

**THE HISTORY OF THE
PRAYER BOOK OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

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The history of the prayer book of the Church of England by Edward Berens

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Berens, Edward

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OF the Prayer Book by far the greater part consists of the very words of Scripture;—as, the Psalms, the Epistles and Gospels, the scriptural Hymns, and other select passages. The remainder of it expresses the sentiments and the spirit of Scripture, generally in scriptural language^a. It might be well if this was borne in mind by those, who disparage the Liturgy of the Church of England, and treat it with neglect, perhaps with contempt. Let such persons consider whether they do not expose themselves to the censure of the Apostle, *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God*^b.

^a Numerous references to Scripture are given in the margin of the Prayer Book of Bishop Mant. The passages thus referred to are for the most part given at length by Vener. Both books deserve to be consulted.

^b 1 Thess. iv. 8.

The little book which is now offered to the public has but slight pretensions to originality. It is, in great measure, a compilation from such works as appeared to furnish the information, which was most likely to be interesting and useful. In the early history of the Liturgy, I have been greatly indebted to that invaluable book, the “*Origines Liturgicæ*” of Mr. Palmer. The subsequent history of the Prayer Book is, of course, intimately connected with the history of the Reformation of the Church of England. That history, a few years ago, was to be collected chiefly from the folios of Fuller, Heylin, Collier, Burnet, and Strype. Recently it has been brought before the public in a most acceptable manner by the learned and copious Histories of Mr. Soames;—by “the Book of the Church” of that master of the English language, Dr. Southey;—by the spirited

“ Sketch of the Reformation ” by Mr. Blunt;—by the very able, honest, and impartial History of the Church of England, by Dr. Short;—and by the eloquent and interesting Biographies of Wickliff, Cranmer, Jewel, and Laud, by Mr. Le Bas. The present work, however, is principally extracted from the folios before alluded to. The account of the Second Prayer Book of Edward the Sixth is taken, (with some abridgment,) almost verbatim, from the accurately learned Preface prefixed by Dr. Cardwell to his highly valuable publication, of “ The Two Prayer Books of Edward the Sixth compared together,” a book which reflects honour on his industry and research, and on the University, from whose press so many important works throwing light on the history of the Reformation have recently issued.

For comments upon the several por-

tions of the Prayer Book, I must refer the reader to the well-known liturgical works of the pious and eloquent Comber, L'Estrange, Nichols, Wheatly, Waldo, and Shepherd^e, and especially to the edition of the Prayer Book, published some years ago by Bishop Mant, which is enriched with notes historical, explanatory, and practical, taken from the writings of very many of our most sound and able Divines.

EDWARD BERENS.

September, 1839.

^e See also the Prayer Book with notes by the late Mr. Justice Bayley.

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