

belief have been suggested in the Church during that long period ! Is it not safer to keep to the primitive teaching and practice of the Church, for the first three centuries than to embark on the questionable sea of the next thousand years which saw the introduction of many false lights which almost made shipwreck of the Church of Christ ?

In order to understand more fully the significance of the work performed by our Reformers in altering the Communion Office, so that it would bear no semblance to the Roman "MASS," let us make a brief study of the opinions of scholars of different schools of thought.

Procter, who was a moderate High Churchman, and whose "History of the Book of Common Prayer" was for many years the standard Text Book in our theological colleges, and also used by our Bishops almost universally in the examination of all candidates for Holy Orders, gives a clear and concise statement of the reasons which led to the placing of the different prayers as they are in our present Prayer Book. He says : "This Thanksgiving was originally the conclusion of the Canon, where coming after the Consecration, and before Communion, it was taken to imply an oblation of the consecrated elements, or a material, though commemorative, sacrifice. In King Edward's Second Prayer Book, therefore, it was removed into a position where it can have no such meaning, but implies a strictly spiritual sacrifice of praise, and an oblation of the worshippers to the service of God." (IXth Edition, p. 366.) It is worthy of notice that Dr. W. H. Frere, who edited Procter, altered the text in such a way as to prevent students of to-day from obtaining this information during their College course from the prescribed Text Book.

Archdeacon Wilberforce, who was in his time an advanced High Churchman, has stated the position from his own standpoint with great precision : "It was only consistent, therefore, to accommodate the usages of the Church to its new doctrine. The Service, consequently, was divested of its sacrificial character, and no longer bore witness, as in early times, to the great event which is transacted at the altar. This was done both by mutilating the Prayer of Oblation, which had been retained in the Book of 1548, and by placing it after, instead of before, the Communion." (Doctrine of the Eucharist, 438-40).

There is perhaps no clearer statement of the case to be found anywhere than that from the pen of Dr. Thomas