impanation or whatever it may be—just looks like a self-contradiction.

Cranmer's doctrine is that the bread and the wine are signs, which in one sense refer to absent things but in another are the 'tokens, declaring unto the faithful receivers of the same, that they receive Christ . . . . '[1] There is *virtue* in the eucharist,[2] *virtue* being used in just the sense as when Jesus felt that 'virtue was gone out of him' (Mark 5:30). The question is still how this is to be understood.

There is no change in the water of Baptism nor the bread nor the wine of the Eucharist. (So Cranmer was very suspicious of any notion of consecration, and did not use the word in the rites of 1549 and 1552, as tending to suggest a change in the elements.) The effect of the sacraments is not *ex opere operato*, which would make the bread of the eucharist rather like a pill: take it and it works whatever you think of it. In Baptism, the water does not perform any of the operations we expect of water, like quenching thirst, putting out fire, driving mills, because the use is sacramental, and independent of the physical attributes of water, though water is necessary. The effect depends on what use the elements are put to: 'usual and common water' can be 'taken from other uses, and put to the use of baptism.'[3] The use determines the nature of the object used as, I would like to say, when certain sounds or marks on paper are put to special uses they become words, without ceasing to be sounds or marks. Their real nature is then to be words. But when that happens it *really* happens.

There are other kinds of signs as well as the Christingle orange.[4] Not all signs work by reference. Traffic lights, for instance, are signs, but not of

1 *Defence*, p.167 2 *Ibid.*, p. 190 3 *Ibid.*, p. 181
4 I have elsewhere discussed the matter in a degree of detail inappropriate to a review: see *Holding the Centre*, 2008, pp. 190ff.

absent things. When the traffic lights turn green the sense we make of the green light assumes a knowledge of the law and a context of a crossroads and traffic, but the existence of the sign is our present understanding of a change in a present situation. A pawnbroker's ticket refers to a probably absent object, but the absent object is not the meaning of the sign. The sign declares a contract about the object. The contract, which is the signified of the sign, is present in the understanding of the sign, and our understanding, not the object referred to, nor the paper of the ticket, is the reality of the sign.

Cranmer rejects the commonly used comparison of a sacrament with a *seal*, and Peter Martyr's analogy with a coronation.[1] A seal, in the sense understood during the Reformation controversies, recognises a state of affairs already existing (though there are surely cases where a seal is performative: some contracts are not valid until the seal is attached?) The Eucharist is not, in Cranmer's view, like a coronation because of 'The king is dead, long live the King': the coronation marks, in however important and ceremonious a way, an already existing state without either creating or re-creating it. (Perhaps it was otherwise when Elisha's messenger secretly anointed Jehu as king of Israel: Jehu was king from that moment.[2]) Cranmer is consistently firm and clear that something new actually happens in a sacrament. This need not be inconsistent with the recognition that to receive with faith, the faith must already be present before the reception and the Lord already indwelling. But the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, unlike a coronation or a seal, needs repetition. (In the first half of the sixteenth century these matters were of course examined with the greatest concentration the human mind is capable of, and modern scholarship is unlikely to be able to do more than retrace and throw light on old paths.) The remembrance that is part of any Mass of any tradition is at once a reminder and a renewal.

Christianity is a religion of consciousness and light. Let us make a similitude (without pressing it too far) between the *anamnesis* of the Eucharist and a reminder of an overdue bill. The bill is overdue whether or not it is nagging away at us. A reminder is of an existing situation which may nevertheless have been forgotten by the recipient, who may need a jog of the memory. Christ may be dwelling in us already and we may have forgotten—and if so that may be an indication that we have put Christ in the cupboard.[3] Which is why the 'bring' of the Prayer Book administration is so preferable to *Common Worship* 'keep': new every morning we have new sins to be forgiven, and the whole Chistian way is bringing us further into everlasting life.

