Proposed Rearrangement of the Communion Service.

IN February, 1915, a Resolution to the effect that certain changes in the order of the prayers in the Communion Service should form part of the revision which the Prayer Book is now undergoing was brought before the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation. The following is the text of the Resolution :—

Permission shall be given for the rearrangement of the Canon as follows: The Prayer of Consecration shall be said immediately after the Sanctus, the *Amen* at the end being omitted ; the Prayer of Oblation shall follow at once (prefaced by the word *Wherefore*), and the Lord's Prayer ; then shall be said the Prayer of Humble Access, followed by the Communion of Priest and People ; after the Communion shall follow the Thanksgiving, the Gloria, and the Blessing.

(*Report of Joint Committee, Convocation of Canterbury*, 1915. No. 487. *Resolution* 59.)

It will perhaps be well to set out in type the alteration from the *Sanctus* onward which, with a subsequent addition, printed in italics, would thus be effected. (The rubrics are omitted.)

Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

THEREFORE with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name ; evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory ; Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. Amen.

ALMIGHTY God, our Heavenly Father, Who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption ; Who made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world ; and did institute, and in His Holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death, until His coming again ; Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee ; and grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood : Who, in the same night that He was betrayed, took Bread ; and, when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is My Body which is given for you : Do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise after supper He took the Cup ; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins : Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, *according to the institution of Thy dearly-beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ*, we Thy humble servants *do celebrate and make here before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy Holy gifts, the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make, having in remembrance His blessed passion, mighty resurrection, and glorious ascension, rendering unto Thee most hearty thanks, for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same*, entirely desiring Thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee; humbly beseeching Thee, that all we, who are partakers of this Holy Communion, may be fulfilled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by Whom, and with Whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, World without end. *Amen.*

OUR Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. *Amen.*

WE do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. *Amen.*

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

THE Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting Kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

GLORY be to God on high, etc.

The proposal to make this change has had a chequered history. It seems to have been referred to a Committee of the Lower House of Canterbury Convocation with instructions to report, which they failed to do, evidently not agreeing on the subject. It was referred to the Joint Committee, which reported in favour of a permissive use of the change as an alternative to the present service. The Lower House in February, 1914, resolved in favour of a compulsory use of the change. The recommendation of the Joint Committee then came before the Bishops, who, in April, 1915, after full and considered debates, rejected it by the substantial majority of fifteen to five. It was not unreasonable to suppose that the matter would end there. In July, 1917, however, the Lower House again, though with many professions of respect for the Bishops, returned to the attack, and a motion for concurrence with the decision of the Upper House was rejected by fifty-seven votes to thirty. Thereupon, the Bishops again considered the matter, and in February of the present year, after another lengthy discussion, of which only a part was reported in the Press, reversed their previous decision by a majority of thirteen to seven. It is not surprising that the Archbishop of Canterbury should express his concern "for the consistency of that House."

After this astonishing *volte face* anything was possible, and the resolution being duly seconded, the Bishop of Truro moved and the Bishop of Gloucester seconded an amendment consisting of an addition to the Resolution which was not approved by any of the Reports which had previously been issued. This was carried by nineteen votes to one. The added words of the amendment are those printed in italics in the form of service set out above. They greatly strengthen the widely felt objection which no doubt weighed with the Bishops when rejecting the Resolution in 1915.

The first aspect of the matter which will naturally occur to us is that it is a step backward. At the beginning of the movement the advocates for Prayer Book Revision made much of the fact that our existing services were last revised more than 250 years ago, and urged the need of adapting them to the changed circumstances of modern times. With this plea most Churchmen, Evangelicals not less than others, were in full sympathy. But such a position is hardly consistent with the introduction of a form of service on the lines of the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, which is a hundred

years older than our present book. This reactionary character marks a great many of the important features of the revision as a whole. The objection is not a captious one, for we have ample evidence that the alterations in the services made by our Reformers in the sixteenth century, in particular those which it is now proposed to reverse, were designedly made to guard against errors to which we are as much exposed now as they were then.

These errors were, in respect of the Communion Office, two-fold. One was the belief that by virtue of consecration the body and blood of Christ became present upon the altar in, with or under the forms of Bread and Wine, and that adoration might consequently be given to them. The other was the widespread teaching that the priest in this service offered Christ, thus present, as a sacrifice both for the living and the dead. These two errors were both rejected by the English Church at the Reformation, and were eliminated from her formularies; hence it is that following upon their dissemination in our midst in recent years those who teach them find the Prayer Book "inadequate." Naturally it is, when it was compiled and revised with the very purpose of excluding them.

