





A SERMON
ON
THE LITURGY
OF THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

PREACHED BEFORE THE CONVENTION HELD IN CHRIST-CHURCH,
PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 15, 1808.

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PRINTED BY SMITH & MAXWELL,
PHILADELPHIA.

1808.

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IN CONVENTION OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
JUNE 15, 1808.

RESOLVED, *That the thanks of the Convention be presented to the Rev. DR. ABERCROMBIE, for his Sermon, delivered this Day, and that he be requested to furnish a copy of the same to be printed.*

Extract from the Journal,

P. F. GLENTWORTH, *Secretary,*

THE Authour of this Sermon, being unexpectedly called upon to preach before the Convention, only four days previous to the meeting of that body ; and having his time almost entirely occupied by the duties of his academical and parochial charges, he could not possibly pay that attention to its composition, which the importance of the occasion and the dignity of his subject required. He, therefore, trusts the candid reader will pardon those deficiencies and errours, which a more extended period for its preparation might have enabled him to avoid. A few sentences in the course of the Sermon are transcribed from a Lecture on our Liturgy, attached to his Lectures on the Catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church, lately published.

Philad. June 25th, 1808.

TO
THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM WHITE, D. D.
BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

THE FOLLOWING

SERMON

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

As a publick testimony of the sincere Esteem, Attachment, and Gratitude, of

His affectionate Friend,

And faithful Servant,

THE AUTHOUR.

A SERMON, &c.

I WILL PRAY WITH THE SPIRIT, AND I WILL PRAY WITH
THE UNDERSTANDING ALSO: I WILL SING WITH THE SPIRIT,
AND I WILL SING WITH THE UNDERSTANDING ALSO.

1 EP. TO COR. 14 CH. 15 V.

THE immediate cause of this declaration of the holy Apostle was, the ostentatious display of the gift of tongues, with which some of his brethren distinguished themselves; speaking to the people in an unknown language, by which they could not be edified.

Against this practice, ST. PAUL reasons and remonstrates, in the chapter from which my text is taken, declaring it to be the duty of a Christian,

and more particularly of a Christian minister, to perform the publick offices of religion, not only with sincerity and zeal, but in such a manner as should most effectually tend to promote the glory of God, and the spiritual improvement of those who were assembled to worship him. “ I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

The occasion of my present address, Brethren, originates in a resolution of our State Convention two years ago, that its future annual meetings should be opened with a Sermon or Charge: and the admirably comprehensive Charge of our venerable Bishop, delivered at the last meeting, and since published, leaving no room to descant upon the *establishment* of the Episcopal Church, and *the various duties of the clerical character*, I have supposed that no other subject would be more appropriate, than that of the duty of connecting wisdom with zeal in our devotional exercises; as exemplified in that fervid effusion of piety and wisdom, the established Liturgy of our Church.

I propose, therefore, in the following Discourse,

1. Briefly to suggest a few arguments in favour of a preconceived or written form of publick worship;

2. To point out a few of the most prominent excellencies of that adopted by us; and,

3. To recommend a uniform and general performance of it, agreeable to the requisitions of its rubricks.

That the best exertions of our noblest faculties should be employed in praising and adoring that Almighty Being to whom we are indebted for them and every other privilege and enjoyment, is the unequivocal dictate of Reason. Sound Reason, however, and the impulses of passion, or the reveries of a heated imagination, often impel to directly opposite conduct. Reason, frequently styled “the candle of the LORD in man,” was given to regulate and restrain the operations of passion, and to direct and control the fervours of imagination. And, under the influence of this Heaven-born guide, and the precepts and examples recorded for our instruction in the Sacred Scriptures, holy and learned men, sanctioned by civil appointment, immediately after

that important era, the Reformation, assembled to digest such a form of publick worship, as should at once accord with the purity of Evangelical truth, the general expression of religious homage by a whole congregation, and the dignity and authority of Episcopal administration. Accordingly, this truly venerable association, in which a CRANMER, a LATIMER, a RIDLEY, and many others whose wisdom, piety, and zeal were “known unto all men,” and “whose praise was in all the churches,” after the most mature deliberation, accompanied by prayer to ALMIGHTY GOD for the influence of his Holy Spirit to direct and guide them, produced a Liturgy, which forms the basis of that sublime and comprehensive series of Instruction and Devotion, that now constitutes the publick service and offices of our Church; and from the doctrinal part of which we have in no degree departed; submitting only to such deviations, as local and political circumstances rendered necessary and unavoidable.

“This form of sound words,” says Archbishop SECKER, “was first compiled, then reviewed, and approved by Confessors and Martyrs for the Pro-

testant cause.” It has since been deliberated upon by Convocations, confirmed by Conventions, and applauded by the great and good, through a long succession of years.

The use and propriety of established forms of publick worship, are sanctioned by high and various authority.

We find, in the 6th chapter of the book of Numbers, that GOD himself dictated the form of blessing that the Priests should use. “ And the LORD spake unto MOSES, saying, “ On this wise ye shall bless the Children of Israel, *saying unto them*, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: the LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” And this very form of blessing is prescribed by our Liturgy, in the office for the visitation of the sick. In the same book is recorded the form of benediction at the removal and resting of the ark: and in the 21st of Deuteronomy, the form of expiation of murder: and in the 26th, the confession of him who offereth the basket of first fruits; and the prayer of him

who giveth the third year's tythes. To these and other single instances may be added, that rich and sublime variety of prayer and praise in the book of Psalms, which were composed by DAVID and other pious members of the Jewish Church, for the service of the Temple.*

“In the language of this divine book,” says the pious and learned Bishop HORNE, “the prayers of the Church have been offered up to the throne of grace from age to age; and it appears to have been the manual of the Son of GOD in the days of his flesh; who, at the conclusion of his Supper, is generally supposed, and that upon good grounds, to have sung a hymn taken from it; who pronounced upon the Cross, the beginning of the twenty-second Psalm, “My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me!” and expired with a part of the thirty-first in his mouth; “Into thy hands I commend my spirit!” Thus he, “who spake as never man spake,”

* By AMBROSE the Psalms are called “the Instruments of Virtue”—by BASIL, “the Essence of Theology”—and by ATHANASIUS and others, “the Epitome of the Holy Scriptures.”

chose to conclude his life, to solace himself in his greatest agony, and at last to breathe out his soul in the Psalmist's *form* of words rather than his own. No tongue of man or angel, as Dr. HAMMOND justly observes, can convey a higher idea of any book, and of their felicity who use it."