1 Jeanes, p. 176   2 2 Kings 9:2
3 Cf. T. F. Powys's story 'Christ in the Cupboard', *The White Paternoster*, 1930

Why did our Lord institute this sacrament in this way, with its two signs of bread and wine? The question is a pointer to thought. I just suggest that one reason why eating and drinking are involved is the natural sense of something human life requires, and repeatedly. We have food inside us already, but we need a renewed supply, daily throughout the year: spiritual as well as animal.

In this way of looking at it, signs are not always references to things elsewhere: a sign can in itself be the signified—in proper understanding.

It is not my contention that Cranmer got everything thoroughly sorted out. (For that I suspect we shall have to wait for the state in which sacraments are no more.) His preoccupation with showing the misguidedness of the doctrine of transubstantiation—which he does, unanswerably—meant that he gave less attention to the question I am raising about the reality of figures. He might have got further by using examples from works of art. Bottom the Weaver actually uses the word *signify* when he solves the problem of how to represent a wall onstage by 'Some man or other must present wall, and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall . . . .'[1] So when the Prologue announces that

> This man, with lime and rought-cast, doth present
> Wall, that vile Wall, which did these lovers sunder[2]

'this man' Snout, who says he presents a wall, is no more a physical wall than in the same scene Snug the Joiner is physically a lion. But by representation (not resemblance, for the Lion goes out of his way to explain that he is no 'lion fell') that is what they *are* in the special context of *The most lamentable comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby*. Patience on a monument smiling at grief in one sense refers elsewhere: if there were no instances of patience in life, the monument could have no sense. But the monument may just be called *Patience* and if so its *sense* is not elsewhere, but in the work of art itself. And the work of art itself is not the block of marble, but the human understanding of it. This seems to me a better example than Cranmer's 'a man's image is called a man, a lion's image a lion . . . .'[3] because there someone might retort: 'But the real lion is absent.' This is not of course an exact analogy (analogies never are exact) with the reality of the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, but may possibly suggest the kind of sense Cranmer was struggling for. (Original thought is a struggle: it is always much easier for the successors walking along the path the pathfinder has cleared the bush to make.) Where is the reality of a figure?—in our understanding in the right context. The only speciality in the case of the Eucharistic bread is that the mode of perception is faith. The reality of the sacrament and the assurance of grace depend on a sort of

1 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* III.i 2 V.i 3 *Defence*, p. 221

guarantee of the sign. We know by faith it is a true sign, and that in consequence we dwell in him and he in us. It is a matter of trusting the promises of God.

What *is* thoroughly convincing in Cranmer's thinking, and of great importance for epistemology—for it seems to me that Cranmer (and other Reformers, especially Peter Martyr) anticipated some of the philosophy-of-language of the twentieth century—is the recognition that if something is a sign, that need not make it only the signifier of an absent real signified, and that in the case of the Lord's Supper the elements are signs also in that other New Testament sense that links the word with *wonders*. They too demand faith. But something really happens! We *are* very members incorporate in the mystical body of the Son.

It is a mark of the genuineness of *Signs of God's Promise* that the book is an invitation to further discussion.

In conclusion: this discussion would be made immensely easier if there were a modern collected edition of the works of Cranmer. The most recent, excellent in its way, is the Parker Society edition of John Edmund Cox, in two volumes 1844 and 1846. It includes the book I have been quoting, the *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine*, but only in the later version, in surely the least readable form ever invented, the animadversion, incorporating into the text a great deal of Bishop Gardiner's reply to Cranmer and Cranmer's replies to Gardiner. (So I am told: I have never managed to pick my way through the text confidently enough to know what is what.) To get an ordinarily readable text of the *Defence* you have to go to the not very accurate 1907 reprint of Jenkyns's text of 1833.[1] What other author of the importance of Cranmer has been left unedited for over a hundred and fifty years? Is a new edition of Cranmer something the Prayer Book Society should organise?

Ian Robinson

1 This 1907 edition was reprinted in 1987, and a report of a currently available reprint should appear in the next *PBS Journal*.

