

Recent Liturgical Literature

It is interesting to note some of the common characteristics apparent in present-day liturgical composition. There is a widespread demand for what is called 'contemporary' language, a demand which is not confined to any one denomination. Here one difficulty is to define the word 'contemporary', and to know what kind of language is involved. It may be suspected that 'contemporary' will signify different qualities according to the part of the country (speaking for example, of Great Britain alone, there is almost certainly a difference between 'contemporary' in London, and 'contemporary' in Edinburgh or Glasgow or Aberdeen). There is a second difficulty. The preparation of services in 'contemporary' language takes a long time. Committees are slow to agree on the words that should be used. Some Committees spend years on this, and even when some sort of agreement is reached, the body (or Church) which appointed the Committee may, and often does, send the material back for revision. The point here is that 'contemporary' language is under constant change, with the result that agreed forms speedily go out of date and the work requires to be done again to keep the language really 'contemporary'.

It is all a very difficult problem, but it does mean that those to whom the task is committed should study the matter very carefully. There is perhaps not much source-material, but two things might be mentioned here. First, there is a very good collection of papers by W. H. Frere, formerly Bishop of Truro, a widely-recognised liturgical authority, published for the Alcuin Club in 1940, and in this book two essays should be noted, "The English Rite" (pp. 107-122) and "Collects, Good and Bad" (pp. 187-190), in both of which remarks on the question of language are wisely made. Thus, Frere says (p. 111) that "there is no reason why the twentieth century should not have a worthy contribution to make to it (i.e., an English liturgical language). Nor is there any reason why archaisms should be preserved where the meaning can equally well be expressed in intelligible and current but yet liturgical English". The other work worthy of mention in this connexion is the fascinating book by Stella Brook, *The Language of the Book of Common Prayer* (London, Andre Deutsch, 1965), especially chapter 8 on "The B. C. P. and Twentieth Century English". Here (p. 213) she gives a

warning to revisers, "Clear intelligibility is not the only quality required. Weight and dignity and 'decency' also have to be served, and the creation of a modern 'Prayer Book English' should not involve the making of undue concessions to the impoverished vocabulary of colloquial speech".

But we must proceed to the examination of some recent works where there have been attempts to present 'contemporary' language. There appear to be two rules which have been found acceptable. First, all words which are no longer in common use should be avoided, words, for example, like 'beseech', 'vouchsafe', 'unto', and so on. To this there seems to be no objection, since there are other words in use which convey the same meaning. The second rule seems to be this—when God is addressed in prayer, one must say 'You' and never 'Thou'. It is difficult to say what is the origin of this idea, but it seems to have a double consequence; on the one hand it suggests that God should be approached in a very familiar manner, and on the other hand, it seems to diminish what Otto meant by the 'idea of the Holy', and to lessen the required emphasis on the Transcendence of God.

The work which seems to have gone furthest in this matter is *Modern Liturgical Texts*. This is an official publication of the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England, but it is emphasised that these texts are not for experimental use, but only for study and discussion. The book is published by S.P.C.K., London (1968, 53 pages, 8s 6d. net). It is stated to be an instalment of texts and services in 'language that is alive in contemporary society'. There are two versions of the Lord's Prayer, one version each of *Gloria in Excelsis*, the Creeds, *Te Deum*, and the three Gospel Canticles. In addition there are translations of the Canticles, with music, for congregational singing; those in verse translation are by C. Day Lewis and the music is by Alan Ridout. There are also the Second Series Services for Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion in modern English. Each section has introductions and notes which explain the ideas expressed. This is all interesting and will certainly provoke much discussion, and much will be said both *pro* and *con*.

