

Notes and Comments.

(BY VARIOUS CONTRIBUTORS).

THE Celtic design of the border on the cover of the Society's Annual has been much admired since it appeared on our first issue in 1928. The emblems of the four Evangelists are shown at the four corners, and various others are placed on the cursive band which binds the whole together. It was the work of the late Miss Gladys Wyllie, a gifted artist, whose death was recently announced. We were also indebted to her for the design on the cover of "Prayers for Holy Week and Easter," published for the Society by William Blackwood & Sons, Ltd.

Miss Wyllie excelled as an exponent of Celtic Art, which she applied with consummate skill in the gentle craftsmanship of Church embroidery. One of her most beautiful works is the cloth on the Holy Table in S. Andrew's Church, Jerusalem. It is in the form of a super-frontal. The material is a lovely blue silk with panels of Celtic design wrought in gold thread and the Chi-Rho monogram (Chrisma of Constantine) in the centre. It is a great joy to see the Holy Table "decently covered" as the Westminster Directory expresses it.

Church embroidery offers a much neglected field for the exercise of the artistic and devotional gifts of our ladies. It calls for no great expenditure of money but it demands much study of good examples, the very best materials, and continual prayer that all may be done for the glory of God in His Church.

Some time ago the Church magazine *Life and Work* opened its pages to a discussion upon whether the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer was better offered as: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" than as "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." What the result of the discussion was may seem to matter little, but another matter of debate might be raised regarding the manner in which either of these two renderings is repeated. In pulpit use, as well as in other usage, one almost invariably hears emphasis laid on the pronoun "we"—"as *we* forgive," and such emphasis, if we but think a moment, seems to convey the unfortunate and irreverent inference that we are setting God an example from our own conduct in this matter. Such a thought may be absent from the mind of the speaker and from the mind of the listener, but it is immediately raised when we stop to reflect, and once raised it does not cease to displease and even to irritate. Have we any right to emphasise that "we" in offering this petition? Does it not become us to suppress all such emphasis, and does not examination of the Greek Text, both in S. Matthew's and S. Luke's version of the petition, lead us to place the emphasis on the word "forgive," with some smaller emphasis, perhaps, on the last word "us"? The emphatic words would then be: "as we FORGIVE *our debtors*" or "as we FORGIVE them that trespass against *us*." The promise of forgiveness is to them who can say that they do really forgive others their debts or trespasses. In S. Matthew's Gospel the petition begins with the Greek words *ὡς καὶ* which should be rendered "for indeed" we forgive. In S. Luke's Gospel the prefatory words *καὶ γὰρ* are even more emphatic in the same way—both pointing to the emphasis to be laid on the word "forgive," with the becoming suppression of the personal pronoun. It would be good to have a consensus of opinion on this question of emphasis, for a prayer divinely taught should have all consideration in the way it is humanly repeated.

In no sphere of the Holy Ministry is well considered order more desirable than in connection with the burial of the dead. On such occasions there is sometimes observable some uncertainty and a lack of *savoir faire*. The "Book of Common Order" informs us what shall or may be said, but is silent as to what is to be done. Here are some thoughts on the subject. When the service is held in the house those present, except the aged and infirm, should stand during prayer. There is often more reverence shown in humble homes where all stand than in "villadom." Sitting at prayer is never more unseemly than on such solemn occasions. On arrival at the cemetery, the Minister should at once go to the hearse, and ascertain where the grave is situated. He should then lead the procession, followed by the coffin bearers, the family mourners, and the general public. It is most convenient for the Minister to conduct the Committal from a position near the head of the grave, where he can best be heard by all the mourners. When the service is held in Church or at a Crematorium, the Minister, being robed, should await the arrival of the coffin at the door and, preceded by the Beadle, from there lead it to the chancel or catafalque. At the conclusion of the service in Church, the order of the procession is—the Beadle, Minister, coffin bearers, family, and general public. At the funeral of a Minister or Elder, the Kirk Session should precede the officiating Minister on entering and on leaving.

Notice was taken in many quarters of the centenary of the death of Sir Francis Chantrey, who died November 25th, 1841. He was the best known British sculptor of the early 19th century, and his bust of Queen Victoria must have been known to millions of her subjects through its appearance on her coinage. In Scotland, probably his best known work is the statue of George IV. in George Street, Edinburgh, though many regard those of Lord President Blair and Lord Melville as better specimens of his genius. In St Bride's Parish Church, Sanquhar, there is a good example of his work in the form of a mural tablet to the memory of a native of the parish, a young naval surgeon who died at Vourla Bay, near Smyrna, in 1838. Allan Cunningham, who was at that time chief assistant to Chantrey, was a native of Nithsdale and a friend of the family of the deceased officer. Through his influence the great sculptor undertook to design and execute the tablet which, as we learned from a contemporary account, was done "in a superior manner; indeed far beyond what the money subscribed could be considered as justifying on the ordinary principles of business."