If we now turn our attention to the New Testament, (for the copiousness of the subject requires brevity in the respective branches of it) we find, that ST. JOHN, the precursor of our Saviour, taught his disciples a *form* of prayer, as the Jewish Doctors had taught theirs; upon which is grounded the application of CHRIST'S disciples to him, as recorded in the 11th chapter of ST. LUKE'S Gospel: "LORD" said they to him, "teach us to pray," or, give us some form for our constant use, "as JOHN also," and the publick teachers of other religious sects have taught theirs.†

† This was a very natural and proper application—for these disciples, as well as JESUS himself, and his precursor JOHN, being Jews, had always been accustomed to an established form of prayer.

For a particular account of the form used in the Synagogue, with extracts from it, see Dr. PRIDEAUX'S

Accordingly, JESUS CHRIST (thereby in the strongest manner possible, attesting his approbation of that mode), dictated to them that admirably comprehensive *form* called the LORD'S Prayer, and enjoined their constant use of it. "And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father, &c." and this, let it be observed, is an exact repetition of the same form, given upon another occasion, as recorded by ST. MATTHEW in his 6th chapter. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking; be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore, pray ye: Our Father, &c."

It is observed by GROTIUS, that so averse was our LORD from unnecessary innovation, and the affectation of novelty, that he who had "the spirit not by measure," (John 3. 34) and in whom were all the "hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge"

(Col. 2. 3) selected words and phrases of this Prayer, principally from *forms* at that time well known among the Jews.*

“Of all applications to the Supreme Being, that are extant,” says a judicious Commentator,† “this is incomparably the most rational, the most devout, and the best. Whilst its comprehensive conciseness, has in all ages been the admiration of the learned, its beautiful simplicity is not less remarkable. It is so short that all may learn it, and so plain that all may understand it. At the same time it is so full,‡

* Docent nos ea, quæ ex Hebræorum libris ab aliis sunt citata, non tam formulam hanc a CHRISTO, suis verbis conceptam, quàm in eam congestum quicquid in Hebræorum precibus erat laudabile, sicut et in admonitionibus passim utitur notis eo seculo proverbiiis. *Tam longe abfuit ipse Dominus ecclesiæ ab omni affectatione non necessariæ novitatis.* Annotat. in *Matt.* vi, 9. See also CAPELLUS.

† SHEPHERD.

‡ In veritate spiritualiter copiosa, ut nihil omnino prætermissum sit, quod in precibus et orationibus nostris cœlestis doctrinæ *compendio* comprehendatur. (Cyprian) Quantum substringitur verbis, tantum diffunditur sensibus. TERTUL.

that it includes all our wants, and so explicit, that whilst it directs us, how to pray, and for what to pray, it teaches us what we should be.* It is, in reality a complete rule of duty, as well as an admirable form of prayer. The Fathers call it “The Epitome of the Gospel.”†

These authorities are amply explicit, conclusive, and sufficient for us; they fully authenticate the truth and propriety of our position, with respect to the use of an established form of Prayer; which is a mode of Publick Worship universally adopted by the Christian Church from the earliest ages; and every-where observed, until a century or two ago. when a rage for innovation, the frenzy of fanaticism, and the folly of enthusiasm, obtained unlimited sway, leading their votaries to subvert all established order, to resist the truth, and to become reprobate concerning the faith. And when by vain and

* *Unusquisque nostrum sic discat orare, et de orationis lege, qualis esse debeat, noscere.* CYPRIAN.

† *Breviarium evangelii*, TERT. See also, CYPRIAN, AUSTIN, AUGUTINE, &c.

illiterate pretenders to immediate inspiration, their crude conceptions are uttered with distortions of the countenance, convulsions of the frame, and an affected, canting articulation, can it, consistently with reason, be supposed, that “with such sacrifices God is well pleased?” and can it be wondered at, that the enemies of our holy faith should represent it as a system of fanaticism, and charge such professing Christians with “offering to God the sacrifice of fools?” Did CHRIST and his Apostles instruct the people in this manner, or did any of the ancient prophets practise such absurdities in their devotional exercises, and publick addresses? I am sure they did not.* Forms of prayer were every-where used by the dissenters from the established Church of England, after the Reformation. Calvin, their leader and guide, in a letter to the Protector under Ed-

* It is far from being intended to imply, that extempore prayer is necessarily attended by these extravagancies. The argument is, that the manner of publick prayer the most liable to such abuse, is not likely to have been that which was originally established in the Christian Church.

ward VIth, hath these words, “ As to a form of prayer, and of Ecclesiastical Rites, I highly approve that it should be *certain*, from which it may not be lawful for any minister to depart; as well in consideration of the weakness and ignorance of some, as that it may more plainly appear how our Churches agree amongst themselves; and lastly, that a stop may be put to the giddiness of those who affect novelties.”

Mr. BAXTER, a well known eminent non-conformist declared, “ Every church on earth hath a worse Liturgy than the Church of England.”

