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ART. I.—THOUGHTS ON THE CHURCH.

THOUGHTS ; not formal argument or discussion. What the case requires, is not immediately and first of all a full regular construction or theory of the doctrine of the Church ; much less a direct plea for any existing church organization. Back of all this lies the region of first principles and elementary ideas, by whose right determination alone it can ever be possible to bring any such theory or scheme to fair and proper trial. Of what account can it be to dispute concerning the power of the sacraments, or about points of ecclesiastical order, where the parties in controversy have no common conception whatever of the nature of the Church itself, but set out in their thinking with regard to it from wholly different points of observation ? The great matter, in every such case, is to get attention fixed on first truths, without regard for the time to the polemical issues with which they may be concerned in actual life. There must be of course always an intimate living connection between what is first here and what is secondary ; the practical issues involve necessarily their own theoretical principles, the ideal elements out of which they grow. But still the two things, as all may easily perceive, are not by any means the same. They are capable of full separation at least for thought. Many hold their practical notions

## ART. II.—THE NEW LITURGY.

A LITURGY ; or, ORDER OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. Prepared by the direction and for the use of the *German Reformed Church* in the United States of America. Philadelphia : Lindsay & Blakiston. 1858. (Third edition.)

NEXT to the Word of God, which stands in unapproachable majesty far above all human creeds and confessions, fathers and reformers, popes and councils, there are no religious books of greater practical importance and influence than catechisms, hymn books, and liturgies. They shape the moral and religious sentiments in early youth ; they feed the devotions in old age ; they are the faithful companions of the most solemn hours in the house of God, around the family altar and in the silent closet ; they give utterance to the deepest emotions, the purest thoughts, the highest aspirations ; they urge to duty and every good work ; they comfort in affliction, and point to heaven at the approach of death. Even the ripe scholar delights to return from time to time, if not daily, to the first question of his Catechism, or a familiar verse, or the simple Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed, which his pious mother taught him when a child, on his knees, and derives more solid wisdom and substantial comfort from them than from a whole library of learned volumes. They embody his earliest and his deepest impressions ; they remind him of his best moments ; they are his sacred things "which doubt has never dimmed and controversy never soiled ;" they teach him his "only comfort in life and in death." Luther did more good by his little Catechism and few hymns than by all his twenty-four large quartos, save only his translation of the book of books. The authors of the Heidelberg and the Westminster Catechisms exerted greater influence upon their age and subsequent generations, than all the schoolmen of the middle age by their subtle commentaries on Aristotle and Peter the Lombard. The author of the simple verse, "Now

I lay me down to sleep," etc., was one of the greatest benefactors of children, and through them of the race.

It is difficult to say which of these three nurseries of the Church occupies the first rank. National and denominational differences must here be allowed their due weight. In Protestant Germany, which produced the richest hymnology in the world, and still adheres to the practice of congregational singing as an essential element of public worship, hymns have a power and influence as in no other land. The Presbyterian and Puritan Churches would no doubt at once give the Catechism and Confession the preference, and look upon liturgies with suspicion as tending to formalism. In the Episcopal Church, the "Common Prayer Book" has probably done more to keep her together, to preserve her faith, to nourish her piety, to attach her membership and to attract a certain class of foreign material, than all her bishops, priests and deacons. The best state of things would perhaps require the equal excellency and harmonious coöperation of the doctrinal and devotional standards. But we know of no denomination which may claim to have at once the best catechism, the best hymn-book and the best liturgy.

The German or Evangelical Reformed Church of this country has undertaken the difficult and responsible task of providing for its membership a new Liturgy or Directory of public and private worship. She did not seek it, but was providentially prepared for, and led into it. The book is now before the public, but simply as an experiment and for provisional use. The Committee which prepared it, have no wish whatever of seeing it introduced into any congregation without their free and full consent. All they ask for their work, is a fair examination and trial. In their final report, they requested Synod not to take any action at present either for or against the book. Its merits or defects can only be properly tested by practical experience in the family and the church. It may require several years to settle the question of its adaptedness to the wants of the denomination for whose use it has been prepared.

This is indeed a new method of introducing a Liturgy, and its practicability may be doubted. But if it be wrong, its fault lies not in the Romanizing, but in the Protestant direction, and should, therefore, give at least no alarm to any body on that score. It makes full account of the general priesthood of believers. It may be called a republican and even a democratic method, or an application of the popular sovereignty-principle to church movements. If the ministers and congregations do not want the new prayer book, all they have to do is, to vote it down, and either to refer it back to the old committee for revision, or to order the preparation of a new liturgy on a different plan, or to drop the subject altogether and settle upon the exclusive system of extemporaneous prayer in the house of God as well as in the family.

But whatever may be the ultimate fate of this provisional liturgy as a public standard of worship, it has some significance even as an experiment. It is certainly one of the most important works which the German Reformed Church has attempted in this country. It represents a piece of her present spiritual life. It forms a chapter of her inner history and development. It is the practical result of a theological movement which has agitated her for a number of years past. It may have considerable influence even beyond the pale of the denomination that gave it birth. For this liturgy, although defective and admitting no doubt of considerable improvement, is by no means a mere compilation or patchwork, but something of an organic growth. The stones are old, but the building itself is new. The book has a life and spirit of its own. It is an American product, grown up on American soil and intended for American use. It is at least an earnest effort to solve the vital question of the best mode of conducting public and private worship for the wants of the present age; and that question will have to be met sooner or later by every Protestant denomination of this great and future-pregnant country.

These considerations will fully justify a more extended

article on the work which is now before the Church for its inspection and experimental use. We propose to furnish a key for its proper understanding and thus to contribute our share towards the final settlement of the practical question of its adoption, rejection, or modification. We will endeavor, if possible, to review it objectively, as if we had no connection with its composition.

We shall first present a full *history* of the preparation of the new Reformed Liturgy, and then give a short *analysis* of its contents with critical remarks on what we regard as deficient in its present provisional form. The members of the committee will easily understand that I can have no disposition here to censure any one of them more than myself. And as to the reader, I would ask him from the start to lay aside personal considerations and to hold the committee as a *whole* responsible for the defects as well as the merits which he may discover in the book. This is the best way, I think, to reach a satisfactory practical result in this important matter.

