

tudes of clerks and working men in their cities who knew nothing beyond the names of the horses bet considerable sums of money upon particular horses, merely upon the authority of the "odds" published in one or other of the newspapers? The Archdeacon then proceeded to give the opinions of eminent men upon the subject, showing how dangerous it was to moral character and happiness, and urged upon young men not merely to abstain themselves from even the smallest indulgence of this most fatal and calamitous vice, but, on behalf of the great masses of clerks and working men, to join the crusade for creating a very wholesome and overwhelming public opinion against this disastrous lure. Their united efforts would help, by God's blessing, to bring on the day when English sports and pastimes would be once more free from this deadly blight. He looked to the time when the editors and proprietors of their great newspapers, with all the responsibilities of their enormous and illimitable influence, would rival each other in ceasing to purvey for the multitudes the calamitous news, than which no other could be more degrading or disastrous.—*Family Churchman.*

The Rev. W. J. Dawson has published "Some plain words on Gambling" in which occurs the following:

"Now, what is gambling?" he asks. "There are those who do not respect the Bible who respect Herbert Spencer. Let Herbert Spencer define it for us. '*Gambling is a kind of action by which pleasure is obtained at the cost of pain to another. It affords no equivalent to the general good: the happiness of the winner implies the misery of the loser.*'"

LESSONS IN PRAYER BOOK STUDY.

By the Right Rev. Bishop Barry, D. D.,
Canon of Windsor; Author of "The
Teacher's Prayer Book," etc.

ITS TEACHING IN DOCTRINE AND HISTORY.

But, as we look more closely, we realise the equally priceless value of the Prayer Book as a standard of doctrine. I do not refer merely to the fact, all-important as it is, that through it—more, perhaps, than any religious Communion in Christendom—our Church has provided for a full and systematic reading of Holy Scripture, which has undoubtedly produced a fulness of religious knowledge, and given an impress to the general thought and literature of England, which are confessedly unique in Europe. Nor, again, to that which corresponds to this—the constant recitation of the great doctrinal truth of the Catholic Creeds, even that public recitation in the vernacular of the Athanasian Creed, in which so far as I know, our Church stands alone. Yet both these give a security, not only for reality, but for right proportion of knowledge and faith, which we often fail to realise, but of which it is difficult to over-estimate the importance. But less obvious, and yet, perhaps, even more effective, is what I may call the impregnation of the whole of our worship with strong and definite conviction of the fundamental truths of the Gospel. It would be easy, for example, to draw out from the preambles of our Collects a fairly complete system; as of Christian duty, so also of Christian theology. And it is, perhaps, thus—by constant implication, and by translation of faith in objective truth into the glow of spiritual

aspiration—that it lays the firmest hold on the great mass of men, because it reaches them, not only through the mind, but through the conscience and the heart. In days of restless speculation like our own, it is notable that even outside our own Church, earnest men, zealous for the truth of the Gospel, have recognised the marvellous power of this witness to Christ, explicit and implicit, in our Prayer Book Service; and in all the divergencies and vagaries of belief and practice within the Church itself, we may (I think) feel great confidence in the steadying and unifying power of that witness, and only be anxious to insist that it shall neither be tampered with nor obscured.

III. But lastly, as we study our Prayer Book under both these aspects, we come to realise more fully the significance of its historic teaching. As in all other departments of thought, so in this, we find that we do not fully understand a thing till we know how it has grown to be what it is. Now, it is not too much to say that our Prayer Book, historically examined, is an epitome of the past of Christianity. So far as it is Catholic, it embodies the history of the whole Church; so far as it is distinctively Anglican, it illustrates the position which our own Church took up three centuries ago in the great Reformation.