Mr. CARPENTER, a pious and respectable dissenting minister, in the same country, a few years ago proposed a Liturgy for the Presbyterians. He says, in his prefatory address, “ Our mode of worship is too refined for the young and ignorant, and I am persuaded that something ought to be done to render our publick services less tiresome, and more interesting to such persons. Forms of devotion would give a dignity and solemnity to our publick worship, and a stability to our religious societies, in which they are now deficient: our publick wor-

ship is too uncertain and fluctuating—it depends on the frame of the person’s mind who officiates, which is variable, and it changes when ministers are changed. There is something more solemn and venerable in publick Liturgies, where responses are used, and where all the people are evidently employed in the worship of their Maker.”

Several forms of prayer for different *publick* occasions, for *family* worship, and *private* devotion, have been given to the world as the habitual devotional exercises of men, whose profound learning, unquestionable energy of mind, and fluency of diction, prohibit all doubt of their ability to express themselves correctly in an extemporaneous address to the Deity, who yet could not reconcile such unpremeditated and familiar effusions, with their just ideas of the awful Majesty of the object addressed, and the propriety of employing their best and most deliberate abilities on so important and solemn an occasion. But, though men of learning and pious dispositions *should* sometimes coherently and judiciously express their devotional feelings, and supplicate for the relief of their wants, and the pardon

of their sins, from the mere impulse of the moment, without any preconceived form, that is not to be wondered at, nor can any argument against a preconceived form be grounded upon such premises; that which is true by accident, being no just foundation of opposition to a general principle. And although no "vain repetitions" should be used, which is rarely the case, no feeble or absurd petitions offered, yet still such are the efforts of the petitioner's mind to recollect the various subjects he would suggest, and to clothe his sentiments in the most expressive language,—and, on the part of the hearer, if it be a publick address, such close attention to the speaker is necessary, such a degree of unavoidable curiosity is awakened to know what is to be uttered, and such caution in each individual to judge whether the petitions thus offered are applicable to himself, and such as he can honestly and cordially join in,—that it is impossible there can exist that energy and total devotion of the mind, that surrender of the whole heart to God, which should always take place when we presume to invoke his immediate attention to us.

Another, among many more very powerful arguments in favour of precomposed prayers, is, that they prevent the introduction of heterodox doctrines and false opinions, which are thus sometimes plausibly and artfully imposed upon the hearers, thereby rendering their devotions a violation of their faith, and consequently a mockery and insult to the Deity, instead of a rational and acceptable service.

Such being the general advantages of an established Formulary of Devotions, I proceed to the Second head of my Discourse, *viz.* To point out a few of the most prominent excellencies of that adopted by us. But here, contemplating the amazing whole, the blaze of spiritual light dazzles the mental eye; and, where excellencies are thus the distinguishing character of every part, a selection from them embarrasses the mind. Like the sacred Ark of the Covenant, under the *Old Dispensation*, which stood in the holy place of the Temple, from which the divine oracles were issued, and over the mercy seat of which the Shechinah or symbol of the Divine Presence hovered,—it should not be

approached but with the most profound reverence and awe: for, as that Ark contained the Tables of the moral law, the golden pot of Manna, AARON'S rod that budded, and the Pentateuch or *Covenant of the Old Testament*—so in this our Christian and Episcopal Ark are contained, in its various orders and offices, the principles and precepts of the same moral law, improved and explained under the *New Dispensation*,—the precious Manna* of Evangelical grace,—and the spirit of pure and undefiled Religion, which, imbibed into the human heart, will assuredly produce in us not only the buds and blossoms of virtue and of piety, but the maturest and most copious fruits of true righteousness:—and, in it are likewise contained, in various extracts from the Gospels and Epistles, the substance of the whole body of the *New Testament Covenant*, which is able to make us wise unto Salvation. And as the Jewish Ark was consecrated with sprinkling of

* Manna was itself probably formed of dew, and both are intended as natural emblems of the divine grace, which, like dew, is a nourishing substance, and distils in a secret and invisible manner. SHEPHERD.

blood, and was carried by the Hebrews as a protection to them through the desert, and borne upon the shoulders of the Priests through the river Jordan, the swollen waters of which divided, and opened a clear passage for the whole Congregation of Israel;—so our Liturgical Ark is consecrated by the great doctrine of Atonement by the blood of CHRIST, which pervades the whole, and with the acknowledgment of which all its prayers are concluded. It is the great spiritual panoply of our Church; leading and protecting her children, through this wilderness of sin and sorrow; and inspiring her faithful worshippers with holy confidence, to pass undismayed through the valley of the shadow of Death, to the promised land of rest, the Heavenly Canaan.

Of the several species of Prayer, under the characters of Confession, Adoration, Supplication, Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Petition, the most sublime and perfect models of composition are to be found in the Daily Morning and Evening Service. The general Confession in each, introduced by an affectionate and impressive exhortation, is in

the highest degree calculated to solemnize the mind, and humble the heart of the worshipper; thus preparing it for the reception of the divine truths contained in the Lessons and Psalms appointed for the day, and for those strains of praise and grateful adoration, contained in the Te Deum, and general Thanksgiving.* The fervid glow of devotional ardour which the various and comprehensive petitions

* The Daily service of our Church may be reduced to four general parts, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication, and Intercession: and agreeably to this order, are its different parts arranged. We are called upon by the Minister first to propitiate the Deity by humbly confessing our sins; we may then be considered as properly qualified to thank him for benefits received; to supplicate for a continuance of his blessings to ourselves; and to intercede in behalf of others.†

† *Χρη γαρ προτερον μιν υμειν επι πασι του Θεου ευεργετην ειτε θυμηρη, ειτε και μη ειθ υτως σπυδαίως τας ικετίας προσφερειν. THEOD. in Epist. ad Philip. c. iv.*

Δει γαρ υπερ των δεδομενων ευχαριστειν προτερον, και τηνικαυτα την ικετικην προσφερειν. Id. in Ep. ad. Col. c. iv.