#### HISTORY OF THE LITURGY.

The proper history of a book, if it have any—for most books, it must be admitted, fall still-born from the press, or die in early infancy—commences with its publication. But it has also a previous subjective history in the mind of the author from its conception to its birth, and in its relation to the wants of the time or denomination which call it into existence. This preparatory history, as far as it may justify the publication and interest the reader, is generally brought out in the Preface. The Liturgy under consideration appeared without a preface, as well as without a name, because it was thought best to let it speak for itself and to disconnect it as much as possible from all personal associations.

The German Reformed Church, like all the Churches of the Reformation, is originally liturgical. Zwingli, Calvin, Bucer, and even John Knox, as well as Luther and Melancthon, Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley, were all in favor of a fixed and settled order of public worship that should serve as a guide to the minister and secure decency, digni-

ty and harmony to the exercises of the sanctuary. Their object was not to overthrow, but to purify, to simplify and to adapt the ancient devotional forms which had been handed down from the previous life of the Church, to transfer them from the Latin into the vernacular tongues, and to enrich them with new forms that should embody and perpetuate the peculiar spirit of evangelical Protestantism. Hence the great number of liturgies and sacred hymns which sprung up in the sixteenth century during and after the pentecostal days of the Reformation.

But while agreed as to the liturgical principle even on ordinary occasions, the Protestants differed from the beginning as to the extent to which it should be carried. The Lutheran and the Anglican Churches adhered more closely to the traditional Catholic order of worship and allowed less room for free prayer in public than the Calvinistic Churches. A few extreme branches of Calvinism, namely, Presbyterianism in Scotland and Puritanism in England, with their large offshoots in America, have, during the seventeenth century, dropped the public use of prayer-books almost entirely. This can be easily accounted for, by their extreme antagonism to the Church of England, by the unsatisfactory character of Knox's liturgy which never took proper root, and by the unwise and tyrannical attempts of archbishop Laud and the Stuarts to force the Anglican service upon the reluctant Scotch nation. In the course of time the anti-liturgical prejudices have in these ecclesiastical bodies assumed the power of tradition which it is very difficult to overcome, especially in this country. But we have no room here to enter into a general argument in favor of liturgies against their opponents.

The Protestant Churches of the Continent are without exception liturgical to this day, and make use of prescribed forms in every service in connection with more or less extemporaneous prayer. But they have too many liturgies and consequently too little unity and harmony in worship. These liturgies, moreover, are intended as guides and helps simply to the ministers, and not for the use of the

people, like the catechism and hymn book. And yet the Protestant doctrine of the general priesthood of believers should lead to some active coöperation of the congregation with the pastor in praying as well as in singing. Here are some of the reasons why none of the Continental liturgies, either Lutheran or Reformed, has been able to take very deep root in the popular heart and to prove as successful as the Common Prayer Book. For the latter is truly a national institution, as strong and powerful as Parliament itself; it has stood the test of three hundred years without serious alteration; it is now as popular as ever, and extends further than ever.

The German branch of the Reformed Church uses a considerable number of liturgies in Germany and Switzerland, where almost every canton has one of its own. Some of them are excellent in many respects, especially those which date whole or in part from the sixteenth century. But none of them, not even the old Palatinate Liturgy, can be called at all equal in depth, fervor and power to the Heidelberg Catechism. None of them combines those merits which constitute a truly popular church-book, and exempt it from the necessity of a revision in almost every generation. But the same holds true of the Lutheran Church, which has as many, or more, liturgies in Germany as Germany has independent sovereignties.

This is one of the causes of the unsatisfactory liturgical condition of the German Reformed Church in America. The missionary fathers of the last century brought with them the different liturgies then in use in those sections of Germany, Switzerland or Holland from which they emigrated. None of them ever received, as far as we know, the exclusive sanction of the Synod. Each minister was left to help himself as well as he could, and this is in point of fact the case still. The Palatinate Liturgy was used more extensively perhaps than any other. But it was superseded in Germany itself, and never republished in this country. Hence only a few copies of the original are to be found even in East Pennsylvania. Several older ministers in that

section of the Church have manuscript copies of some of the old Palatinate forms and use them to this day, while a few others prefer the German translation of Dr. Mayer's Liturgy. In addition to these, there are in use, especially among our foreign German congregations, several Swiss Liturgies of Berne, Basel, Zurich, Coire, and Ebrard's Reformirtes Kirchenbuch. Such a diversity and arbitrary freedom in public worship is certainly undesirable in one and the same denomination and leads to confusion.

In the course of the present century our Church was gradually anglicanized and in the same proportion also presbyterianized and puritanized to a very considerable extent. This influence showed itself in public worship by the gradual introduction of the free prayer-system in the *regular* services of the Lord's day. It gradually gained the ascendancy and prevails now almost without exception in our English congregations. But the Church never prohibited, of course, the use of liturgies even on ordinary Sundays, and always adhered to the liturgical principle for all special occasions, and sacramental transactions. Here the same loose practice and arbitrary freedom prevailed to this day, as in the German congregations. Some use the translation of portions of the Palatinate liturgy as appended to the hymn book of the Dutch Reformed Church; others, Dr. Mayer's; others, portions of the Episcopal Common Prayer Book; others, prefer to compile from various sources their own forms for the sacramental occasions, for confirmation, marriage and the burial of the dead; while still others go the full length of the Puritan principle and depend altogether upon their individual resources and the inspiration of the moment for all these solemn occasions.

This is the state of things which the Church has long in vain tried to correct and to regulate. For the last thirty or forty years the Synod has agitated from time to time the liturgical question, with the view to do away with this loose practice and to introduce a settled and uniform system of public worship, both in the English and German congregations under its jurisdiction, through means of a liturgy



that should breathe the spirit of its doctrinal standard, the Heidelberg Catechism, and yet be adapted in arrangement and style to the wants of the Church at the present day and in this country in midst of Anglo-American relations. This will appear from the following historical statement, which our esteemed colleague, the Rev. Dr. Wolff, has kindly prepared for us from the minutes of the earlier meetings of Synod, in nearly all of which he took part, first as lay delegate and subsequently as one of the leading ministers.