"Recently," writes a member of the Society, "I had the opportunity of attending a Scots Communion Service in the Chapel of a big Military Hospital 'furth of Scotland.' The officiating elders were both Colonels in the Royal Army Medical Corps, and I noticed that the one who bore the chalice wore a linen napkin over his arm. On asking him why he did so, I learned that it had been the custom in his native parish in Galloway forty years ago, and he thought it was still the practice there. The padre informed me that he had only once seen this done in Scotland, and that he thought the napkin so carried was in a way a survival of the maniple of the priestly vestments in the Roman Church. My wife, who was brought up in an old Secession Church which went back to the days of the Erskines, tells me that in her girlhood a similar custom was followed at Holy Communion in that congregation."

Our attitude as a Church to the symbol of the Cross is curiously illogical. While in all congregations we sing about it heartily, one searches in vain, in many churches, for any representation of it in form or colour. It may usually be found outside, either on a gable or on a tower. It may also be seen internally, in a stained-glass window, but seldom elsewhere. In the chapel of the Warriston Crematorium, Edinburgh, a beautiful and very simple brass Cross adorns the Holy Table. Hard, indeed, must be the heart of the mourner that does not respond to its mute appeal. What an enrichment it would be, both spiritually and artistically, if a similar Cross were to be placed on the Holy Table in our churches! Are our prejudices as irreconcilable as they are often supposed to be?

One of the charges brought against Knox and his brethren by Ninian Winzet, that stalwart defender of the old ways, was that the "Calvinian Preachers" sang the doxology at the end of every psalm, although that "godly form was only commanded to be sung in that place by Pope Damasus in rebuke of heretics." This indicates that the use of the doxology at the end of the psalms was continued by the Reformers, and in Scottish Psalters from 1567 onwards we find the doxology in one form or another. Indeed, in the Psalter issued in 1595, there are no less than thirty-four different doxologies, being one for every type of metre found therein. The doxology continued in use through the troubled years which preceded and followed the Glasgow Assembly of 1638. Robert Baillie, the covenanting leader, defended its use against those who, under the influence of the English "Brownists," wished to do away with it. It is on record that when some years later the General Assembly was debating the question of its discontinuance, David Calderwood broke into the debate with the words, "Moderator, I entreat that it be not laid aside, for I hope to sing it in Glory." Unfortunately, during the Second Episcopacy, the efforts of the Bishops to further its use led to the view that it was a "badge of prelacy," in spite of the fact that one of the most prominent of covenanting martyrs, Johnston of Warriston, approved of it being sung in church. The result was that after the Revolution its use gradually ceased, although there are indications of its survival in some circles almost to our own day. In his "Reminiscences of a Highland Parish," the great Norman Macleod tells us that in his youth the doxology was always sung at the close of the Communion Service, as was also the case amongst Gaelic-speaking Scots in Canada. Edward Irving revived its use in the Scots Church in London in the twenties of last century. One is glad to know that in quite a number of churches this Catholic and Reformed custom has been restored, though there are still ministers who allow the doxology at the close of the prose psalms, but are, curiously enough, opposed to its use with the metrical psalms. Many would like to see the doxology restored in the daily devotions of the General Assembly, where the unaccompanied singing of the metrical psalms is such an impressive feature.

In the *Church of Scotland Year Book*, the column headed "Communion Services" reflects the diverse circumstances and traditions of the various parishes. The purely rural parishes largely adhere to the time-honoured spring and autumn celebrations, while in the larger centres of population quarterly celebrations are very general. A comparison of the usages as given in the issues for 1931 and 1941 affords food for thought, and indicates the current of opinion in the Church on this important

subject. In the former year the Easter Communion numbered 110, and in the latter year they had increased to 146. Whitsunday celebrations increased from 8 to 19 and at Christmas from 29 to 49. One parish announces a celebration on All Saints' which may probably mean the first Sunday in November. Some time ago the General Assembly urged that a time of remembrance of the blessed dead should be held at this season. This could be conveniently kept in view by inserting in *The Year Book*—"All Saints" instead of "1 Nov." It is difficult to understand why there should be so many more celebrations at Christmas than at Whitsunday, but the increase on both occasions is satisfactory. The number of Easter Communion is probably understated for, in many parishes, the Spring Communion is held in April in which month Easter most frequently falls. We venture to urge ministers and Kirk Sessions in such parishes to consider the advisability of fixing the Spring Communion on Easter Day, and thus to demonstrate our essential unity with "the Holy Church throughout the world" in offering on that day the Holy Eucharist in humble and joyful remembrance of our Saviour's glorious resurrection.

