

tion of the Church's rulers, to establish a new church, or to form an entirely new code, or form of worship ; for they well knew that they could not establish a new church, because God alone has either the authority or the power for so mighty a work ; and they sought not in the compilation of the Book of Common Prayer to destroy the ancient prayers of the Church,—but only to cast out all that was evil, or that might tend to the promotion of evil ; in fine, they so endeavoured to establish the Holy Service, that the injunction of the apostle might be fulfilled, and “all things be done decently and in order.” And they who undertook so great a task, we should also bear in mind, were not men who had sprung up of themselves, or of their own appointment, to be teachers and rulers in God's Kingdom, but they were the true heads of the Church in England,—men apostolically ordained to minister in holy things,—men who could look back to the Apostles as their forerunners in the great work of preaching the Gospel of Christ,—men they were, of whom many proved their faith and their sincerity, by suffering as confessors and as martyrs for the work of Reformation, which, through the grace of God, they had been able to accomplish. And the holy men who were thus called to revise the ancient liturgies, and to prepare in one volume, so pure and scriptural a form of worship, that it might indeed be, the Book of Common Prayer, as that in which it was common for all men to join, and by which they were able to be more closely united when lifting up their voices and their hearts to God,—these men had no idea of casting off all remembrance of the prayers of their forefathers, by destroying them utterly ; but they carefully preserved the pure and good petitions composed by holy men, while they cast out the impure and profane innovations which had disfigured in a great degree the Prayer Books originally used. So that, thanks to the conservative care of the great reformers of the Church, we are now called to offer up prayers and petitions, which, for many hundred years, have been in constant use among those who have gone before us. Nor was this great work of preparing a form of worship suitable for all of God's creatures, who call themselves by the name of Christ, passed over lightly or carelessly, but at five separate times was it carefully revised and corrected, by different men, so that nought might remain that was not pure, simple, and scriptural, and that as far as man could make it so, it might