“It might be supposed from one unacquainted with its history, that the Liturgy, recently prepared and published by a Committee appointed for the purpose, by the Synod of the German Reformed Church, was the product of some precipitate and uncongenial movement, and as such was sprung upon the Church in an uncalled for way. A greater mistake can scarcely be imagined than any supposition of the kind. The want of a Liturgy, adapted to the condition of the Church, appears to have been felt at an early period. At the Synod of Hagerstown, in 1820—the first delegated Synod that met after the division into Classes—a request was sent up from the Maryland Classis to make a revision of the Church *Agenda*, with a view to their publication in both the English and German languages. A Committee was appointed in accordance with their request, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. *Hendel, Hinsch, S. Helfenstein, Rahauer and Becker*. The Committee was continued from year to year until the Synod of Bedford, in 1824, when they submitted a report, which was referred to a special Committee for examination; at whose request the whole subject was deferred until the next meeting of Synod. At the ensuing Synod, which met at Philadelphia, another Committee of examination was appointed; but there is nothing upon record to show that the report at Bedford was ever acted upon. The difficulties connected with the establishment of the Theological Seminary, and its subsequent removal from Carlisle, were so serious and absorbing as to throw every thing of minor consideration into the back ground. Another cause probably was, that the older ministers interested in the preparation of a Liturgy, after the Synod at Bedford, began to yield their places in the councils of the Church to others. The consequence was, that the subject was lost sight of, until at the Synod of Hagerstown, in 1830, it was again brought up by the Maryland Classis, in the form of a request, to have the Liturgy printed and bound up with the contemplated English hymn book. A Committee was appointed to attend to the duty; but the Liturgy never appeared.

At Pittsburg, in 1834, the attention of Synod was again directed to the subject by an action from the Classis of Susquehanna for "the appointment of a committee to prepare an improved Liturgy to be submitted to the next Synod." A committee was accordingly appointed, consisting of Drs. *Mayer, Rauch, Hoffeditz*, and the Rev. Messrs. *Fries, Geiger* and *Hacke*. Three years after, in 1837, the chairman of the committee transmitted the draft of a Liturgy for examination to the Synod of Sunbury, which, after "having been read and referred to several committees, was sent down to the Classes for their action." At the ensuing Synod at Lancaster, it appeared that a majority of the Classes were in favor of its adoption; but Synod deemed it best to submit it again for revision. The committee appointed to attend to this duty never met, and at the Synod of Philadelphia was superseded by another made up of the Rev. Messrs. *Smaltz, J. Helfenstein, Schneek, Cares* and the Elder *J. C. Bucher*, who submitted the original draft, with alterations and amendments, to the Synod of Greencastle, in 1840, when it was adopted, and ordered to be printed, in the form in which it is now before the churches. Dr. Mayer's liturgy appeared in 1841, in both languages, but never reached a second edition, although the number of copies printed was very small.

The Church generally was not satisfied with the work. In many of the charges it was never used. At the Synod of Lancaster, in 1847, the Classis of East Pennsylvania openly expressed its dissatisfaction, and requested that "the old Liturgy should be reprinted, or a new one prepared more congenial to the spirit of the Heidelberg Catechism." The whole subject "of the revision of the Liturgy so as to secure one which is adapted to the wants of the whole Church, and the general use of which can be enforced," was referred to the consideration of the several Classes, and at the next Synod at Hagerstown, it appeared, that all the Classes, with the exception of North Carolina, had expressed themselves in their minutes in favor of a new Liturgy."

This brings us to the very threshold of the last stage of the liturgical movement in the German Reformed Church, which ultimately resulted in the present book.

In the mean time, since the year 1844, this body began to be strongly agitated by a theological controversy known as the "Mercersburg" movement. It referred to the church question under its theoretical and practical aspect. It commenced with the discussion of the original and fundamental principles of Protestantism in its relations to Roman Catholicism, on the one hand, and to rationalism,

and sectarianism on the other, and extended gradually over a considerable number of important historical and doctrinal topics, including the sacraments, the ministry and the nature of public worship. It led to serious synodical discussions since the meeting at York, 1845, where the members of the new liturgical committee have in part occupied very different ground. As this movement is not yet closed, but in active, though more silent and peaceful progress, it would be premature to pass a final judgment on its merits. The best in it is unquestionably its *providential* character which justifies the hope that it will lead ultimately to good results in and out of the denomination in whose bosom it was first started. We are here merely concerned with its bearing upon the new liturgy. The Mercersburg controversy did evidently not originate the liturgical movement in the German Reformed body, as appears from the preceding statement, but it gave it a new impulse and direction and carried it to a practical result that differed very widely from what was originally contemplated. It called attention to the liturgies of the age of the Reformation and of the primitive Catholic Church, which had been almost entirely lost sight of in this country, and recommended them as the general basis on which the new work should be constructed. It placed, moreover, the defense of liturgical service on different grounds. It viewed it not simply in the light of convenience, decency and propriety, but as a sacred bond of union between the different ages of Christ's Church, as a guarantee against excesses of arbitrary freedom, as a conservative power in doctrine and discipline, as the organ for the exercise of the *general* priesthood, and as the artistic form which the very spirit of social worship instinctively assumes and which will characterize even the worship of the redeemed in heaven as a complete harmony of united thanksgiving and praise. The friends of that system deprecated the idea of a liturgy that should be either a purely subjective and narrow denominational production, or a mechanical compilation from other sources without principle and vitality. Such a book would hardly deserve the name and not be worth the trouble of prepara-

tion. They called for a free reproduction and adaptation of the time-honored devotions of the purest ages to our particular age and country. In one word, they desired a truly *scriptural, historical, evangelical catholic, and artistic* liturgy for the *people* as well as the ministry. Whether this aim be at all attained in the new book, is an altogether different question. For, from the ideal to the real, from theory to practice, there is more than one step, and many of the noblest aims of mortal men remain *pia desideria* in this world of imperfections.

The new phase of the liturgical movement then commenced, as far as the corporate action of the German Reformed Church is concerned, at the Synod of Hagerstown, Md., in the year 1848. From want of time, and from prudential considerations the subject was not discussed in that meeting, but referred to a committee, consisting of the Rev. John H. A. Bomberger, Daniel Zacharias, D. D., John F. Mesick, and Elders George Besore and W. Cameron, to report at the next annual meeting. (Minutes for 1848, p. 75.)

At the Synod of Norristown, Pa., in October, 1849, this committee submitted a majority report, which, after some amendments, was adopted, as follows :

“ *The primary object* of Christians in ‘assembling themselves together,’ is, according to the Scriptures, and should therefore be in practice, *to worship God*. The ancient sanctuary was known to the most evangelical of the Prophets, chiefly as *a house of prayer*. (Is. 56 : 7.) And this sentiment has the express sanction of our Lord himself, in his quotation of it in defence of the zeal exhibited in driving the money-changers from the temple. The prevalence of this view is also exhibited in the entire public devotions of the Jews under the old covenant—(their attachment to which, as well as their rigid perseverance in it, is proven by their public religious ceremonies at the present day.) Their gathering together on Sabbaths, and new moons, and solemn feasts, was emphatically and almost exclusively for the purpose of worshipping God, by uniting in public acts of devotion. Whatever time or place may have been given to other duties, such as the reading of the law and exhortation, their devotional ceremonies always occupied the chief place in their services and the larger portion of their time. And *all this was by explicit divine appointment*.