One of the most impressive services of the Church is the Order for the Ordination and Induction of a Minister. No pains should be spared to invest this service with dignity and spiritual significance. With this end in view many Presbyteries have drawn up a printed Order of Service, based upon the Ordinal published by the Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee. In some instances the prayers also are printed in full, and officiating clergy are required to adhere to the service in detail. The advantage of having an Order printed in leaflet form is that not only the officiating clergy but also all members of Presbytery know exactly what is to be done next, thus avoiding confusion and uncertainty. Suitable rubrics can be included to indicate the order of procession on entering and leaving the church, an important matter where everything should be done "decently and in order." Through lack of forethought it sometimes happens that the Formula, to which the Minister is asked to append his signature, is signed on the Holy Table. This should be avoided by having a small side-table placed in the church for this purpose. Another reasonable requirement, surely, is that not only the officiating clergy, but all ministerial members of Presbytery should be *fully* robed. It seems a fairly common custom for Presbyters who are not actually taking audible part in the service to content themselves simply with a gown. There seems no justification for this curious half-measure.

It is not unknown for a Presbytery, for some inscrutable reason, actually to *discourage* wearing of robes by members who are not conducting the service! It is the established practice for a probationer, about to be *ordained*, to appear without robes. The reason, presumably, is that he is later to be presented with robes, for the first time, by the congregation. In the case of an ordained Minister being *inducted* to a new parish, however, this consideration does not seem to apply in the same sense. He should take his appointed place in the church, fully-robed, as a Minister already in full standing. This practice, indeed, seems to be observed in the more important city churches. Is there any reason, whatsoever, why it should be limited to these?

The following Collect from the Roman Votive Mass in time of War was probably used by the Abbot of Inchaffray when he celebrated before the Scots army on the morning of Bannockburn. It might be used to-day:—

"O God, Who makest wars to cease, crushing by Thy might the enemies of those who put their trust in Thee, succour us Thy servants who entreat Thy mercy, and destroy the savage power of our foes, that we may praise Thee with thankful hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Sir D. Y. Cameron, R.A., LL.D., early achieved eminence in the world of art as an etcher, and those gifts of spiritual insight and exposition which he expressed in delicate line and impressive chiar-oscuro were still further emphasised by colour in his work as a painter. Along with Sir James Guthrie and Sir John Lavery, he was one of a group of brilliant young artists who became famous half-a-century ago as the Glasgow School which did much to revive the study of nature in the open air.

It is a hopeful sign of the renaissance of the Fine Arts in the Scottish Church that a son of the manse and an elder of such international fame as an artist, should be unsparing of his time and talents in furthering the adornment of the House of God, and thereby help to make it more worthy of its high purpose. He took an active part in the renovation of his parish church at Kippen which was described, with illustrations, in the Society's Annual for 1929-30 by the Minister, the Rev. J. M. Younie, B.D.

In recent years there has been a large influx of the younger men of the Church into the ranks of the Society. Especially is this noticeable amongst Divinity students in the Colleges. The recently formed branch at New College, University of Edinburgh, is doing excellent work in furthering the principles for which the Society stands. Regular meetings are held during the academic year, and large attendances are reported. During the past winter visiting speakers were the Rev. William McMillan, Ph.D., D.D., C.F., on "The Order of Morning Service," and J. Bennett McNeill, Esq., Mus. Bac., F.R.C.O., of Greyfriars Church, on "Relations of Minister and Organist."

It may be of interest to add that in the past three years no less than sixty students in the Divinity Faculties at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen have joined the membership of the Society. This augurs well for the future influence of the movement.

Encouraging reports come from the recently formed Church Service Society of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, which has a large and growing membership. The President is the Very Rev. Principal John Dickie, D.D., of Knox College, Dunedin, who is still well remembered in Scotland. The Society has made rapid progress, and is exercising an increasing influence in the life of this virile Dominion Church.

Members have greatly valued the *Annual*, and the various publications of the Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee of the Church of Scotland. To fill the gap caused by the temporary cessation of the *Annual* the Society recently decided to publish a monthly Bulletin, of four tastefully printed pages. The first number, October, 1941, is interesting and stimulating. It contains some appreciative and critical comments on the *Book of Common Order*, an article advocating a more seemly Holy Table for the celebration of the Sacrament, and a neat and provocative paragraph on "Where shall we put the Choir?" Altogether a useful little publication, designed to keep members in regular touch with one another.

From the Annual Meeting, through the enthusiastic Secretary, the Rev. Ian Dixon, M.A., comes a cordial message of greeting to "the parent Society in Scotland." We warmly reciprocate, and wish this vigorous and enterprising body continued progress and influence.