Διδασκομιθα πρωτον ευχαριστειν υπερ των προσηγμενων ημιν αγαθων ειθ ουτως αιτιν τα ελλειποντα—τουτο γαρ εστιν ευρειν πανταχου ποιουντα του θεου ατιστολον. Id. in Ep. 1. ad Thess. c. 1.

in the Litany inspire, embrace all the wants, and extend to all the weaknesses and temptations of “poor, bewilder’d, miserable man.”

The constant reading of the Holy Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, communicates, not only historical, but moral and religious instruction: and the Lessons from each are so selected, that where the Service is performed *daily*, as it is the intention of our Church that it should be, the Old Testament is read over once, and the New Testament three times every year. By this means, the poor and illiterate who cannot read, the laboriously active who have not leisure, and the foolishly “wise in their own conceits,” who think there is no necessity to read them, hear these sacred oracles of divine truth promulgated, and are thereby instructed in the way of Salvation.

The admirable arrangement of the various parts of our service, and the judicious alternation of precept, prayer, and praise, prevent the mind from being fatigued by too protracted an attention to either: such variety relieves it, and consequently gives energy to its action.

The Offices for the Administration of the two Sacraments of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper, and those for the Visitation of the sick, and Burial of the Dead, convey, in the purest strains of eloquence, that Divine Consolation which is the peculiar characteristick of our Holy Religion.

The established Fasts and Festivals, are wisely calculated to keep alive in our minds, the most important incidents and principles which attended the introduction of the Christian system, by annually presenting them before us, and affectionately soliciting our most attentive consideration of them.

In short, the majestick simplicity, and sublime energy of this wonderful series of devotional exercises, must ever command the affectionate attachment of the members of our Church,* and has even obtained the liberal praise of some of the most intelligent and eminent of the non-episcopalians.

* For the Church of England, I am persuaded, that the constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox, that whosoever believes it, and lives according to it, *undoubtedly* shall be saved; and that there is *no error* in it, which may warrant any man to disturb the peace, or renounce the communion of it. CHILLINGWORTH.

With respect to our Rites and Ceremonies, they are neither numerous nor burdensome; preserving a just medium between the fastidious and melancholy coldness of Puritanism, and the tedious and unmeaning mummery of Superstition, they are admirably calculated to awaken and animate attention. Appropriate, solemn, and impressive, they give dignity to our devotion, and enforce the sublimity of our service.*

In recommending, agreeably to the Third proposed head of my discourse, a uniform and general performance of publick worship, according to the requisitions of its rubricks,† I shall first address myself to the Laity.

* For a more copious illustration and recommendation of our excellent Liturgy, the reader is referred to the writings of Wheatley, Hooker, Jewell, Bennet, Chillingworth, Comber, Secker, and Shepherd, a modern writer whose critical and practical elucidation of the Book of Common Prayer in 3 vols. 8vo. is a judicious and learned commentary on all former writers on that subject.

† Rubricks are the rules and directions given in the book of Common Prayer for the *proper* performance of the respective offices of the Church. They are called *Rubricks*,

And here I must be permitted to remonstrate, to rebuke, and to persuade.

A leading idea in the construction of our excellent form of publick worship, is, that it should be an alternate service between the Minister, and the People. Now, unless it be thus performed, so far from producing its intended and proper effect, so far from being a sublime and expressive service, it is rendered, to the audience, not only insipid but absurd. If, when the people should, with an audible voice, perform their parts, and repeat the appointed responses, they be totally silent, and the voice of the clerk alone be heard, and he speaking frequently in the plural number, how can the intended effect be produced? Besides, by the non-compliance of the people with the instructions of the rubrick, that ardour

because they were formerly distinguished by appearing in *red* letters. The Latin word *Rubrica*, from which the English term Rubrick is derived, means red earth, red ochre, &c. The Rubricks of the *Missal* and other Romish offices, are still printed in red letters. In the modern editions of our Liturgy, all the offices, excepting the responses, are generally printed in Roman, and the Rubrick in Italic characters.

of religious zeal, that sacred fervour of devotion, which is always awakened by the irresistible power of sympathy, remains dormant: whereas, did the mingled harmony of prayer and praise resound from the tongues of the whole assembly, how animating, how powerful would be its influence! how sublime and interesting would our service then appear! and how entirely extinguished would be that listlessness and apparent indifference, that supine and torpid deportment, which so frequently are seen, and which would lead a stranger to suppose, that such persons assembled for any other purpose but that of worshipping ALMIGHTY GOD!*

* CHRYSOSTOM, who was Bishop of Antioch, in the fourth century, tells us, that when the congregation of the Church in which he officiated, made the responses, and pronounced *Amen*, it was like a clap of thunder.

JEROM also informs us, that at Rome, in his time, the people answered *Amen*, with a voice so loud that it resembled a peal of thunder. *Ad similitudinem celestis tonitruui Amen reboat.* JER.

It may not be proper to recommend to modern Christians too close an imitation of these examples; but hence we may take occasion to observe, that *Amen* (*with the other*

The beauty and dignity of our prescribed form of publick worship is also often shamefully obscured and diminished, by the standing of some, the sitting down of others, and the reclining attitudes of many, when all should be upon their knees imploring the mercy, the blessings of GOD.

The Divine Authour of our Religion, JESUS CHRIST, kneeled down when he prayed, and so did his apostles, and primitive disciples.

Under the Jewish, as well as during the early periods of the Christian dispensation, kneeling was considered as the proper posture for prayer. SOLOMON, we are told, at the dedication of the temple “kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel.” (2 Chron. 6, 13.) DANIEL also “kneeled upon his knees three times a-day, and prayed and gave thanks before his GOD.” (Dan. 6, 10.) Peter kneeled down when he prayed and raised Dorcas from the dead. (Acts 9. 40) Stephen, when he was suffering martyrdom, “kneeled down,

appointed responses) should be solemnly pronounced by the whole congregation, with a distinct and audible voice.

and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." (Acts 7, 60.) And ST. PAUL tells the Ephesians, " I bow my knees unto the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST." (Eph. 3, 14.)