Neither was the precedent, thus divinely set, wholly abolished, either in principle or practice, at the introduction of the later dispensation. Zealously as the Lord urged his disciples, both by command and example, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom he had come to found, there is nothing in all his teaching or conduct, that evinces the least purpose of having this preaching supersede the acts and duties of ancient worship. In the nature of the case more time and effort had to be given to the proclamation of the kingdom about to be set up. But no sooner were its principles made known, and companies of believers gathered in different places, than we find them uniting in the formation of Christian societies (of churches), meeting stately for mutual edification by means of public worship, and adapting the ancient form of worship to the peculiar spirit and principles of the remodeled order of things. For whilst the peculiar form of their devotional acts differed wholly from that of the preceding dispensation, yet the spirit and principle were retained. There was indeed no altar smoking with incense,

" No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,  
No hysop branch nor sprinkling priest,"

no Sion or Gerizim to which their devotions were confined. But whilst the mere outward accidents of their old ritual were abrogated, there was neither an abolition nor demolition of the thing itself. The times of types and shadows, had indeed passed by, but they were gone because the anti-type and substance had come to take their place. There was still an altar, an incense, and a sacrifice—and external forms in which these existed. Only they were more spiritual in their character. The Christian Church was far from being a society formed upon the principles and after the heartless asceticism of the exclusive Essenes—but exhibited that intimate relation to the order of things which preceded its institution, which at once proved it to be the offspring of the same mind and heart—a continuation and completion of the old in a higher and fuller form—the old things passing away, by all becoming new.

And now to aid them in their worship, and to secure the desired uniformity and edification in their devotions, the earliest Church organizations of whose history any authentic traditions have reached us—at once availed themselves of set forms of devotional hymns and prayers, which were in part transferred from the Jewish Church, and in part framed expressly for the latter, by those to whom their superintendence was committed. And these acts of devotion, their singing and praying, and reading of the Scriptures, constituted an important element, and occupied a large portion of time, in all their public worship. *This again was by divine appointment, and under apostolical sanction.*

Of the gradual perversion of the spirituality and simplicity

which originally characterized the worship of the Christian Church, of the corruptions which crept in with the various elements that were mingled with it, in the course of its progress and extension—and of which so dark a picture is exhibited in the history of the Papacy, and especially in its professedly devotional ceremonies, and of the fearful prevalence of these during the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, the committee need say nothing.

With the opening of the following century came agitations and changes which characterized the great Reformation. But amidst all these the thought of abrogating all forms of Church worship was never once cherished. At first those forms previously employed were continued in use, with such omissions and modifications as were thought necessary. And as soon as circumstances permitted, both branches of the Protestant Church set themselves diligently to the work of preparing suitable Liturgies—and the use of such in all public acts of worship has always continued to characterize the German Reformed and Lutheran Churches of Germany to the present day. Thus the Churches of the Reformation have ever conformed with the example set by the earliest ages—in making acts of worship the great business of the sanctuary—and making suitable provision for this. The result of this provision we possess in the old and excellent Liturgy of the Palatinate—which obtained general approbation in our Churches in Germany and which was sent over to the Church in this country with our Missionary Fathers—and is known among us both in the original language and a translation of large portions of it found attached to most Reformed Dutch Hymn Books.

In view of these facts your committee suggest

1. That the use of Liturgical forms of church worship, as recognized by our forefathers, has the clear sanction of the practice and peculiar genius of the original protestant Churches.

2. That there is nothing in the present circumstances of our Church in this country to call for or justify a total departure from this ancient and long-established usage.

3. That the Liturgy now authorized and partially used by the Church, is inadequate to our wants, inasmuch as apart from other deficiencies which may be found in it, it makes *no provision for ordinary occasions of public worship.*

4. That whilst the older Liturgies of the Church, and especially that of the Palatinate, are of such a character as to commend the greater portions of them for adoption, there is still need of various modifications in order to adapt them fully to our wants and circumstances.

5. That the present would be as favorable a time for making the requisite provision in the case, as any which may be anticipated in the future.

6. That Synod, therefore, proceed to make such arrangements as it may in its wisdom think best for the securing of this object.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN H. A. BOMBERGER, *Chairman.*"

This report gave rise to a lengthy and earnest discussion on the general subject of the liturgy, which was continued throughout several sessions, and excited a great deal of interest in the religious community of the place at the time. As the Minutes of Synod contain no speeches, we have to draw here upon our memory as one of the participants in the debate. The question then was: Liturgy, or no liturgy. The modern Puritan spirit which had gradually crept into the Church made a vigorous effort to defeat the object of the report altogether. One member of the committee, who became also a member of the final committee, had prepared an elaborate argument against all forms of prayer, as interfering more or less with the freedom, fervor and spirituality of devotion, and quoted Justin Martyr's well known *οση δυναμις αυτω*, and Tertullian's "*ex proprio ingenio*," concerning the public prayers in the second century. But he was evidently influenced by ill-founded apprehensions of Romanizing tendencies, and did injustice to his own churchly instincts and deep-rooted German Reformed sympathies. His objections were respectfully met by arguments from the Scriptures, from history, from considerations of order, respectability, unity and practical usefulness, which it would take us too long to give in full. Another speaker embodied his anti-liturgical prejudices in the lines:

"Prayer is the simplest form of speech  
That infant lips can try."

But he was promptly silenced by the quotation of what immediately follows, in the same hymn of Montgomery, who as a Moravian, was certainly in favor of liturgical worship:

"Prayer the sublimest strains that reach  
The majesty on high."

A third opponent of the report asked the question: "If I

read another man's prayer, is it I who prays, or the one who wrote it?" He was effectually answered by another question: "If you sing a hymn, is it you that sings, or the man who composed it; or must you make both the poetry and the music in order to use it as an act of worship?" The last speech, as far as I recollect, was made by Dr. J. W. Nevin, with his usual solemnity and earnestness. He stated frankly, that the study of the church question had wrought a complete theological revolution in his mind and entirely removed his inherited Presbyterian prejudices against liturgies, and then went on to show the necessary connection of liturgical worship with the idea of the Church as the body of Christ, of the communion of saints as a present reality enjoyed in the public devotions, of the sacraments as means of grace, and of the nature of true worship as a united act of the whole congregation.

