

III.

In speaking of the fruits of this critical study, your committee have naturally dwelt upon the clearer exhibition, due to such criticism, of the general continuity and development of the Revelation of God made in the Bible. They deem it, therefore, the most important to lay emphasis upon the duty, which is unchanged by critical results, of humble and prayerful use of the Scripture in its separate parts. The example of our Blessed Lord, and the use of the Old Testament in the New, strongly enforce this duty. Our Lord appeals to the Old Testament as witnessing to Himself. He teaches His disciples that all things written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Him are to be fulfilled. He dwells, moreover, upon details of type and phrase. He declares that not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law until all be fulfilled.

Two methods of considering Holy Scripture, the general and the particular, must go on side by side. They will occasionally overlap; they may sometimes seem to clash. But in this, as in other cases, a course which is most loyal to truth is that of proceeding confidently upon both lines, without waiting for a theoretically complete reconciliation of the two. The use of the Scriptures by the early teachers of the Church may be regarded as an example to us, of one kind, of the combination of minute fidelity to Holy Writ with great freedom in its treatment.

Your committee do not hold that a true view of Holy Scripture forecloses any legitimate question about the literary character and literal accuracy of different parts or statements of the Old Testament; but keeping in view the example of Christ and His Apostles, they hold that we should refuse to accept any conclusion which would withdraw any portion of the Bible from the category of "God-inspired" Scripture, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

This report, it will be seen, does not attempt to make any final pronouncement on critical questions. Your committee express their conviction with regard to the New Testament that the results of critical study have confirmed the Christian faith. They do not consider that the results of the more recent criticism of the Old Testament can yet be specified with certainty; but they are confident that wherever men humbly and trustfully use the Bible, seeking always the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost, it will commend itself more and more clearly to their hearts and consciences as, indeed, the Word of God.

Report of Committee on the Prayer Book.—This committee, which was composed as follows, made the report appended: Archbishop of York, Bishop of Ballarat, Bishop of Bloemfontein, Bishop of Brisbane, Bishop-Coadjutor of Brisbane, Bishop in Corea, Bishop of Cork, Bishop of Dallas, Bishop of Derby, Bishop of Dunedin, Bishop in Eastern Equatorial Africa, Bishop of Edinburgh, Bishop of Ely (chairman), Bishop of Guiana, Bishop of Guildford (secretary), Bishop of Iowa, Bishop in Kiu Shiu, Bishop of Lincoln, Bishop Macrorie, Bishop of Marlborough, Bishop of Nebraska, Bishop Oluwole (Western Equatorial Africa), Bishop of Rangoon, Bishop in South Tokyo, Bishop of Spokane, Bishop of Springfield, Bishop of Tennessee, Bishop of The Platte, Bishop of Thetford, Bishop of Vermont, Bishop of Wakefield:

The committee have carefully considered the subject referred to them, and feel it to be their duty in this report to bring before the conference the principles which they think should be observed in providing services other than those in the Book of Common Prayer, and also in adapting to local circumstances those already contained therein.

The several Churches of the Anglican Communion differ materially in their legal position with reference to the Book of Common Prayer. The Church in England is more or less limited in its action by the terms of the Act of Uniformity. The Amendment Act of 1872 provides as follows (35 and 36 Vict., c. 35, sections 3 and 4):

3. "Upon any special occasion approved by the ordinary, there may be used in any cathedral or church a special form of service approved by the ordinary, so that there be not introduced into such

service anything, except anthems or hymns, which does not form part of the Holy Scriptures or Book of Common Prayer.

4. "An additional form of service varying from any form prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer may be used at any hour on any Sunday or holyday in any cathedral or church in which there are duly read, said, or sung, as required by law on such Sunday or holy-day at some other hour or hours the order for Morning Prayer, the litany, such part of the order for the administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion as is required to be read on Sundays or holy-days if there be no Communion, and the order for Evening Prayer, so that there be not introduced into such additional service any portion of the order for the administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion, or anything except anthems or hymns, which does not form part of the Holy Scriptures or Book of Common Prayer, and so that such form of service and the mode in which it is used is for the time being approved by the ordinary * * * * *

Under the provisions of this clause many services, some for occasional use, others for use daily or weekly, have been introduced and found of considerable value. But the preparation of such services has been much hindered by the limitation the Act appears to impose as regards the choice of materials.

It is not, however, at all clear that the Acts of Uniformity deprived Bishops of the "jus liturgicum," including the right to set forth for use in their dioceses forms of prayer other than such as are prescribed in those Acts. There are several instances of such services or forms of prayer set forth by Bishops for use in their own dioceses.* This was done at the time when earlier Acts of Uniformity, as stringent as that of 1662, were in force, and seems to prove that such Acts were not intended to hamper the action of Bishops in this respect. But it is to be regretted that the Act of 1872, which enables the Bishop to authorize services taken from Holy Scripture and the Book of Common Prayer, might appear by implication to limit the power he would otherwise possess of setting forth services composed by himself, or drawn from other sources.