DAVID's exhortation is, " O come, let us worship, and fall down, and kneel, before the LORD our Maker."* (Ps. 95, 6.)

And certainly it is the most natural and proper posture for such sinful, rebellious beings, as we are, to assume, when we supplicate the awful Majesty of Heaven, the supreme and transcendently glorious Creator and Governour of the Universe.†

* Were this, or any other posture of the body, during prayer, a matter of indifference to the Deity, our Saviour would not have observed it, and particularly while suffering his agony in the garden: (Matt. 26, 39.) nor would St. PAUL and his attendants have kneeled down on the Syrian shore to pray: (Acts 21, 5.) both those situations being in the highest degree unfavourable to such an expression of adoration.

† " Kneeling in prayer (says Archbishop SECKER, Serm. 7) has not only ancient authority but nature likewise, on its side; and so strongly expresses and excites inward humility, that it should never be omitted wilfully or negligently in favour of ease and indolence."

Another important and expressive part of our excellent Service, which is almost universally neglected by the congregation, is the duty of joining their voices with that of the Clerk, and with the Organ in the Chants and Psalms.

Singing, accompanied by instrumental musick, has, from the earliest ages, constituted a part of publick worship. It is a natural expression of devotional feelings. Even the Heathen in their sacred Festivals used it. We are told by the prophet DANIEL, that when the golden image was set up by Nebuchadnezzar, in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, the act of adoration was accompanied by “the sound of the cornet, flute, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick.” (Dan. 3. 5.)

In the Service of the Tabernacle and Temple all kinds of instruments were employed, and bands of singers and musicians in such numbers, that one of the Fathers of the Church informs us, the burst of harmony in the Temple, on days of great solemnity, was, from the elevation of the building and the multitude of performers, so loud that

it could be heard at the distance of several miles.* Numerous are the scriptural authorities for this part of publick worship, both in the Old and New Testaments.

“O come,” says DAVID, “let us sing unto the LORD, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our Salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in him with Psalms.” (Ps. 95. 1, 2.) “O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the whole earth. Sing unto the LORD and praise his name, be telling of his salvation from day to day.” (Ps. 96. 1, 2.) “O be joyful in the LORD all ye lands; serve the LORD with gladness, and come before his presence with a song. O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.” (Ps. 100.

* The practice of Psalm singing as used in our Churches is derived probably from the ancient alternate chanting of the Jews, (Ezra, 3, 11. Nehem. 12, 24.) authourized by the Apostles, and adopted into the earliest Christian Churches. Choral musick was brought into England, A. D. 596, and first established at Canterbury. Vide Bedford's Temple Musick. Hawkins's History of Musick, Vol. 1 and 2.

1, 3.) “Is any merry,” saith ST. JAMES, “let him sing Psalms.” (James 5, 13.) “Speak to yourselves,” says ST. PAUL “in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, singing and making melody in your hearts unto the LORD.” (Eph 5. 19.) And to the Colossians, “teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the LORD. (Col. 3. 16.) We often also read of CHRIST and his disciples singing a Hymn.

Instruments of musick, and particularly organs, were introduced no doubt to aid the human voice: it too frequently, however, happens, that instead of aiding, they absolutely suppress, the vocal musick, or prevent many in the congregation from singing, as they know the strain will be performed without their aid: this is much to be lamented; for, did every individual consider it his duty to join in the psalmody to the best of his ability, the united voices of the whole congregation aided by the organ, would produce an effect highly conducive to the great end for which publick worship was originally instituted, *viz.* the glory of GOD, and the furtherance of our spiri-

tual improvement here, and eternal Salvation hereafter.

“Religious harmony,” says a judicious writer,* “should be moving, but noble, grave, solemn, and seraphick; fit for a Martyr to play, and an Angel to hear.” By thus loudly chanting forth the praises of our GOD, we should anticipate and prepare ourselves for our future employment in the realms of celestial bliss and glory: for there we are told “the innumerable Sanctities of Heaven” surrounding the throne, and admitted into the immediate presence of GOD, “rest not day and night, saying Holy, Holy, Holy, LORD GOD Almighty! who was, and is, and is to come!” “And I looked,” saith ST. JOHN,” and lo, a lamb stood on mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from Heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps; and they sung, as it were, a new song before the throne.”

* COLLIER.

(Rev. 14. 1, 2, 3.) And again, “I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah! for the LORD GOD omnipotent reigneth! Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him!” The Evangelical prophet ISAIAH, to whom was revealed, in vision, the glory of the celestial world, thus sublimely describes the responsive adoration of those angelick Heralds, who communicated to him his heavenly mission: “In the year that King UZZIAH died, I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphim: each one had six wings: with twain he covered his face; and with twain he covered his feet; and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Isa. 6. 1, 2, 3.)

Let me entreat you, therefore, Brethren, interested as you all are, in the prosperity of our Church, and in the benefits resulting from her prosperity to each individual who endeavours to promote it,—let me entreat you, no longer to indulge in apparent cold-

ness or indifference in the publick worship of Almighty GOD; but let each individual henceforth determine to perform his part, in so laudable, so important a duty: thus will you “give unto the LORD the honour due unto his name,” thus will you “worship him with a holy worship,” and “offer a reasonable and acceptable service:” and thus will you kindle in your hearts such an ardent flame of piety and true devotion, as will consume all your earthly corruptions, refine and purify your depraved passions, animate and invigorate you in your Christian warfare, illuminate and exhilarate your path through the valley of the shadow of Death, and finally, conduct you to the Paradise of GOD.