The great majority of Synod was evidently in favor of a liturgy, and seemed to appreciate also more or less its true character, as rising far above all merely utilitarian considerations. After the adoption of the report, it was resolved, on motion of Dr. B. S. Schneck, to appoint a committee with instructions to examine thoroughly the liturgical literature of the Reformed Churches, and to prepare for the next meeting of Synod a plan or outline of the proposed liturgy, with some specimens, old or new, as they might see fit.

This committee, as appointed by the President, (the Rev. J. Rebaugh) consisted of the Rev. Dr. John W. Nevin, Philip Schaff, Barnard C. Wolff, Elias Heiner, John H. A. Bomberger, Henry Harbaugh, Joseph F. Berg, and the Elders William Heyser, John C. Bucher, Dr. Caspar Schæfer and George C. Welker.

The individual members of the committee kept the subject before their mind and bestowed upon it such attention as their many engagements would permit. During the next Synodical year, Dr. Wolff translated the instructive introduction to Dr. Ebrard's "Reformirtes Kirchenbuch," on the Reformed Liturgies of the sixteenth century. Dr.



Bomberger brought out in an English dress, several parts of the Palatinate liturgy from a German copy of 1684. Both these contributions appeared in the second volume of the Mercersburg Review for 1850, and were followed by other communications on the same topic in subsequent volumes of this quarterly. But the committee held no meeting and thought it prudent indefinitely to postpone the whole work, for which the Church seemed not yet sufficiently prepared. Hence the following report in the Minutes of the Synod of 1850, held at Martinsburg, Va. :

“The committee appointed to commence the preparation of a new Liturgy, respectfully report, that after such attention as they have been able to give to the subject, and in view of the general posture of the Church at the present time, they have not considered it expedient as yet to go forward with the work. Should it be felt necessary on the part of Synod to bring out at once a new formulary for public use, it is believed that the most advisable course for the present would be to give a translation simply of the old Liturgy of the Palatinate; although the Committee are by no means of the mind, that this would be the best ultimate form in which to provide for the great interest here in question. Altogether it is felt, however, that other questions of vital moment now before the Church need first to be settled, in order that it may become important really to bestow any full and final care on this question of a new Liturgy  
Respectfully submitted,

JOHN W. NEVIN, *Chairman.*”

In the year 1851 the Church was so engrossed with preparations for the removal of her literary institutions from Mercersburg to Lancaster, with the theological discussion of the Church question, which now assumed a more solemn and critical aspect than ever, and with the withdrawal of Dr. Nevin from active service in the Theological Seminary, that the liturgical question, although never lost sight of altogether, was thrown into the back ground by questions of more urgent and immediate interest, which seemed to involve almost the very existence of the German Reformed Church as a separate denomination. For this body was just then shaken to its very base by attacks from without and agitation from within. The contemplated removal of the literary institutions, too, seemed for some time doomed

to a humiliating and disastrous failure. The prospects were dark and gloomy indeed, and yet not without promise and hope to the eye of faith. It is now evident that the apprehensions were groundless, and that the organized persecution to the German Reformed Church for real or supposed heresy, instead of tending to her dissolution, resulted in her consolidation. But the delay of action on the side of the liturgy committee was altogether judicious and wise under the circumstances. The work itself only gained by it in the end.

At the next annual meeting of Synod held at Lancaster, in October, 1851, Dr. Nevin resigned his theological professorship in the Seminary, and with it also his chairmanship of the committee on the liturgy, and proposed his colleague, being the second on the list, in his place. The request was granted with the instruction that the committee should report to Synod as soon as possible. Besides this, the composition of the committee appointed at Norristown underwent gradually several other changes by the death of some (Judge Bucher, Dr. Schæfer), and the withdrawal of other members (Dr. Berg, etc.), who were replaced at subsequent meetings of Synod. One or two members were added for special reasons. Thus Dr. Gerhart, after his removal from Ohio, was elected at the synodical meeting of Chambersburg in 1855, with the view to represent the interests of the Western Synod, as the former chairman of the Western liturgical committee, which was appointed to coöperate with that of the Eastern Synod as far as practicable.

The committee on the Liturgy, as it finally stood, since October, 1855, and is alone responsible for the work as actually prepared and published, consisted of ten ministers and four elders, viz: Philip Schaff, John W. Nevin, B. C. Wolff, J. H. A. Bomberger, Henry Harbaugh, Elias Heiner, Daniel Zacharias, Thomas C. Porter, E. V. Gerhart, Samuel R. Fisher, and elders William Heyser, John Rodemeyer, George Schæfer, George C. Welker.

These names represent pretty well the various sections and interests of the German Reformed Church, and include

even its theological extremes, having often met on opposite sides in the discussion of important questions on the floor of Synod. And yet upon the whole they got along very harmoniously with the task, although it involved directly or indirectly almost every point of dispute between them. To them it has been a work of peace and reconciliation rather than of strife and division. This is one of the most encouraging features in this movement. May the book as published have the same effect at last for the whole German Reformed Church and prove to it a bond of unity and peace!

Of the fourteen members about four took no part in any of the meetings held. But this was owing to modesty or sickness or unavoidable engagements, and to no want of sympathy with the movement itself of which they heartily approve, as far as I know. The remaining members all coöperated in furnishing selections or original contributions. But all contributions were submitted, before their adoption, to a thorough revision of the committee at their several meetings, and a large number of them were laid aside or superseded. Every chapter of the Liturgy proper, as now published, even to the rubrics and notes, became in this way more or less the work of the whole committee. The only partial exception to this is the appended selection of hymns, for whose examination in detail by the committee as a whole, there was no time left. For this reason the new Liturgy can and should never be baptized with the name of any individual, like the one which preceded it in the German Reformed Church. The comparative freedom from subjectivity and individuality we regard as a decided recommendation to a church-book, provided it do not destroy its unity and harmony.