We turn now to the new Service-Book produced by the Presbyterian Church of England, *The Presbyterian Service Book*, by the Publications Committee of the Presbyterian Church of England (London, 1968, 300 pages, 18s. 6d.). This is a completely revised Service Book, and contains the

special form of Communion service for the Presbyterian Church of Wales. The book is neatly bound in red, with red edges, and two ribbons are inserted, a very useful idea, which might be more widely acted upon. The usual services are provided for. There are three morning services, and two evening services, and in each case, the last is of a 'modern' or 'contemporary' style, addressing God as 'You'. There are services for Baptism and Confirmation and for the Reception of members transferred from other congregations. There are three Orders for Holy Communion, and there is one Marriage Service. There have been omitted prayers with the choir and prayers for the Christian Year, on the ground that these are easily available elsewhere. The lectionary is that produced by the Joint Liturgical Group in their publication, *The Calendar and Lectionary*. The printing of this book is well done, but the lay-out is in some places not satisfactory. Thus, on the first page of the Communion Service (p. 64) the title is at the very top of the page, and the page has four half-inch spaces, which seem unnecessary divisions of the text. If the beginning of the service were lowered by fully one inch, the text would be better integrated and the appearance of the page would be improved. At some other points, similar slight adjustments would mean an improvement.

Another revision is in *The Book of Common Worship*, containing provisional services and lectionary for the Christian Year (Philadelphia, the Westminster Press, 1966, 157 pages. About 8s. unbound). This book was prepared by the Joint Committee on Worship, appointed by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. A preparatory study was issued in 1964 under the title *Services for the Lord's Day* which contained also the lectionary. The present book contains an outline for a service including the Lord's Supper, another including Baptism, and a third for use when the Sacraments are omitted. There are services for the Lord's Day, and for the Lord's Day in 'contemporary' language, for the Sacrament of Baptism, an Order for Daily Prayer, for the Marriage Service, and a variant of the last in 'contemporary' language. The Burial Service is called, 'Witness to the Resurrection', and is in two parts, the Funeral Service and the Committal Service. There are seven litanies, prayers for the Home, collects and the lectionary. A very useful section explains the services for the Lord's Day, and there is an index of

prayers. The volume is very well arranged and the printing is excellent, with a clear arrangement of the parts of the services, with the rubrics in red. The size of the page is rather larger than is usual in such books, but this is an experimental book, and so is not necessarily in its final form. This book also should be examined by revisers and students of worship-forms. The lectionary is still in a rather illogical form, and it is to be hoped that the work of the Joint Liturgical Group on this matter may be taken into account here.

The Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion of the Church of Scotland has been busy for some years on the revision of the Services for Holy Baptism and Confirmation, and there has now appeared a small publication, authorised by the General Assembly, under the title, *Holy Baptism and Confirmation and Admission to the Lord's Supper*.

The Committee has also been occupied with the Order of Evening Services. Many difficulties arise in this connexion. Often the evening service is more or less a repetition of the morning service, usually with some shortening. Questions about this and requests for assistance have been received, and as a result, six Orders of service have been prepared, with considerable divergence in shape. It is hoped that these will give some guidance and provide suggestions for those in perplexity. The cost is 3d. or 4d. per copy, but ten shillings for fifty, and a pound for 100 copies. The printed forms will be most useful if placed in the hands of the worshippers, especially where responses are involved.

We turn now to *Modern Anglican Liturgies. 1958-1968*, edited by Colin O. Buchanan (London, O.U.P., 1968, 388 pages, 63s. net). This is a most valuable and useful volume, and should be, together with Wigan's *The Liturgy in English* (which is now in a second edition), on the shelves of all liturgical students and others interested in worship-forms. The present volume opens with a chapter on Anglican Eucharistic Liturgies which contains an assessment of general trends, of the effects of Lambeth 1958 and the Pan-Anglican Movement. The remainder of the book presents the texts authorised for use in many parts of the world—in Africa (with seven forms), in the United Kingdom and Eire (including the English First and Second Series Liturgies and those of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland), in the Americas (Canada, U.S.A., West Indies, Brazil, and Chile), in Asia (India, Japan, and Korea), and in Australasia (Australia and New Zealand). The appendices show common forms, and there are three

tables (two on folding sheets) on the interdependence of texts. A good index completes the work, which is obviously of the greatest value and interest.

