

adapted for use at a Parish Communion.

If so used, the praise would, of course, have to be adapted to the local circumstances, and the readings would probably be longer.

The order as printed was used, with a very brief Sermon, and the entire Service was completed in three quarters of an hour. It is given here, as then used, as a paradigm for short celebrations for special groups.

Needless to say, when used for a Parish Communion during Lent, the element of Intercession should be expanded, either by extending the paragraph preceding the Lord's Prayer, or by including a prayer of intercession elsewhere in the Service.

The Rev John Heron MA DD

REVIEWS

THE PSALMS COME ALIVE - AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PSALMS THROUGH THE ARTS by John H Eaton (Mowbrays Christian Studies 1984 165pp PB £4.95)

Here is a splendid book that lives up to its title! Clearly written and well presented it will provide stimulating and welcome encouragement to all those involved in conducting or teaching about the worship of God. And it should delight all who love the Psalms, who wish to learn more about the context in which they were written, and who would understand better why they endure in the affection and worship of so many.

John Eaton is Reader in Old Testament Studies at Birmingham University. He has set out to show how our appreciation of the Psalms can be deepened and enriched as we come to understand the profound influence that the arts had upon them. 'In the Psalms religion and the arts do indeed pulsate together', he writes, and he has tried to prove this by exploring the Psalms along the paths of the various arts from poetry, through architecture, music and dance, to drama.

It is an exciting exploration. After a general introduction in which the influences of geographical setting and history are briefly noted, the matter of poetry and the Psalms is dealt with. Can poetry be translated and what is lost in the process? Through what forms are poetic imagery and truth expressed in the Psalms? How are the elements of praise and prayer, divine speech and wisdom distinguished? These questions are raised and answered, convincing us of the 'poetic genius' of the Psalms for describing God and portraying our relationship with him. Then

architecture is dealt with. Jerusalem, 'the beloved city', is described and the symbolic likeness to the character of God of its features drawn out: its setting and aspect as a great stronghold, its walls and gates and courts. The temple and its surroundings are described and the process by which these are transfigured in faith and imagination into the 'heavenly sanctuary' explained.

Next Mr Eaton deals with music's influence. The particular instruments are surveyed: the stringed instruments, the pipes, the percussion, the trumpets and horns. The close association between playing and singing is noted, both active partners in the work of proclamation, praise, prayer and teaching. Music is the means of worship, but also in part the meaning of worship: 'It is clear that we are in the presence of master artists, who, in varying moods of contemplation, ecstasy, lament and joy addressed their art to the Holy God'.

Finally, dance and drama in the Psalms are described and their significance explained. Here some of us in the Protestant tradition are most challenged by what the author has to say. Either we see dancing in worship as 'sinful', or we are far too inhibited to take part. And drama in worship we tend to leave to the fringe, or to the children at Christmas. But the Psalms tell us that both were not only natural and acceptable before God, but proper and praiseworthy, the body's reverent response to the gracious goodness of God. There is the vision of God himself leading the dance, truly the 'Lord of the dance'. And God is the central figure in the drama of worship, drama in which he reveals himself as the triumphant king, chastening, guiding and blessing his people, the ancient and sacred story acted out again and again before the eyes of the worshippers, the hidden God made visible.

Mr Eaton has given us much that is new to think about in a book that is scholarly and enjoyable. It has an adequate index and the many scriptural quotations are well referenced. There are a number of references to David's influence, though the association of David with most of the Psalms is taken to be a later development. There is a little mention of Christ, the Messiah foreshadowed in the kingship theme in the Psalms, but apart from this the theology of Christ in the Psalms is not explored. Perhaps, too, more could have been said about sacrifice which must have dominated worship along with the Psalms. But Mr Eaton has more than convinced us that there is much in the Psalms worthy of our reappraisal in the new light which he has shed upon them. He has encouraged us to put the Psalms back into worship, private and public, with greater understanding, and helped us to realise why 'translated into all the tongues, they still lead the music of the world's prayer and praise.'