Soon after the Synod of Lancaster the proper execution of the work itself was seriously commenced. The members of the committee residing at Mercersburg held weekly meetings during the summer of 1852 and prepared a general plan, also four forms for the regular service on the Lord's day, two baptismal services, a form for the solemn-

zation of matrimony, and a part of the Scripture lessons and collects for the ecclesiastical year. These labors were approved by a general meeting of the committee, and then laid before the Synod convened in the city of Baltimore, October, 1852. The following report, embracing the plan of the work, was adopted at that Synod :

“The Committee on the Liturgy beg leave to submit the following report :

Soon after the last meeting of Synod at Lancaster, the Committee gave the subject entrusted to their care such attention as their time and regular duties would allow. Those members who reside at Mercersburg, held weekly meetings of conference and consultation during last summer, while the other members were requested to prepare, in the mean time, certain portions of the proposed Liturgy, and to submit them afterwards to the revision of the whole Committee. The further they proceeded in the work, and the more they made themselves acquainted with the liturgical literature of ancient and modern times, the more they felt the importance, difficulty and responsibility of the task committed to their hands. Next to the confession of faith, no book, not even the hymn book excepted, is calculated to exert so much influence in forming the peculiar religious character of a Church, as a liturgy which should embody its whole devotional life. The difficulties are increased in this case by the great number and variety of such works issued before and after the Reformation, which makes the selection sometimes more embarrassing than the original production; also by the reigning tone of piety in the Protestant denominations of this country, which, with a few exceptions, are more or less, however unjustly, prejudiced against the whole system of liturgical worship as tending to formalism; and, finally, by the peculiar position of our own communion, which seems to be just now in a state of transition. In view of these considerations, it might seem prudent for Synod indefinitely to postpone the work, until the liturgical reforms, which are just now agitated in various evangelical churches of Germany, both Reformed and Lutheran, shall come to definite results, and until perhaps similar movements in other sections of our American Protestantism, which may be expected to take place at no distant day, shall facilitate its execution.

But, on the other hand, there can be no doubt, that our Church, which, in common with all the Churches of the Reformation, has at all times, to a greater or less extent, approved of stated forms of public worship without excluding thereby the right use of extemporaneous prayer, is entirely dissatisfied with its present liturgy, and calls loudly for a book of public

devotion which should embrace the best portions of older works of the kind, and be adapted, at the same time, to the peculiar wants of its present condition. Besides, the power of your Committee, according to the Minutes of the Synod at Norristown, A. D., 1849, which first brought up the subject in a definite form, does not extend, for the present, beyond proposing a general *plan* and presenting a few *specimens* of liturgical forms. It is, therefore, only a preparatory work which we are expected to bring before Synod at this time, and it is hoped that your further advice and more definite instructions will greatly facilitate the continuation and final consummation of the task, to whomsoever it may be hereafter entrusted.

With this expectation your Committee would bring before your reverend body :

### I. *A plan of the proposed Liturgy.*

It is designed to make provision for the following heads, which are generally comprehended in a full and regular Liturgy in the proper sense of the term :

- I. The regular Service on the Lord's Day.
- II. The Festival Seasons, especially Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday.
- III. Prayers for Miscellaneous Occasions.
- IV. The Administration of Infant and Adult Baptism.
- V. The Order of Confirmation.
- VI. The Holy Communion.
- VII. The Visitation and Communion of the Sick.
- VIII. The Visitation of Prisoners.
- IX. The Solemnization of Matrimony.
- X. The Ordination and Installation of Ministers, Elders and Deacons.
- XI. The Laying of a Corner Stone.
- XII. The Consecration of a Church.
- XIII. The Burial of the Dead.
- XIV. The Family Liturgy, or Prayers to be used in Morning and Evening Devotions, and on special occasions.
- XV. A Table of the Lessons of the Holy Scriptures to be read in the Church throughout the year, and a similar Table for the private use of the Scripture.

### II. *The principles on which the new Liturgy is to be constructed.*

1.) The liturgical worship of the *Primitive Church*, as far as it can be ascertained from the Holy Scriptures, the oldest ecclesiastical writers, and the Liturgies of the Greek and Latin Churches of the third and fourth centuries, ought to be made, as much as possible, the *general basis* of the proposed Liturgy ; the more so, as they are in fact also the source from which the best portions of the various Liturgies of the sixteenth century

were derived, such as the forms of confession and absolution, the litanies, the creeds, the *Te Deum*, the *Gloria in excelsis*, the collects, the doxologies, &c. For the merit of the Reformation in the department of worship, if we except the hymnology, which has been very materially enriched, especially by the evangelical Churches of Germany, does not so much consist in producing new forms of devotion, as in transferring those handed down from former ages into the vernacular tongues, in purifying them from certain additions, in reducing them to greater simplicity, and in subordinating them to the preaching of the Gospel, as the principal part of Protestant worship.

2.) Among the later Liturgies special reference ought to be had to the old *Palatinate* and other *Reformed* Liturgies of the *sixteenth* century.

3.) Neither the ancient Catholic nor the Reformed Liturgies, however, ought to be copied slavishly, but reproduced rather in a *free evangelical spirit and adapted to the peculiar wants of our age and denomination*; inasmuch as these Liturgies themselves exhibit to us a considerable variety with essential unity, and as every age of the Church has the promise of the Spirit and a peculiar mission to fulfil. For the same reason, *new* forms may be prepared also, where it may seem desirable, but in keeping always with the devotional spirit of the Church in her purest days.

4.) Those portions of the Liturgy which are most frequently used, as the regular service on the Lord's Day, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, should embrace *several* forms, some shorter and some longer, some with and some without responses, with a view to avoid monotony, and to adapt them the more readily to the condition and wants of our various ministers and congregations which are evidently not prepared for an entire uniformity.

5.) The *language and style* ought to be throughout *scriptural* as much as possible; that is, simple, sublime, and devotional, such as we find in the Psalms especially, and in the Lord's Prayer. The doctrinal tone, which predominates too much in most of the Calvinistic Liturgies, ought to be used only within certain limits.

6.) The addition of a *Family Liturgy*, including a sufficient number of prayers, seems to be very desirable, not only on account of its independent value, but especially also because it would facilitate the introduction of the Liturgy amongst our laity, and thus promote its right use in the Church. For, in the opinion of your Committee, a Liturgy will never fully answer its purpose, and be sufficiently appreciated by the congregation, if it is confined to the hands of the minister. Like

the Bible, the Catechism and the Hymn Book, it ought to be the common property and manual of *every member of the Church*. The laymen will take a far deeper interest in the devotional exercises, if they can follow the minister by their book, and respond at least with an audible *Amen* at the end of each prayer.

7.) Finally, a Liturgy ought not to interfere with the proper use of *extemporaneous* prayer, either in public or in private, but rather to *regulate* and *promote* it. Sufficient room should be left for its exercise in connection with the Sunday afternoon and evening services, as well as in weekly Bible lectures, social prayer meetings, catechetical exercises, and on special occasions.