As regards any changes in the Book of Common Prayer itself, whether for local adaptation or for any other purpose, such changes for the Church in England would need confirmation by Parliament.

In other Churches of the Anglican Communion, the state of the case is generally different. The Churches of Scotland, of America, of Ireland, and of Japan, have modified, to a greater or less degree, the services in the Book of Common Prayer, and have in some cases added new services. In some of the colonies either by an Act of the Legislature, or by an act or canon of the spiritual authority, no alteration is allowed, unless it be first made by the Church at home; in others there is no such limitation. But that changes, in some cases, are absolutely needed, is quite clear.

The committee consider that the only proper course, whether for local adaptation of the Book of Common Prayer, or for the provision of additional services, is for the Bishops to avail themselves of the jus liturgicum which, by the Common Law of the Church, belongs to their office. It must necessarily be exercised subject to any restrictions imposed by civil or ecclesiastical authority, and it would also, in the opinion of the committee, be well if the Lambeth Conference were to advise some limitation in all cases upon the independent action of each Bishop in his diocese where such limitations are not already in force. These principles of action are embodied in the resolutions appended to this report.

In the formation of additional services care should be taken to adhere as closely as possible to liturgical usage; and that the distinctive portions of the more solemn offices should not be used apart from their proper place therein.

The committee think it well to add in an appendix, by way of illustrating their meaning, some examples of additional services and of adaptations of the Book of Common Prayer to local circumstances, which may be found useful or necessary in various parts of the Anglican Communion. Some of the latter

*See Appendix.

are already in many churches in England actually adopted; though without authority, and many of the former are already in many dioceses provided, under the limitations of the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act, 1872.

A petition from the General Synod of Australia and Tasmania with reference to the importance of a revised translation of the "Quicunque Vult" being authorized by the Lambeth Conference, was transmitted by his Grace the president to your committee for their consideration.

Your committee are of opinion that it is very desirable that action, in accordance with this petition, as expressed in the third of their resolutions, should be taken.

Appendix.—(a.) Additional services for Sundays: Holydays: Weekdays: for the Rogation Days: for Harvest Thanksgiving: Services of Intercession for Missions: Services for Children: Form of Admission into the Church of those Baptized otherwise than according to the Service of the Church: A service for the Burial of Children: for Burial of Catechumens: A service for the Admission of Readers to their office: and services to be used by Readers.

Adaptations of Book of Common Prayer to Local Circumstances.—(b.) Shortened Mattins and Evensong; modification of the various prayers for the sovereign in countries under heathen sovereigns, or under Republican Government; where there are many communicants and few clergymen some shortening of the form of words used in the distribution of the Holy Sacrament: diminution of number of sponsors required for public baptism: changes in the preface to the Confirmation Service and in the form of the question put to candidates.

Services or Forms of Prayer.—In a volume of liturgical services, published by the Parker Society in 1847, a list is given of forty-four occasional forms of prayer set forth in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Of these five are stated in their titles to be published or directed to be used by the authority of the Queen; nine "by authority" without specifying of whom; one is only known by a letter in which Parker tells Cecil he has prescribed it for the use of the inhabitants of his own cathedral city in their distress; twenty-four have no title, or none which gives any clue to the authority by which they were published. Of the remaining five two appear to have been issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the other three by Diocesan Bishops on their own authority. Their titles are as follows:

(II. 1560.) A short form and order to be used in common prayer thrice a week for seasonable weather and good success of the common affairs of the realm meet to be used at this present, and also hereafter when like occasion shall arise, by the discretion of the ordinaries within the province of Canterbury.

(VII. 1564.) A short form of Thanksgiving to God for ceasing the contagious sickness of the plague, to be used in common prayer on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, instead of the Common Prayers used in the time of mortality, set forth by the Bishop of London, to be used in the city of London and the rest of his diocese, and in other places also at the discretion of the ordinary ministers of the churches.

(VIII. 1565.) A form to be used in Common Prayer every Wednesday and Friday within the city and Diocese of Sarum; to excite all godly people to pray unto God for the delivery of those Christians that are now invaded by the Turks.

(IX. 1565.) A short form of Thanksgiving to God for the delivery of the Isle of Malta from the invasion and long siege thereof by the great army of the Turks, both by sea and land, and for sundry other victories lately obtained by the Christians against the said Turks, to be used in the Common Prayer within the province of Canterbury on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, for the space of six weeks next ensuing the receipt hereof.

Set forth by the Most Reverend Father in God, Matthew, by God's providence, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England and Metropolitan.

(XVIII. 1585.) An order of prayer and Thanksgiving for the preservation of the Queenes Majesties life and saltie, to be used of the preachers and ministers of the Diocese of Winchester.