In concluding this Address, permit me, my Reverend Brethren, most affectionately and earnestly to impress upon your minds the necessity of your most strenuous, and unremitted exertions to induce your congregations to comply with the injunctions contained in the rubricks of our Morning and Evening Service. In an especial manner would I now address myself to those of you whose parochial cures are not in the city. Your peculiar situation gives you

very considerable influence over your congregations, and I am confident your zeal for the glorious cause in which we are engaged—your regard for the honour of our Church—your attachment to our sublime and inimitable form of worship,—your love of order and approbation of ecclesiastical discipline—will lead you to omit no effort which remonstrance and persuasion can make, to produce this desirable, this blessed effect, in your respective churches. And, let your example in the correct and undeviating performance of your part of the Service, induce their compliance with the injunctions of the Rubrick with respect to theirs;—a departure *in any degree* from the prescribed language of the Liturgy, by addition, omission, or alteration, as it originates in vanity and self-conceit, so it invariably lessens the dignity and destroys the perfection of our Service. For, can it be supposed, that the effusions, however zealous, of an individual, can be superiour to the deliberate composition of some of the wisest and most pious members of our Church assembled together in Convocation; which composition is also ratified and confirmed by her authority? Besides,

let every Minister, thus disposed to offend, remember, that at his ordination, he solemnly promised “to conform to the doctrines and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in these United States.”

Nothing I am persuaded is wanting to give our Liturgy that marked superiority, in the general estimation, above all other modes of publick worship, which its intrinsick excellence deserves, but the *proper* performance of that part which belongs to the people.* Were it duly executed, we should indeed then “pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also, we should sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also.” The prayers and praises which we should thus offer unto God in his Holy Temple, would be a Service justly calculated to express the profound humility of the worshipper, and as justly accommodated to the dignity and majesty of the object addressed, as the feeble

* A late writer on the Liturgy, † speaking of the mode of worship obtaining where there is no established Form of Devotion, observes that “it is always too naked for the lower classes, when stripped of the aids of fanatical fervour, and by much too abstract for the young and illiterate.”

† MACAULEY.

powers of human ability can possibly frame. We should thereby prove that we are a people “taught of God;” and, by so proper an exhibition of our inimitable Liturgy, should be justly said, to “worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”*

Now to GOD the Father, &c.

* It is perhaps worthy of observation, that even in those Christian Societies where extempore prayer is practised in Publick Worship, though the expressions be extempore, and they profess disapprobation of forms as to the Minister, yet they certainly constitute a form as to the Congregation, the people being altogether led by them, and the aspirations of their hearts directed by them. In such case, which is the most likely to be accommodated to the dignity, solemnity, and importance of the occasion?—those Prayers which are precomposed by the united talents of the wisest and most pious members of a Church, and which the people are well acquainted with before they utter them, or, those which are dictated by an individual at the moment in which they are pronounced, and of which, consequently, the people can know nothing, before they hear them?—Besides, by those who reject a written form of *Prayer*, a written form of *Praise* is *always* used; for they never sing any psalms or hymns, but those which are printed. Is Prayer less worthy of previous attention than Praise?

APPENDIX.

THE following extract from REEVES' "History of the Common Prayer," will, it is thought, be a useful appendage to the foregoing SERMON, as it communicates, in a brief and explicit manner, an account of the rise, progress, and establishment of the Liturgy of our Church.

“**S**ET forms of Prayer, precomposed, and daily repeated without variation, have ever been in use, where there has been any constant practice of religious duties; and such established forms are necessary, not only to assist the meditations of those, who cannot always command their thoughts, and direct them to the proper object; but also for the purpose of uniting persons in publick devotion, which could never be carried on, without some settled and known expression of sentiment and words, in which they all agreed, and to which they all were accustomed. The practice of the Jewish and Christian Church has been the same, in conforming to the use of some precomposed Prayers. We are told that DAVID appointed the *Levites to stand every morning to thank and*

praise the LORD, and likewise at even, (1 Chron. xxiii. 30.) which could not be performed by many persons together, without some set form, in which they all could join. The whole book of Psalms may be considered as forms of prayer and praise, suggested by the Holy Ghost, for the joint use of the congregation; and this appears no less from the titles of several, than from other places of Scripture, which testify to their being so used, (Chron. xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. Ezra, iii. 10, 11.) Indeed there is so much evidence on this head, that one should no more doubt about the Jews having used set forms in their devotions, than of our using the Book of Common Prayer.

“As our Saviour always joined in communion with the Jewish Church, he gave his sanction to such set forms, by his compliance with them; and he finally gave the strongest approbation to continuing the practice, by delivering to his Disciples, at least one set form of Prayer, when they asked it of him. No doubt, the Apostles and Disciples joined in the Jewish worship till our LORD’s ascension; and when they had formed Christian assemblies, it is plain they used in them precomposed forms, more especially *in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,* (Ep. v. 10.) which, and the like descriptions of publick devotion so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, give an idea of some liturgical order observed among those, who had conversed with CHRIST, and gave a degree of credit to the liturgies, which have been from the earliest ages, ascribed to ST. PETER, ST. MARK, and ST. JAMES; which though not composed by those persons, are certainly of an age very near to them.

“That the primitive Christians used set forms of Prayer, is also evident from the expressions to be found in the earliest fathers of *Common Prayers*,* *Constituted Prayers*,† and *Solemn Prayers*.‡ But this matter is put out of all doubt, by the evidence of the *Apostolical Constitutions*, where are given the forms both of morning and evening prayer, with as much regularity as in any modern Liturgy. After the period of that work, which, though not Apostolical, as it purports to be, is of very high and acknowledged antiquity, the forming of Liturgies became an exercise for some of the most eminent among the fathers. ST. BASIL, ST. CHRYSOSTOM, and ST. AMBROSE, composed each their orders and forms of Prayer, which we now possess. In this class of works may be reckoned the Lectionary of ST. JEROM, and the Sacramentary of ST. GREGORY, which last person seems to have brought the Offices of the Western Church to a more complete form, than they had yet received, and by such eminent services to the Church, obtained the surname of *the Great*.