This embodiment of general Church history is to be traced in the whole structure and substance of the Prayer Book: for of it above two-thirds is old—the result of a gradual development through more than a thousand years. Take, for example, the three Creeds. Each has its peculiar and instructive history—the Apostles' Creed as the great Creed of the West, growing freely and naturally out of Baptismal profession; the Nicene Creed, in its present form, exhibiting the result of the great struggle against Arianism and its many following heresies, and imposed by authority in the age of the great Councils, as the Creed of the whole Christian Communion; the Athanasian Creed, rather an Exposition than properly a Creed, of uncertain date and origin, but clearly marking the conclusion of a similar struggle in Spain and Gaul against the Arianism of the Gothic races. Look, again, at the whole tenor of our Service of Holy Communion. In it, even as it stands, though still more clearly as it stood in 1549, we can trace that remarkable identity of substantial structure, under secondary variations, which carries us back through the great families of ancient Liturgies to an almost Apostolic original. Note, once more, the structure of our Morning Service. We can see how it has grown out of the ancient recitation of the Psalter and the reading of Holy Scripture, and gradually embedded these (so to speak) in a setting of Confession, and Praise, and Prayer. Examine the ancient Collects—easily to be distinguished in style from the new Collects of the sixteenth century—and they are traced back to Service-Books, as of Gelasius and Gregory, dating from the fifth and seventh centuries, but embodying, no doubt, far older materials. Everywhere we read implicitly the history at once of the natural and happy growth of the Catholic Church, and of the antagonisms which vexed and perverted it; and the truths which the words of our Prayer Book convey gain new light and vitality, when we see in them the results of the working through that

history of the Providence and the Spirit of God.

ITS TEACHING IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

Let us glance briefly at some few out of the many historical indications of that crisis in English Christianity, when our Church, "refusing to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church," yet asserted its national independence, under appeal (be it remembered) to a true General Council, and exercised it in revival of the old primitive and Scriptural order, freed from the mediæval accretions, which had overlaid and corrupted it. We see that assertion clearly in the freedom with which our Prayer Book treats this rich treasure of old materials, purifying, rearranging, simplifying it, and adding to it new material of original composition, especially in prayer and simple vernacular teaching, to meet the needs of the time. Not giving up for a moment "the Catholic faith of Christendom," or the great principles of ecclesiastical organisation yet our Church is seen plainly here to claim its right of reforming them, and its power to "bring out of its treasures things new and old." No one who studies the Prayer Book with any care can doubt what was historically the position which, in spite of many confusions and shortcomings, the English Reformation thus took up for the Church of our fathers. Nor is it more difficult to trace through the Prayer Book the second great characteristic of the Reformation, in the claim for the laity of their right position of duty and privilege in the Church. How plainly is this shown in the care that all worship shall be really the worship of the whole people, heard, understood, joined in, by all; in the "turning the solitary mass into a real Communion," and providing that, except in extreme and clearly defined cases, none shall be repelled from it; in the provision that all members of the Church, unless formally excommunicated, shall have an indefeasible right, as to the Sacraments in life, so to the Funeral Service in death! Yet hardly less instructive than the study of these principles, is the illustration by first comparison of the various editions of the Prayer Book from 1549 to 1662, of the long and gradual process, not without action and reaction, through which the Anglican Church position was finally established. In the progress through the first and second Prayer Books of Edward VI. to the Prayer Book of Elizabeth—the first which stood unchanged for half a century—we can trace the primary establishment of "the Reformation settlement." In the demands made, but not granted, at the Revision of 1604, we trace the first growth to power of the great Puritan party, Presbyterian in Church government and Calvinistic in doctrine, which, dissatisfied with that settlement, first attempted to recast our Prayer Book, and then abolished it. In the last Revision of 1662—again signally disappointing the desires which it was first intended to meet—we see the final victory of the old Anglican principles over these formidable powers of antagonism. From the substantial identity and the not unimportant variations of these successive Prayer Books, we can see how, like all movements free in energy and deep-seated in principle, the Reformation movement, by its very changes and irregularities, showed itself to be a natural growth. Such study is, after all, the surest corrective of crude and one-sided conceptions of the religious history of that eventful period.

From these three important aspects of our Prayer Book—corresponding remarkably with the devotion, the thought, and the visible action, which are the three chief spiritual energies of men—we cannot but see how deeply important and how deeply interesting is its careful study to us all. Some hints as to the leading ideas of such study we may hope to suggest hereafter. Meanwhile, it is enough to urge not only the devout, but the intelligent, use of it, as an application of the Apostolic maxim "to pray with the spirit," and "to pray with the understanding also."