

**THE SECOND PRAYER-
BOOK OF KING
EDWARD VI, 1552**

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The second prayer-book of King Edward VI, 1552 by Church of England

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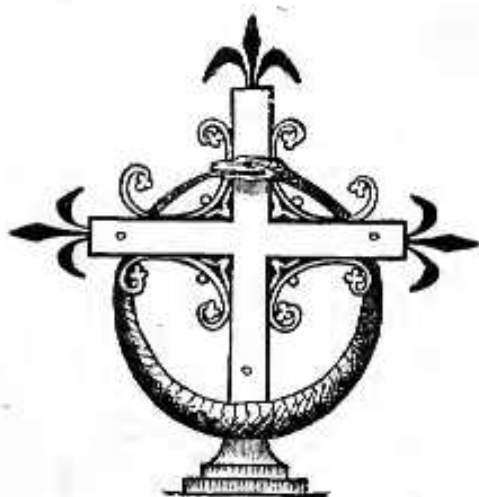
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CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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THE SECOND PRAYER-BOOK
OF
KING EDWARD VI.



The Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature.

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THE SECOND PRAYER-BOOK
OF
KING EDWARD VI
1552

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AND SYDNEY

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

THE Second Prayer-Book of King Edward VI., which is here before the reader, exhibited, throughout, a strong divergence from the principles which had marked the structure of the First Book. That Book had been drawn up with care from the ancient Liturgies of the Western Church, and aimed, as the Preface declared, at preserving "the godly and decent order of the ancient fathers," while it omitted accretions with which later times had injured it. The result was, as will be specially seen by an examination of the Communion Service, that the First Liturgy of King Edward followed closely the ancient Canon, only it was in English. In the Second Book aim was taken to weaken this identity, and Catholic antiquity was seriously departed from.

The common opinion is, that this change was due to the influence of foreign Reformers, but Mr Procter, in his excellent *History of the Book of Common Prayer*, has shown us that this opinion must be largely qualified. Indirectly, indeed, the English Reformers were being affected by the progress of thought on the Continent; but so far as their action was concerned with respect to the Liturgy, the author we have just referred to shows that it was spontaneous, and that though Bucer, who was made Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge in 1549, published a somewhat voluminous treatise on the subject, it was not in the hands of the revisers until they had finished their work. (Procter, pp. 38-43.)

The publication of the First Book was, on the whole, well received in England. It was seen that the Ceremonial to which men had been accustomed in years past, remained; and no violence was done to religious feeling. But the march of events was rapid and strong. The crimes of the Duke of Somerset represented the bad side of the movement against the old order; the action of Ridley and Hooper was the conscientious enforcement of views, which regarded the communion of the individual soul with God as of greater importance than the maintenance of Catholic unity. Ridley had been one of the most zealous destroyers of the ancient "Mass Books" and images in churches; and one of his first acts on his appointment to the see of London, was to remove the stone altar from St Paul's Cathedral, and to substitute a table. Hooper preached, somewhat violently, doctrine in unison with this action, and an Order in Council, promulgated Nov. 1550, directed that altars were to be everywhere removed, and statements were prepared to reconcile parishioners to the change.

The question of ecclesiastical vestments had come to the forefront when Hooper, who was nominated to the see of Gloucester, refused to be consecrated in the legal Episcopal robes, and after a warm controversy with Ridley on the point, was sent to the Fleet for contumacy. Then he yielded, on the understanding that after his consecration he should not be compelled to wear the obnoxious vestments on all occasions in his diocese.

It is no wonder therefore that the First Prayer-Book was no sooner published than fresh alterations were called for. At the simultaneous meeting of Convocation and Parliament in 1550 the question was opened, doubts were expressed about what holidays should be observed, what should be the dress of the minister, what the words of administration of Holy

Communion; and a committee of divines, under the presidency of Archbishop Cranmer, was appointed. This committee drew up the Second Book. They proceeded slowly with their work, for they began in the autumn of 1550. Next year there was a long private discussion concerning the manner of Christ's presence in the Sacrament. On the 23rd of January 1552 (the day after Somerset was beheaded) Parliament met, and next day Convocation. Then Cranmer produced the amended book. On the 6th of April following, the Act of Uniformity was passed, which was to bring it into use. It is to be noticed that this Act explained that the alterations had been made in order to "render the book fully perfect in all such places in which it was necessary to be made more earnest and fit for the stirring up of all Christian people to the true honouring of Almighty God, and with no intention of condemning the doctrine of the former book." It also emphatically declared that the First Book had *contained nothing but what was agreeable to the Word of God and the Primitive Church*. For some reason a long interval was fixed before the new book was to come into use, viz., the ensuing All Saints' Day. It may have been that there was, on the one hand, a fear that those who, like Bishop Gardiner, had accepted the First Book, would reject the Second, and, on the other, that the ardent Reform party wanted yet further alterations. In the interval the issue of the new book was suspended for the correction of certain faults, and it was not until October 27th that the "Black Rubric" was added at the end of the Communion Service, in explanation of the kneeling posture required of the Communicants.

As a matter of fact, as Canon Daniel observes, the Second Book of King Edward does not seem to have ever come into general use. In many congregations it was felt

that "the old was better," and any attempt to enforce penally the new Liturgy was prevented by the illness of the king, and the political excitements which filled his last days. In the following July he died. The accession of Queen Mary was the signal for the restoration for the time being of the Roman Service.

We have in our edition of the First Book referred the reader to the book itself to discover the differences between that and our present Liturgy, and so we now leave him to study out the differences between the two Liturgies of Edward. They are many and important, the principal being (1) the addition of the Sentences, Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution in the Daily Service, probably derived, though not verbally, from a service drawn up by the Calvinist Pullain for the French Refugees at Glastonbury (Procter, p. 45); (2) the addition of the Decalogue in the Communion Service; (3) the great changes made in the order of that service, and in the words of administration; (4) the omission of the Introits; (5) and the prohibition of the Ancient Vestments.

It may be well to point out, in conclusion, that the interest attaching to this book is purely historical. The second Liturgy of Edward VI. is not ours; it was abolished in the first year of Queen Mary, and has never been restored. In the reign of Elizabeth a new Liturgy was adopted by the Church of England, which was afterwards modified and altered at the Hampton Court Conference. But the authorised Prayer-Book is that of 1662. The nature of the successive changes we hope to show in ensuing volumes.

W. B.

THE BOKE OF
COMMON PRAYER AND AD-
MINISTRACION OF THE
SACRAMENTES,
AND OTHER
RITES
AND CEREMONIES IN
THE CHURCHE OF
ENGLAND.

Londini, in Officina
Edvardi Whytchurche.
Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.
Anno 1552.