“Out of these various Liturgies had been compiled, at different times, the forms of Publick Service that were used in this kingdom, for many centuries during the reign of Popery. They were known, under the several names of Breviaries, Missals, and Mass Books; and those of the same name and description differed the one from the other, so that there were in the kingdom divers forms of Publick Prayer; there was the use of *Sarum*, the use

* Κοινὰ ἑυχαί.

† Προσαχθεῖσαι ἑυχαί.

‡ Preces solennes.

of *York*, the use of *Bangor*, and the use of *Lincoln*. These Offices were all in Latin, so that the Laity who had not the advantage of a learned education, could not join in them, or receive any edification from them; they were also mixed with many of those corruptions, into which the mother Church of the Western World, the Church of Rome, had fallen; namely, addresses to the Saints, adorations of the Host, Images, and other inventions, that were no longer looked on with reverence, when Henry VIII began the great work of Reformation. It was then thought necessary to correct, and amend these Offices; and not only to have the service of the Church in the English tongue, but to restore it to its original purity; it being the design of our Reformers, not to introduce a new Form of Worship, but to correct and amend the old one, till it was rendered more agreeable to Scripture, and the practice of the Primitive Church, in the purest ages of Christianity. In this Reformation they proceeded with moderation, and gradually, according as they were able.

“ The first step taken in this attempt to reform our publick worship, was in the year 1537, when the Convocation appointed a Committee for that purpose. This Committee composed a book, intitled, *The Godly and pious Institution of a Christian Man*; containing a declaration of the LORD’S Prayer, the Ave Maria, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Seven Sacraments. This book was republished in 1540, and again in 1543, with alterations, under the title of *A necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man*. Also, in the year 1540, a Committee of Bishops and Divines was appointed by the King, to re-

form the Rituals, and Offices of the Church; what they did was reconsidered by the Convocation, in 1543; and, in the next year, the King ordered the Prayers for Processions and Litanies to be put into English, and publickly used. Finally, in 1545, the King's *Primer* came forth, wherein were contained, among other things, the LORD'S Prayer, Creed, Ten Commandments, Venite, Te Deum, with other Hymns, and Collects, in English, and several of them in the same version, in which we now use them. This is all that seems to have been done, with relation to Liturgical matters, in the reign of HENRY VIII.

“ In the first year of EDWARD VI, ANNO 1547, the Convocation declared *nullo reclamante*, the opinion that the Communion ought to be administered to all persons, under *both kinds*; whereupon it was ordained, by the first Statute passed in this reign, that the Communion should be so administered. The next measure was to appoint a Committee of Bishops, and other learned Divines, for composing *a uniform Order of Communion according to the rules of Scripture, and the use of the Primitive Church*. Within a few days, the Committee drew up that Form, which is to be seen in Bishop SPARROW'S Collection. Being empowered by a new Commission to proceed further in this pious work, they finished in a few months the whole Liturgy, having drawn up Publick Offices for Sundays, and Holy-Days, for Baptism, Confirmation, Matrimony, Burial of the Dead, and for other special occasions; among these services, the beforementioned Office for the Communion was inferred, but with several alterations. The Liturgy was thus composed by learned Bishops, and

Divines of eminence; many of whom afterwards became Martyrs for the Reformation in which they had laboured. It was revised and improved by the Convocation, and was established by Statute 2 and 3 EDWARD VI, chap. 1, under the title of *The Book of the Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, after the Use of the Church of England.*

“ Some exceptions being taken at certain things in this book, as savouring too much of the former superstition, Archbishop CRANMER proposed that it should be submitted to a review; on which occasion he desired the assistance of two foreigners, MARTIN BUCER, and PETER MARTYR, whom he had invited into this country during the troubles that prevailed, on account of religion, in Germany. These persons were very forward in censuring various parts of the book; and they prevailed so far as to procure the rejection of many things in it, which others think were primitive and very venerable usages: these foreign advisers lay under the reproach of being actuated more by the prejudices they had, in favour of certain reformed Churches abroad, and particularly of the Calvinistical Church of Geneva, than by the suggestions of a sound judgment, or the lights to be derived from a thorough knowledge of Christian antiquity.

“ Some useful additions, however, were made at this Review; of which one was prefixing *the sentences, exhortation, confession, and absolution*, at the beginning of the Morning and Evening Prayer; some things were properly expunged, such as the use of *oil in baptism, the unction of*

the sick, prayers for souls departed, both in the Communion Office, and in the Burial of the Dead. There was also expunged, the *invocation of the Holy Ghost*, in the consecration of the Eucharist; the prayer of *Oblation*, that used to follow it; and the Rubrick that ordered *water* to be mixed with the sacramental wine. The *habits* prescribed by the former Rubrick, were now to be laid aside; and a Rubrick was added at the end of the Communion Service, to explain the reason of kneeling at the Sacrament. The Book, thus revised, and altered, was confirmed by Stat. 5 and 6 Ed. VI, ch. 1, which, at the same time declares, that the doubts, which had arisen respecting the first Book, were, rather by the curiosity of the Ministers and mistakers, than of any other worthy cause. To this work was also added, for the first time, *a form and manner of consecrating archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons*. But this act, and the former act of uniformity, were both repealed when QUEEN MARY came to the throne, who re-established the Roman form of worship in all its rites and ceremonies.

“ Upon the accession of QUEEN ELIZABETH, several learned divines were appointed by the Queen, to make another Review of King EDWARD’s two Liturgies, and to frame from them both, a Book for the use of the Church of England. After some debate, which of the two Books should be received, it was at last agreed, that the second should be preferred; and it was accordingly altered in some particulars, and proposed to Parliament: the Parliament approved it; and having, by the first act passed in this reign, revived the two statutes of EDWARD VI, they pas-

sed a second for re-establishing the Book of Common Prayer, “ with one alteration or addition, of certain Lessons to be used on every Sunday in the year; and the form of the Litany altered and corrected; and two sentences only added in the delivery of the Sacrament to the Communicants, and none other, or otherwise.”

