

# The Value of the Prayer Book.

---

ONE of the first things that we ought to realize as Church people is that the value of the Prayer Book does not consist merely in its traditional importance. It is to be feared that many people look upon the Prayer Book as a very respectable volume, possessed of a certain amount of dignity and gravity, but a thing, after all, that has had its day, and that the few only realize its essential value and the greatness of its importance as a present-day asset of a living Church! That great Churchman, Anselm, made a fine remark in his *Cur Deus Home*: "It seems to me," he said, "to be negligence, if after we have been confirmed in the faith, we do not study to understand what we believe." Anselm was right. We ought to study in order that we may understand, and if we lay our minds to this matter we shall undoubtedly come to see the wonderful value of our Prayer Book.

1. In the first place think for a moment of its historical value. Think of the place it has held in English life. Think of the place it now holds in the life of the Empire. Think of its power as a moulding factor in the family, the Church and the nation. Think of the moral and spiritual impulses it has sent into a myriad of lives, through these modern centuries. It can unquestionably be asserted that nowhere else is the greatest guarantee of our Church's spiritual life. It has become a national institution. In its consecration and initiation it represents that emergence of the spirit of British nationalism which culminated in the overthrow of the long-claimed supremacy of an alien potentate of Rome, and the magnificent assertion of the right of a national Church to formulate its own doctrines and to construct its own style of worship. It was the climax, the culmination, of centuries of aspirations and spiritual upheaval, and in its

ITS

HISTORICAL

VALUE :