With regard to the first, "that error of the Real Presence" as Cranmer called it, the whole teaching of the Prayer Book and Articles is repugnant to it. The statement in the 29th Article that "The wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, yet *in no wise* are they partakers of Christ," could hardly have been drafted by men who believed that Christ was in the bread; for if He were there the wicked receiver must, in *some* wise, partake of Him, even though it were to his own condemnation. Such a belief naturally and inevitably leads to adoration of the consecrated elements, and in order to guard against this the Prayers in the Communion Service of the First Prayer Book were transposed, so that nothing should intervene between the consecration and the reception by the communicants. Before the consecration, there is nothing upon the Holy Table to which prayer or adoration can be directed. After reception, if the matter is rightly ordered, as Cosin said should be the case, nothing will remain. As the service now stands there can be no danger that the prayer, "We do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord," will be addressed to any supposed presence

of our Lord upon that Table; but the proposed alteration of its position will make it a very real danger in the case of all who signed or sympathise with the recent memorial of 1,000 clergy in favour of access to the reserved Sacrament for purposes of adoration. Those who have been present at a Communion Service administered in a modern Ritualistic Church, and have seen the genuflections, almost amounting to prostration, performed by the priest before the newly consecrated wafer, and the prostrations of the people as he turns to them with it in his hand, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God," will readily understand why the Reformers transposed or removed everything which came between consecration and reception. The *Agnus Dei*, "O, Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world," beautiful and harmless in the Litany, lent itself to idolatry here, and was consequently omitted; though unhappily it has since been made permissible by the Lambeth Judgment for the choir to sing it at this point.

In regard to the other point, "the sacrificial aspect" of the service, which was continually referred to in the discussions in Convocation, it is obvious that the position of those who maintain that the priest offers in the Eucharist a sacrifice on behalf of himself and the people, would be very greatly strengthened if after the recital of our Lord's words "Do this as oft as ye shall drink it in remembrance of Me" there followed the words "Wherefore we . . . entirely desiring thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept *this our sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving," etc. Especially is this the case when we remember that the words "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving" are regarded as a technical phrase expressing the idea of "Eucharistic Sacrifice." Thus Dr. Frere describes it in a footnote on p. 3 of the Alcuin Club Tract *Russian Observations on the American Prayer Book*. It is unfortunate for this view that the same phrase occurs in the form of prayer for the use of those at sea, and so Dr. Frere endeavours to explain it away by saying—

"The phrase is, no doubt, out of place in the prayer for the use of the Navy after a storm. Its insertion there is one of the mistakes due to the revisers of 1661, who were evidently thinking vaguely of its occurrence in Psalm cvii. 22, in connexion with seafaring, rather than of its eucharistic and technical meaning. The mistake, thus justified and occurring in such an obscure position, is not of any great importance. In any case it does not rob the phrase of its proper meaning as used in the Holy Eucharist" (*ib.*).

If space permitted, we could quote many passages from the

speeches of those who in Convocation advocated the change to show that they regarded it as emphasizing the idea of sacrifice, but Dr. Frere, who is a member of the Northern Convocation, is a representative exponent of the teaching which lies behind the proposal, and his testimony is sufficient for the purpose. A good many things were said in the course of the debates in Convocation which exhibited the vagueness which so often marks the thinking of those who try to read into the service what there is certainly no trace of in the New Testament. One wonders, for instance, what Canon Stanton, who in July, 1911 moved the Resolution for a service on the lines now suggested, can have meant by the offering of the souls and bodies of the worshippers being "closely associated with the consecration of the Bread and Wine." We wonder still more when we find the Bishop of Winchester saying that "They lifted up their offering of themselves *in union*, so far as their pardoned sins permitted, *with the sacrifice of the Lord. . . .*" In the light of such utterances it is less surprising than it might otherwise be to find that in the course of the debates in both the Lower and Upper Houses in July, 1911, in April, 1915, and in July, 1917, no one speaker once referred to the form of the Institution as recorded in the Gospels. In them we find no interpolation between the command to "eat," "drink," and the disciples' obedience to the command, and in following the model of Holy Scripture our Reformers acted upon the principle which guided all their work of demolition and reconstruction. If we abandon this safe ground, history will repeat itself, and innovation will follow innovation in natural and necessary sequence until the Mass with all its accessories is restored by authority. That this is no imaginary danger may be seen already by the practice of a large and steadily increasing number of parishes. The development can even now be traced in a measure. The Archdeacon of Coventry said in 1911, "The discussion was encouraging for the reason that *it could hardly have taken place some years ago*, and Canon Stanton's suggestion was one which would have been *almost scouted* by a large number of Churchmen *even within his own memory*" (*Chronicle of Conv.* 1911, No. 3, p. 357). To this we should add what the Archdeacon of Surrey, in moving a modification of the Resolution, said, i.e., that "it went as far as they were justified in going *at that moment . . .*" it was "a small step but a useful one *in the direction* of reform" (*ib.* 350). The

Bishop of Oxford, speaking of the Scotch and American Prayer Books, said "That was *at present* beyond their reach, but let them do something" (*ib.* 1915, No. 2, p. 281). And Dr. Frere suggests that this revision will leave "*to a later generation* a more thorough reconsideration of the rite, and alterations in the text of the services *both in large matters and in small*" (*Principles of Lit. Ref.*, p. 195).