Andrew Anderson
Edinburgh

The choice of hymns for worship is not always made with as much care as it deserves, nor is the singing of hymns always uplifting or musical. Yet in many churches it might be the only part of the service in which the congregation takes part. This small book written by the Director of the Royal School of Church Music is intended as a practical rather than academic guide to the choice and performance of hymns. Dr Dakers begins by discussing what a hymn is and how they should be used. He then comments briefly on the main hymnbooks in use today (with the notable omission of CH3) and discusses the factors which should be considered when choosing hymns : the words are more important than the tune, the benefits of choosing varied metres, keys, length of verses, styles of word and music etc. This is followed by a discourse on the use of hymns at various points in the Anglican service and on special occasions. He concludes with practical hints on the performance of hymns.

This book raises a number of points which should be constantly in the minds of ministers and organists. For example, is our hymn repertoire narrow and repetitive? Do we consider our congregations' preferences (although I hate to think what might emerge from a questionnaire)? Do we treat hymns as the most important element in the musical part of services? I also found myself in sympathy with his objections to the use of hymns as 'fillers' rather than as an integral part of the structure of a service, chosen in the light of the theme for that day. But he does not seem to consider the Anglican practice of singing hymns during the receiving of communion equally deplorable! He does encourage one to look afresh at the range of hymnody available. I found his writing repetitious, however, and the book could have benefited from firm editing, eg 'With the bonanza of all that is now available, the world is our oyster'. The section of practical hints for performance is more tightly argued, but the book would be better if it was half the length. As always after reading about the excellent store of hymns available, I am left wondering why some of my organist colleagues still have to put up with ministers who think that second-rate hymns have a place in worship!

David A Stewart
Edinburgh

HANDBOOK TO THE CHURCH HYMNARY THIRD EDITION Edited by the Reverend Professor John M. Barkley, MA, PhD, DD, FR Hist S. Oxford University Press, 1979. £4.75

Twelve years after publication the "new hymnary", CH3 has achieved almost universal use in the Church of Scotland: continuing sales numbered over fifty thousand copies in 1984. Any inevitable criticisms of the book have been more than offset by widespread appreciation of such features as the availability in print of the liturgical material included; the varieties in psalmody; and the increased number of hymns provided for Holy Communion and such festivals as Pentecost.

But it may be asked, how intelligently and imaginatively are the resources of CH3 being employed? Is the Church of Scotland any nearer a tradition in church music where both ministers and organists, not to mention choristers, play a constructive role? Names like Professor James Moffatt and Dr. Millar Patrick from our Presbyterian hymnological past remind us with what care, and both liturgical and musical knowledge, our hymnody was built up; and their hymnary Handbook served two generations of Scottish worshipper right well.

Those origins are acknowledged and their service is advanced, both in CH3 itself and in the new Handbook provided, to ensure the continuance of the finest traditions in the praises of the Sanctuary. The Handbook to the Church Hymnary Third Edition has been available now for over six years. Professor John Barkley of Belfast, who as one of the representatives of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland on the Church Hymnary Revision Committee, 1963-73, has put all the participating churches in his lasting debt, now by his erudite and skilled editing of the CH3 Handbook. Until this valuable work is in the hands of every parish minister and every organist in our church, CH3 is failing to serve the whole church as competently and helpfully as it could do.

The attention of the Church Service Society and of all whom its members may interest and influence, is drawn to a new impression of the Handbook to the Church Hymnary Third Edition. The Oxford University Press has produced a new and attractive dust-cover, with a modernist organ-pipe design; and the Church Hymnary Trustees, drawing very limited royalties, agree in keeping this four-hundred page mine of hymnological information at the modest price of £4.75.

In 1973, The Church Hymnary: Third Edition was sent out "in the prayerful hope that it may enrich the worship of congregations to the greater glory of God." The Handbook is a vital handmaid in implementing this high purpose.

R Stuart Loudon