“ In this state the Liturgy continued till the first year of JAMES I, when, after the Conference at Hampton-Court (in which that Prince took part) between the Bishops on one side, and Dr. REYNOLDS and other Puritans, on the other, there were made some few alterations. At the end of the Litany, some forms of *Thanksgiving* were added; to the *Catechism* an addition was made concerning the Sacraments; the Catechism before that time ending with the Answer to the Question, that follows the LORD’S Prayer. In the Rubrick, at the beginning of the Office for Private Baptism, the words ‘lawful minister’ were inserted, to prevent midwives, or laymen from presuming to baptize. There were one or two more alterations. What was done on this occasion was without any interference, or sanction of Parliament.

“ So the Liturgy continued till the reign of CHARLES II, when the Presbyterians requesting another Review, the King issued a Commission, dated 25th March, 1661, empowering twelve Bishops, and twelve Presbyterian divines, to make such reasonable and necessary alterations, as they should jointly agree upon; to these were added nine assistants on each side. These commissioners had several meetings at the Savoy, but to little purpose. The Presbyterians showed themselves so little disposed to proceed, in

the temperate way pointed out by the Commission, that the Conference broke up, without anything done, except that some alterations were proposed by the Episcopal divines, which, in the May following, were agreed to by the whole Convocation. The principal alterations were, that several Lessons in the Calendar were changed for others, which were thought more proper for the days: the *Prayers for particular Occasions* were disjoined from the Litany; the two Prayers to be used in the *Ember Weeks*, the Prayer for the *Parliament*, that *for all Conditions of Men*, and *The General Thanksgiving*, were added; several of the Collects were altered; the Epistles and Gospels were taken out of the last translation of the Bible in the time of King JAMES, being read before out of what is called CRANMER'S translation: *The Office of Baptism for those of riper Years*, and *The Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea*, were added. A more particular account of what was done at this Review, may be seen in the Preface to the Common Prayer Book.

“ Thus was the whole Liturgy brought to the state in which we now see it: it was unanimously subscribed by both houses of Convocation, 20th Dec. 1661, and was established by the last Act of Uniformity, Stat. 13 and 14 Car. II, ch. 4, when Lord Chancellor CLARENDON was charged by the House, to return the thanks of the Lords to the Bishops and Clergy of both provinces, for the great care and industry shown in the Review.

“ Such is the History of the Common Prayer, and of the several Reviews, it has undergone: from which it appears, that, in the successive stages of this national work

of religion and piety, there has invariably been a union of all the ability, and all the authority, which the Church and State could contribute: the matter has always been planned, digested, and approved by the Bishops and Clergy, first under regular commissions, and afterwards in full Convocation: and the whole result has then been sanctioned by the King, with the advice, and consent of the three estates of the realm. So that it stands upon the joint foundations of ecclesiastical and civil authority.

“ Our Common Prayer, thus framed upon the most approved models of primitive Christianity, and brought to its present state after successive revisions, by our own divines, has been judged to be as comprehensive, and as unexceptionable a Form of Publick Service, as is used in any Church in the world. We have the testimony of the celebrated GROTIUS, that it comes nearer to the primitive patterns, than those of any of the Reformed Churches: it has always been in high esteem with the most eminent Protestants abroad: and it has been admired even in the Eastern Churches. It is disapproved only by the Papists, who grudge that it retains not more of their service: and by the Dissenters, who are jealous that it retains any of it at all. Among impartial judges it must be owned, to be so judiciously contrived, as that the wisest may there exercise at once their knowledge and devotion, and yet so plain that the most ignorant may pray out of it with understanding; so full, that nothing is omitted which is fit to be asked in publick; and so particular, that it comprises most things which we would ask in private; and yet so short, as not to tire any that have true devotion. Its doctrine is

pure and primitive ; its ceremonies so few and innocent, that most of the Christian world agree in them ; its method is exact and natural ; its language significant and perspicuous, most of the words and phrases being taken out of the Scriptures ; the rest are the expressions of the first and purest ages. In such forms as these, there are few, surely, who may not consent to worship GOD, if they desire only to do it with zeal and knowledge, spirit and truth, purity and sincerity.

The whole of the Book, as now finally settled, consists of the following parts: *The Common Prayer*, containing the services, that were in the first and subsequent Prayer Books, to which the Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea, were added at the last Review; *The Psalter*, which was always a distinct Book from the Common Prayer, till the last Review; *The Form of Ordaining and Consecrating*, which also, before the last Review, was a distinct Book; and, lastly, *The annexed Services*, which have been added since the last Review, by Royal Authority. These Four Parts comprehend in them five distinct heads, or classes of Matter: namely, *Common Prayer, Sacraments, Rites and Ceremonies, The Psalter, and Ordaining and Consecrating*; as they are particularly specified in the titlepage of the book."

Thus far Mr. REEVES.

When in the course of Divine Providence, The United States became independent on the Government of Great Britain, it was rendered necessary that certain alterations dictated by local circumstances should be adopted; which, after various Conventions held for that purpose, was ac-

cordingly done, and established in 1789, when, the Episcopal successions being then obtained from the Church of England, there was held in the city of Philadelphia a Convention of the Bishops, the Clergy, and the Laity ; the two latter orders being represented by deputies from the Church in the different States. In that Convention was established “ The Book of Common Prayer, &c.” and “ The Book of Psalms in Metre, &c.” as now used by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The same Church has since in a General Convention held in New York in 1792 appointed “ a Form of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,” and also “ A Form of Consecration of a Church or Chapel;” and at a Convention held in 1801, “ Articles of Religion, &c.” and in a late General Convention held in Baltimore, (May, 1808) thirty additional Hymns were authorized.

THE END.





