

broad outline to vary the use of certain forms, the place of certain hymns, the time of the offering, and so on; order without monotony; variety without confusion—these are the features that we have sought to bring into our work, in the hope of preparing a book which might really help the people to join in the service.

It will be seen that such a programme involves a great deal of careful, difficult, protracted labor. To make a book merely to suit our own personal tastes would have been easy. But this was not what we wanted to do. Our desire was to make a book which would suit others, and which would be serviceable for actual use, at least in a great many churches, if not in all.

A collection of books containing the material most likely to be of use was put in the hands of each member of the Committee. We divided the Committee into three Subcommittees, assigning to each the duty of making a first draft of certain services. When a Subcommittee had finished the first draft of a service, it was presented to the General Committee and subjected to the most minute and ruthless criticism. Word by word and line by line it was gone over. The members of the Committee, representing different sections of the country and different points of view, had no diffidence in expressing their judgments. Many of the forms were sifted and revised four or five times. The work was sometimes exasperating, often exhausting, always profitable.

The abundance of material at our disposal added to the difficulty of choice. We have collected much which we have not yet been able to arrange in proper form for practical use. It seemed to us that we should best fulfill the will and instructions of the Assembly by working slowly and carefully. The majority of the different forms which we were instructed to prepare are already under way; several of them are nearly finished; the others need considerable revision and rearrangement. Two forms of service seem to us approximately complete.

There was a difference of opinion in the Committee in regard to the question of presenting these two forms to the Assembly at this time. On the one hand, we felt the serious disadvantage and possible danger of having a "Book of Common Worship" examined and judged in fragments. On the other hand, we wished to keep in close touch with the whole Church by a frank