The Joint Liturgical Group has now issued a third work showing the result of their consultations. This is *The Daily Office*, edited by Canon R. C. D. Jasper (London, S.P.C.K. and the Epworth Press, 1968, 100 pages, 12s. 6d.). There has been for some time a widespread demand for an Office of this kind, and this volume offers proposals for morning and evening services, together with a Table of Psalms, a Lectionary and suggested Collects and prayers. There is a very excellent introductory essay by Stephen F. Winward, and this should be carefully studied by all readers. Each section has a brief but helpful introduction. The section with the Collects contains prayers old (often amended) and new. Traditional language is used throughout, except in the Intercessions and Thanksgivings, where, it is felt, "a break with traditional language is both permissible and desirable" (p. 90). Many will feel that it would have been more consistent to retain the same kind of language, viz. traditional, throughout. But it is hoped that many individuals, as well as groups, will use this book, and find it to be a source both of inspiration and of spiritual blessing.

Many books continue to appear on the Eucharistic liturgy, some of them directly as a consequence of Vatican II, but others with less direct connexion.

A book of special interest is *Eucharistic Theology Then and Now*. (Theological Collections, No. 9. London, S.P.C.K., 1968, 116 pages). This includes seven essays which cover, in brief, the history of Eucharistic theology. The first essay is on "The Meaning of Ritual Acts in Israelite Religion", by Dr. R. E. Clements, and the other six take the general subject through the stages of Christian history. The names of the authors guarantee the interest of the book—they are Austin Farrer, G. W. H. Lampe, C. W. Dugmore, Alfred Hardelin, John Wilkinson and C. B. Naylor.

Secondly may be mentioned a small but original and valuable work, *The Eucharist*, by E. Schillebeeckx, in the series of Stagbooks published by Sheed and Ward (London, 1968, 160 pages, 9s. net). This is an impressive book, with its main emphasis on the doctrine of the Real Presence.

Thirdly comes one of many books dealing with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy—*Sacramental Liturgy*, by Frederick R. McManus (New York, Herder and Herder, 1967, 256 pages, about 44s.). The Constitution is given in

English translation, and the main body of the book is in two parts. The first goes into detail on the provisions of the Constitution, showing, by way of commentary and notes, what differences are involved in general principles ; and the second part is on "The New Rite of Mass", in which the details given in the Instruction of September 26, 1964, are fully explained. This is for an interim period, while the Roman liturgical books are being revised. This is a book of considerable interest ; it will be an excellent guide to Roman Catholics, and should be of use and interest to all who give some study to liturgical questions.

We must note here a very valuable work in two large volumes, *Enchiridion Liturgicum*, complectens theologiae sacramentalis et dogmata et leges, by Polycarpus Rado, O. S. B. (Rome-Freiburg, 1966, 1522 pages + 12 + 12 supplements). This is the second edition, amended and augmented. This must be a very useful pair of volumes, a reference work in Latin rather than a book for reading or even study, with full information on Roman sacramental doctrine and law.

Finally reference may again be made to three periodicals that are devoted to problems of worship. All are Roman Catholic in origin but all are of wide general interest. *Worship* is published in the U.S.A. and costs five dollars for the annual subscription, normally eleven numbers. This now claims to be ecumenical in interest, and many articles witness to this. Thus, two articles in the number for October, 1968 were on "Liturgy and the New Testament", and "Eucharistic Liturgy in the Anglican Communion".

The second is the French *La Maison-Dieu*. *Revue de Pastoral Liturgique*. This quarterly (annual subscription, 19F.) provides up-to-date information on all problems of liturgy, and each number normally has an extensive section of book-reviews.

Thirdly, there is the English production *Liturgy*, a quarterly issued by the Society of St. Gregory. The subscription is one pound per annum, and is really a subscription to the Society, which for long campaigned for a vernacular liturgy, but has now a much wider interest. The articles her are varied and valuable. E.g., an important one in a recent number (October 1968) has an excellent discussion on the new English Eucharistic prayers. All three periodicals devote space to book-reviews, and often also to reviews of musical records.

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