If these principles be conscientiously and wisely carried out, it is hoped that, by the blessing of God, a Liturgy might be produced at last, which will be a *bond of union both with the ancient Catholic Church and the Reformation*, and yet be the *product of the religious life of our denomination in its present state*.

### III. *Some specimens of the new Liturgy.*

In conclusion, we lay before Synod some *specimens*, as Synod required of us, viz: four forms for *regular worship* on Sunday morning, a form for the administration of *Infant Baptism*, another for *Adult Baptism*, and a *Marriage* service. They have been constructed on the above principles, and have undergone a thorough examination of the members of the Committee as far as they could be brought together.

It is now for Synod to approve, or reject, or to modify what we here submit under a deep sense of the responsibility of the work and of our own insufficiency for it, and to make the necessary arrangements for its continuation and completion.

If we are expected to suggest any plan to this end, it would be this: that Synod appoint a committee with instructions to print, as soon as the nature of the work will admit, a *specimen Liturgy*, for the *inspection* of our Church.

Respectfully submitted,

PHILIP SCHAFF, *Chairman.*"

In connection with this report the several specimen forms above mentioned were read, and then referred to the same committee with instructions "to carry out the suggestions made at the close of the report." All these forms, together with a communion service on the basis of the Palatinate, and several other liturgical contributions, were subsequently printed in the *Mercersburg Review* for 1854 and 1855, so that the Church at large had an opportunity of forming some idea of the probable nature of the work under preparation.

The scheme and the general principles adopted by the Baltimore Synod, were conscientiously, yet not pedantically adhered to by the committee in their subsequent labors, as will appear from a comparison of the report with the book. The order of subjects was improved; the chapters on miscellaneous prayers and the visitation of prisoners were dropped, and replaced by a few others not included in the original frame work. The recommendation mentioned under 4.) in the report, was carried out only in regard to the service for the Lord's Day, and the Baptism of Infants. In all other services the duplicates originally contemplated, were dispensed with, as it was thought, on more mature consideration, that a variety of forms might only introduce confusion.

After the adoption of a definite basis, the chairman distributed the various chapters of the Liturgy among members of the committee, with the understanding that they should have them ready till Spring, 1853, when a general meeting was to be held for their examination, correction and adoption.

But owing to various causes the work proceeded very slowly, and it was impossible to convene a general meeting of the Committee at the time contemplated. The more the members studied the subject and tried their hands at the preparation of devotional forms for others, the more they felt the difficulty of the task and their insufficiency satisfactorily to perform it. The Synodical Minutes for 1853 and 1854 report no further progress.

But the Synod held at Chambersburg in 1855 gave the enterprise a new impulse, a tolerably full meeting of the Committee having been secured. A report was submitted and adopted, in which the Committee wish their task to be confined simply to the preparation and publication of a *provisional* liturgy for *experimental* and *optional* use, and strongly advise Synod not to take action upon it, until it could be thoroughly revised on the ground of *practical experience* as to its actual working in the congregations under their care, (*Minutes*, p. 80, 81). The same Synod reduced the quorum of the committee to five persons, in order to facilitate



their labors, and passed also a resolution proposing a well meant but impracticable plan for defraying the expenses of the publication of the provisional liturgy by public collections. This was, however, happily superseded by making the book pay for itself.

After this Synodical meeting the work was resumed with more spirit and energy than ever and persevered in, until it was finally completed. The Committee held several meetings, more than were originally contemplated, one in March 13, 1856, and four in 1837, viz: January 2, April 20, August 25, and October 13. Each lasted from one to two weeks. The number of the morning, afternoon and night sessions, as I learn from the secretary, amounts to one hundred and four, exclusive of the sessions of the Lancaster, and Mercersburg sub-committees, and those preceding the Synod of Baltimore. The first four of these general meetings were held at Lancaster city, owing to its central location and its being the residence of several members of the Committee; the last was held in Philadelphia in the midst of the late financial panic, and the proof was read as the book passed through the hands of the printer. The members will not easily forget the old fashioned round walnut table in the consistory room of St. Paul's church at Lancaster, and the similar table in the equally comfortable consistory room of the Race street church in Philadelphia, one of the oldest in the city and in our denomination, where once Schlatter, Hendel, Weiberg and other missionary fathers of pious memory labored in their generation. There the Committee sat many a day praying, writing, consulting together, criticising, examining and pondering over Bibles, Concordances, Liturgies, old and new, from the Clementine down to the Irvingite, and

*"Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore."*

They applied the pruning knife very freely to their own productions and laid aside whole piles of manuscript. Human nature, unaided by divine grace, would hardly have submitted to such an unceremonious process. But the book, I am sure, is only the better for it. Almost every sentence

and word were rigidly examined and measured. Sometimes interesting theological discussions would spring up and relieve the mind of the wearisomeness of minute verbal criticism. The whole was a capital training school, and if the committee could have recommenced their labors where they stopped, with the experience they had acquired, they would probably make a much better book than the one now published. Several forms prepared with considerable care, as prayers at sea, for the opening of consistorial meetings and Sabbath schools, could not be finally acted upon, partly from want of time, partly from want of room, the agreement with the publishers limiting the book to 400 pages. The last meeting, consisting of five members, was held on Wednesday the 21st of October, 1857, at Philadelphia, and closed at six o'clock, P. M., in a solemn manner by prayer and the singing of a doxology.

If we date the proper commencement of the labors of the Committee from the Synod of Lancaster in 1851, and deduct the year 1854, during which they were entirely suspended, owing to the absence of the chairman in Europe, we may call the new Liturgy the result of five years' combined labor. This is certainly not too much time for a work so difficult and responsible. But we must take into consideration that the members of the Committee, being all engaged in the active duties of teaching and preaching, could only bestow a limited portion of their time to this task. Under these circumstances it was completed in as short a period as could reasonably be expected.

A few days after the final session of the Committee they laid, through their chairman, their final report before the Synod convened in Allentown, which, after some discussion, was unanimously adopted on Tuesday, October 27, 1857. It was drawn up by Dr. Nevin, and reads as follows:

"The committee appointed to prepare and publish a *Provisional Liturgy* for the use of the German Reformed Church, beg leave to lay before the Synod respectfully, at this time, their final report.

It is with much satisfaction, and heartfelt thankfulness to God, they find themselves able to announce, that their difficult

and laborious task has at length been brought to completion. A Liturgy, or General Order of Worship, including some Prayers for family use, and a small selection of choice Hymns, the whole forming a volume of about 400 hundred pages, has been prepared, and is now in the hands of the Printer, with the prospect of being published in the course of a few days.