But the way for this more drastic dealing with the Prayer Book is being well prepared. The Lincoln Judgment has restored the *Agnus Dei* and the Eastward Position, the present revision has already admitted the Vestments, the ceremonial mixing of the chalice, Reservation, the transposition of the Canon, the shortening the words of administration by the use of the first half only; the Bishop of London said that he wished to obtain "burnt incense" (*Chron. Conv.* 1915, No. 2, p. 294); and lighted candles were included in the Report of one of the Committees of York Convocation. All this is included in a tentative revision, which many of its authors fondly hope will be final, but which will create an atmosphere in which the full schemes of those whom the Bishop of London calls "the fighting party" and "the anarchists" can be developed. If these things are done in a green tree, what will be done in the dry?

The addendum to the Resolution agreed to by the Bishops in February last which was finally incorporated in it, must not pass without notice, for it greatly adds to the seriousness of the matter. It consisted of the following words to be interpolated into the first post-communion prayer which is now to follow the consecration :—

"*Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of Thy dearly beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, we Thy humble servants do celebrate and make here before the divine Majesty, with these Thy Holy gifts the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make, having in remembrance His blessed passion, mighty resurrection, and glorious ascension, rendering unto Thee most hearty thanks, for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.*"

This paragraph, which is taken from the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, appears in both the Scotch and American Prayer Books with the words "which we now offer unto thee" added after "gifts," and the word "commanded" instead of "willed." The form proposed is in these two respects better than the Scotch and American, which both contain a definite offering of the consecrated elements to God, but the statement above quoted from the Bishop

of Oxford and the constant references to these two modern liturgies in the debates in Convocation show that their form would be preferred by a large number of revisionists if it could be obtained. The word "memorial," to quote Dr. Frere again, is said to be "technical *and sacrificial* in itself" (*Russian Observations*, etc., p. 4, note), and corresponds to that part of a Jewish sacrifice which was taken to represent the whole, as in Leviticus ii. 1–3.

It may be said without hesitation that there was no such memorial willed or commanded by our Lord to be made when He instituted the Holy Communion. There is at least no sign of it in the records which have come down to us from the inspired writers of the New Testament. The command "do this as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me," is simple enough and clear enough whether in the Greek or the English. Nothing but the exigencies of theological controversy could have led to any such interpretation of the words as "offer this for a memorial of me." The best Greek scholarship is against it, and it may be enough to quote here Bishop Gore's own admission, "there is not sufficient evidence to entitle us to say that 'do' bears the sacrificial sense in the New Testament" (*The Body of Christ*, 1901, p. 315). "The matter stands similarly with 'remembrance'" (*ib.*). Moveover, the "Memorial" in the Old Testament is "either the blood sprinkled, which of course it would have been an unheard of impiety to eat or drink; or that portion of the meat offering (Lev. ii. 1 *sq.*), of the oblation of the first-fruits (Lev. ii. 12–29), and of the trespass and sin offerings (Lev. v. 12 *sq.*), which was presented to God upon His altar, and there consumed. But in all these cases the memorial, or quasi-memorial, was the *only* part of the offering that was *never eaten* (or drunk) *either by priest or people*, and the partaking of which would have involved a sin punishable by 'cutting off from the congregation'" (Rev. W. B. Marriott, *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, p. 189). The suggested analogy with the Levitical rite falls to the ground.

The desire, again and again repeated in the course of the debates, for a closer approach to the Scotch and American Prayer Books was unaccompanied by any similar wish to copy, or keep in line with, the Irish and Canadian Books. It is the more remarkable when we consider how relatively unimportant an influence both the Scotch and American episcopal Churches have in their respective countries. In the case of Scotland, it was stated that the Scotch Communion

Office had been a cause of trouble and schism, that the English Office, which is printed in the same Prayer Book as an alternative, was in many cases preferred.

It was stated, oddly enough in a debate proposing to saddle us with the Scotch Office, that the objectors to that service in Scotland were English residents! That would seem to be a reason for not introducing it into England, though the speaker did not draw that conclusion. It was also stated that Bishop Seabury, the first American Bishop, who was consecrated in Scotland, promised to endeavour to introduce the Scotch Communion Office into America, but the strong Puritan element compelled a compromise. It is clear that neither service has won its way to the affections of the people of either country, and there are not wanting signs that our English Liturgy, if approximated as near as the present revision would bring it to the unreformed services of the Church of Rome, would soon lose its place in the hearts of the English people, and with it would depart their love for the Church which they would feel had betrayed them.

W. GUY JOHNSON.