Anglican Icon

Michael Brydon, *The Evolving Reputation of Richard Hooker: An Examination of Responses 1600–1714*, Oxford University Press, 2006, ISBN 978-0-19-920481-6, £49.00

A few years ago there was a fashion among enthusiastic young Christians for wearing armbands with the initials 'WWJD'. 'What would Jesus do?' was the question to ask when confronted with any of life's dilemmas. It is a question that all of us should keep in mind, though we do well to recognise that it is more easily asked than answered. Something similar applies to the question that invariably arises when Anglicans wrangle over matters of faith and order: 'What would Hooker say?' With remarkable consistency, Catholics, Liberals and, increasingly of late, Evangelicals will use Richard Hooker's name—and sometimes even his writings—to give the imprimatur of authenticity to their perspective on Anglicanism. In the forgetfulness and confusion of our arguments it is always instructive to turn to the *Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, but the answers we find there are rarely deployable in quite the way we might want them to be. Hooker's writing, like his theological method, is thoroughgoing, patient and circumspect and its wisdom is not easily won.

The great merit of Michael Brydon's book is to show for just how long our forebears have been citing Hooker, often in support of mutually incompatible positions. For a brief period in the early seventeenth century the *Lawes* subsided into relative obscurity; figures now largely forgotten, such as William Perkins and Andrew Willet, were the authorities to whom to turn. But from the 1630s, when a memorial was erected to Hooker in his Kent parish of Bishopsbourne and William Page first bestowed on him the lasting epithet 'iudicious', Hooker and his works have constantly been in play.

Brydon gives some startling examples of the brazen co-option of Hooker. In the Restoration period the *Lawes* were several times cited in favour of divine right theories of kingship. The fact that the letter of their text contradicted any such position was more easily dealt with because the references were in the posthumously published Book VIII, against whose authenticity aspersions had been cast. Almost as surprising, at the other end of the political spectrum on the subject of monarchy, was John Locke's claim that 'the Judicious Hooker' had anticipated the contractual theory advanced in his own *Two Treatises of Government*. Brydon shows how the individualism of Locke is entirely alien to Hooker, whose notion of contract is founded in the evolving consensus of a corporate body, rather than the natural virtue of an idealised individual.

It has been recognised for a long while that the single figure most responsible for our sense of Hooker as a person and a thinker is Isaac Walton. Brydon cites Jessica Martin's research (*Walton's Lives*, reviewed in *Faith and Worship* 53) to show how Walton's approach in the *Lives* falls into a tradition established by Plutarch and continued in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, 'in which factual accuracy mattered far less than moral efficacy' (p.111). Walton, it seems, had only a sketchy acquaintance with Hooker's writings and much of his biographical detail is poorly attested. Yet, as Martin demonstrates, we should not judge Walton by standards that were not available to him. He never claimed to be writing a biography in the modern sense and his liberties do not disturb in the way that the suppositions of Philip Secor's recent *Richard Hooker: Prophet of Anglicanism* do.

For most of his book, Michael Brydon is scrupulous in maintaining scholarly distance, refusing to side with any particular school of Hooker interpretation. Yet, as his helpful summary of recent research in the introduction makes clear, the latest scholarship tends to lean towards a more 'catholic' reading. Brydon's use of the phrase 'faithful remnant' (p.195) about the later Nonjuring tradition in the early nineteenth century perhaps indicates where his sympathies lie, but his impartiality is commendable. We are indebted to him for the heavy spade work needed to uncover the early stages in the evolution of Hooker as an Anglican icon. He sends us back to an author who remains the most stimulating theologian the post-Reformation Church of England has produced, an exemplar to us all, High, Low or Broad.

Edmund Newey

Correspondence

From Mr Ian Robinson

C.D. Heath's 'Defence of 1549' in *Faith and Worship* 63 follows the old adage that attack is the best means of defence. The attack is on the Prayer Book tradition of 1552–1662, the one we all know; the defence, of the original 1549 Prayer Book influential in Scotland, the U.S.A. and our 1928 revision. Cranmer (let us assume that the Archbishop was responsible one way or another for both texts, 1549 and 1552) is argued to have drafted 1552 in so great 'haste, for why else was an entirely different rite not composed?' that he wrote, at some critical points, bad, over-complicated and ambiguous prose. 'These changes [to what 1662 calls the Prayer of Consecration] came at a heavy cost in linguistic complexity.' The 'who' of 'who in the same night that he was betrayed . . . .' has, Mr Heath argues, no proper relation to its antecedent, Christ, so that 'The result is barely grammatical, if at all.'