It is not for the committee to speak of the merits of their own work. They may be allowed to say, however, that they have spared no pains to make it worthy of the solemn purpose for which it has been framed. It might have been produced in much less time, and with much less labor, had the object been simply to bring out a collection of written prayers of the first best sort that might have come to hand. But it was felt from the beginning, that the true idea of a Liturgy involved a great deal more than this; and that a great deal more than this was needed in fact, to satisfy the expectations and wants of the German Reformed Church. It was found, moreover, that with the progress of the work itself, the idea of what it should be, acquired new depth and force in the mind of the committee themselves; while it seemed to them, that the feeling of the Church also called for more in this direction than might have been distinctly thought of in the beginning. This gave rise naturally to caution and delay. A large part of the first preparations of the committee proved wholly unsatisfactory afterwards to themselves, and were either altogether laid aside, or at least wrought into entirely new form and shape. In this way, moreover, the work has been subject to long interruptions; and it seemed doubtful indeed at times, whether it would ever be completed at all. Nothing, however, has been lost, it is now believed, by any such difficulty and delay. The studies and conferences of the committee have at all events, as they believe, contributed much to their own qualification for the service committed to their hands, and enabled them to work out a result by their own united labors which could hardly have been reached in any other way. The new Liturgy is not a mere compilation, or outward putting together of heterogeneous parts. It has a true life of its own, such as gives unity and harmony to it as a whole; and it is hoped, that this will be found to be in harmony, at the same time, with the theological life and historical genius of the Church for whose use more particularly it has been prepared.

It is a matter of much satisfaction, we may be allowed to add, that no attempt is to be made to force the Liturgy upon the Church, without such general inward and free consent to its use. The Synod has ordered it to be prepared and published only for *provisional* use, and is not expected of course to take any action upon it one way or the other at the present time. It must go forth among the churches simply as an *experiment*.

Every congregation is left to settle the question for itself, how far it will accept the new book, or whether it will be accepted and used at all. This is, in the judgment of the committee, just as it ought to be. They would be sorry, indeed, to have the Liturgy introduced in any quarter, sooner or farther than there may be a disposition among the people to make it welcome, as a help to them, and not a hindrance in their public worship. In this way, the Liturgy asks no ecclesiastical sanction in its favor. It is enough that the Synod has sanctioned the principle of worship in such form, and that the new book is submitted to the churches by its direction and order. Whether it shall satisfy their judgment, and be taken into their full confidence and trust, remains yet to be seen. Years may be required to settle this question; and the interest involved in it is so vast, that no one should object to have years allowed for the purpose. As the case now stands, the Liturgy must work its own way, quietly and silently, into general use; or else pass away at last without any authority whatever, as a provision for which after all there has been no real demand in the reigning life of the Reformed Church.

Should this be so, the committee would not feel still that their labor has been wholly thrown away. They think it of much account, in any event, that a fair trial should be made in this way of the possibility of incorporating the true conception of a Liturgy practically with the worship of the Reformed Church. For it is not too much to say, that if the present Liturgy should prove inadequate to this end, no other is ever likely to be formed that will be attended with any better effect.

Signed in behalf of the committee.

J. W. NEVIN."

Here ends the Synod's action with reference to this liturgical movement, for the present. A few weeks after the adjournment of Synod the book left the press of the Messrs. Lindsay & Blakiston in Philadelphia. The Committee succeeded in having it published in good style, without any cost to Synod. They expect and ask no remuneration for their labors, whatever may be their just claim to it. All they received is fifty free copies in plain binding from the publishers which were distributed among the members, including those who took no part in the preparation, the literary institutions of the Eastern and Western Synods and the two congregations which kindly granted them the use of their consistory room. Whatever may be paid to them from the proceeds, beyond the necessary expenses, will be handed

over to Synod for some benevolent object which they may hereafter designate. The contract with the present publishers, however, covers merely the provisional liturgy. Whenever the Church, by action of Synod, adopts the book as her own, she can make her own arrangements as to the plan and manner of publication. We would not have alluded to this point at all, if it were not for the expression of dissatisfaction in a certain quarter entitled to respect. The Committee have consulted in this matter the best interests of their work and of the Synod to which alone they are responsible. So far their course has been justified even beyond their expectation.

These are, to the best of our knowledge, the principal facts relating to the liturgical movement in the German Reformed Church from its beginning to the actual completion and publication of the new liturgy. The particulars of the various meetings, should they ever be of interest to any body, may be found in the minutes as recorded and kept by the faithful Secretary of the Committee, the Rev. Henry Harbaugh.

It remains now for the Eastern and Western Synod of the German Reformed Church—for both are here equally interested and have the same right to speak—to decide the fate of this Liturgy as a standard of public and private worship within their jurisdiction. There need be no haste in this matter. It may be best to delay final action for several years. The Church may either reject the book altogether, which it will hardly do, in view of its preceding actions. Or it may refer it to the old, or to a new committee for revision, with such instructions as practical experience may suggest. The Liturgy, thus revised, may then be made a binding law of the Church, or it may be adopted merely for optional use, allowing the ministers to use it in full, or in part, or not at all, as they may deem best.

I have no right to speak for the Committee as to what course may be the best. For my own part, I feel almost indifferent as to the result, leaving it altogether in the

hands of that merciful Providence which has thus far guided the German Reformed Church in this country. I regret no time and labor bestowed upon the work, although I am free to confess, that I would never have consented to act as chairman, could I have foreseen the amount of trouble, anxiety and vexation which it involved. Without any disposition to boast, which is an offence against good taste, as well as good morals, it is not too much to say, that the book, both as a literary production and a book of devotion, reflects at least no discredit either upon the Committee, or upon the German Reformed Church, and will answer a useful purpose in the family and as a general guide to the ministers in preparing for the exercises of the sanctuary, even if it should never become an authoritative standard of worship. Whatever may be its ultimate fate, as an ecclesiastical standard, the Committee have the satisfaction that, in discharging the important trust committed to their hands, they did the best according the measure of their abilities and were guided by a pure regard to the spiritual welfare of the Church of their fathers.

We intended to condense all we have to say on the new Liturgy into one article. But as this historical account has extended beyond the limits originally contemplated, we must delay the critical *analysis* of the Liturgy to a future number of the Review. We would be still better satisfied, however, if another member of the Committee, or an outsider, well acquainted with the general subject of Liturgies, would relieve us of this delicate task.

P. S.