I beg leave to differ. Minor points: it would have been entirely out of character for Archbishop Cranmer to make something quite new if modification or re-use was possible. His consistent principle was to change only what had to be reformed, and where possible to maintain continuity. Then Mr Heath rightly tells us to judge 1549 'by what its text and rubrics actually say', and gives as example the chanting of the Epistle and Gospel, asserting that 'the rubric was printed in the order for Matins.' Since the Epistle and Gospel are not found in Matins it is unclear what Mr Heath means. In any case, rubrics varied a good deal with publishers and impressions, but in the handiest available text (published by PBS Trading) the word used of both Epistle and Gospel is 'read', and in Matins 'Then shalbe read ii. lessons distinctely with a loud voice . . . . The mininstre that readeth the lesson, standing and turnyng hym[self] so as he maye beste be hearde of all suche as be present.' So I don't know what Mr Heath has in mind here.

As to the more important matter of 'barely grammatical' writing: elsewhere, in *Cranmer's Sentences*, I have argued that Cranmer is the single most important writer in the history of English prose, because the first to establish modern syntactic prose as our ordinary written medium. Syntactic composition, as against the traditional paratactic shortish sentences, often beginning *And*, by which Tyndale translated so much Biblical narrative so closely, was necessary to Cranmer,[1] to begin with in

1 Cf. also Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: on the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1998

the Collects. A collect fits the traditional definition of the sentence as 'single thought', a definition which preceded modern ideas of the syntactically well-formed sentence. Cranmer's innovation was to make the single thought the same as a well-formed complex sentence, with subordinate clauses relating to the main clause, the central petition. Whether he worked this out for himself, consciously, there is no way of knowing, but as with all literary creation, the author's intention is judged by the result. Cranmer achieved in his mature letters and controversial writings as well as in his liturgical work the confident grasp of a syntactically complex but lucid and easy-to-read medium that we take for granted (perhaps too easily) as ordinary prose.

One of the marks of ordinary prose is that it can be produced in large quantities by ordinary people, if necessary against the clock (journalists) without becoming incoherent. It is highly improbable that in 1552 Cranmer, towards the end of a long and intensive career of writing English prose, should have been unable to compose at the speed he needed without sacrificing 'linguistic clarity'.

The Prayer Book has been revised a number of times in the 456 years since the 1552 book, but the 'barely grammatical' bits have not been changed. In the Prayer of Consecration a sixteenth-century 'which' has been replaced by a 'who' and instead of 'we beseech' we have 'we most humbly beseech'. Apart from that the prayer we pray week by week is *exactly* the same as Cranmer left it in 1552. Mr Heath thinks this is because we have got used to the awkwardnesses and ungrammaticalities. But in the comparable case of the text of the Homilies, corrections and improvements were made from one edition to the next. In hymn texts, glaringly wrong phrasing offends the congregations until the next editor alters it. We *don't* get used to barely grammatical unclear hasty stuff, and in particular we don't admire it as a model of English prose.

To leave probability for actuality: Mr Heath's criticisms do not stick. The chosen example is not ungrammatical. It is not the rule of a well-formed sentence that a relative must follow immediately after its antecedent, or that the antecedent must not be an adjectival possessive rather than noun or pronoun, though of course it is normal for the antecedent to be noun or pronoun and the relative to follow immediately. But like the hypothetical 1,000,000-word sentence much discussed by linguists, what can be taken as an antecedent is a question of practicality and intelligibility, not grammatical rule. Has anyone ever actually found the phrasing of that Prayer of Consecration phrase ambiguous? If so the Nicene Creed, which aims with great deliberation at absolute unambiguousness, is also ambiguous in 'by whom all things were made'. The antecedent of *whom* is not the immediately preceding noun. One of my favourite Cowper poems,

'To a Spaniel called Beau, killing a Young Bird' uses almost the same construction as Cranmer's eucharistic prayer:

> But you have kill'd a tiny bird,
> Which flew not till today,
> Against my orders, whom you heard
> Forbidding you the prey.

What's good enough for Cranmer and Cowper is good enough for me.

Cranmer needed a relative 'who' rather than a new syntactic structure, to maintain the unity of the prayer with its main verb 'grant'. The sentence is evidence not of over-hasty composition but of fluent mastery of English prose, rather of a Jane Austen kind. (Look at her letters: sometimes 'barely grammatical' by the prissy standards of the succeeding generation, but perfectly clear and easy.) Mr Heath says of part of the 1549 Canon, 'This use of participles, rather than a series of *ands*, is the most important characeristic . . . . They make the whole sentence the expression of a single, integrated act . . . .' Yes. Much the same can be said about the relative clause of the 1552 revision, only more so.

What we have in the 1552/1662 Prayer of Consecration, with the turn towards the story of the institution of 'Who in the same night that he was betrayed . . . .' is one of the most beautiful things in English, perfectly made, perfectly clear. I called this prayer 'surely the longest English sentence in common use' but it is very unlike the long wandering sentences written by so many of Cranmer's contemporaries. This is hardly contentious, because we all know it from experience. All the celebrant has to do is read the Prayer Book clearly in a loud voice and the prayer does its work. Nobody gets lost.

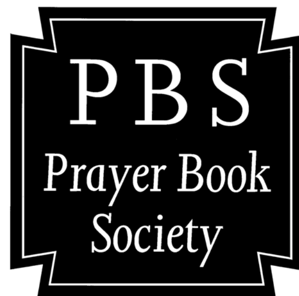
There is something odd about having to defend Cranmer, in *Faith & Worship*, as a writer of competent English prose.

May I also hint that, just as the Church of England has had plenty of time to revise the Prayer of Consecration, it has had ample opportunity to reverse the direction of the Reformers and adopt a liturgy more acceptable to the Church of Rome. There may be reasons better than inertia why on the whole those who continue to stand by the Book of Common Prayer also stand by the Reformed Catholic tradition and use 1662 not 1928—even before we begin noticing in 1928 the beginnings of an enfeeblement of which we now have over-abundant experience. For instance, as Professor Chapman rightly points out, 'The Introduction to the Marriage Service radically modifies the severe 1662 view of sexuality . . . .' That was a first step towards the soppy *Common Worship* marriage service. It is not the Christian message the twenty-first century needs

From Mr Richard Gregson

I have a point arising from *Faith and Worship* 62 on which I would welcome clarification from a reader. Pages 45 and 53 both refer to the opening Lord's Prayer in the 1662 Prayer Book Holy Communion (p.45—'the congregation overhearing, as it were, the private prayer of the celebrant'; p.53—'the whole service was to be audible'). This prayer is not printed in either 1549 or 1552, though mentioned in the rubrics. Was it printed in the 1559 Prayer Book, or new to 1662? I was told when being prepared for Confirmation (over fifty years ago), possibly wrongly, that Cranmer was referring back to a pre-Reformation tradition of secret prayers, when what happened at the altar was inaudible to most of the congregation. The typography of both the Book of Common Prayer and *Common Worship* Order Two indicates that the Amen, which is in the same typeface as the prayer, should be said only by whoever is saying the prayer: the Prayer Book says the priest, *Common Worship* rather typically cops out of indicating anyone. After Confirmation I often experienced this prayer as deliberately inaudibly said by the priest, and very occasionally still do, by priests of a certain age. What is the correct usage here? (My local church expects everyone to say it all; in a spirit of rebellion I have taken to remaining silent, as in some of the other prayers that should not be for the general congregation.)

The Objects of the Prayer Book Society



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- **Uphold the worship and doctrine of the Church of England and of other churches in the Anglican tradition as enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer**
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- **Encourage the use of the Book of Common Prayer in the training of Ordinands at Theological Colleges and other similar institutions**
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