

Reviews

CONCERNING WORSHIP, by William D. Maxwell, B.D., Ph.D., London. Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press. 8/6.

What is the origin of our ordinary Sunday service? What should its general content be? How should the minister announce a hymn? Should tunes be "played over"? What should be said after the lessons? What should be the minister's posture at prayer? At what point of the Communion service should the minister himself receive? Where should the elders sit? Should there be a Bible on the Holy Table? Should the surname be used at baptisms and weddings? Should a church be furnished with chairs or pews? What was the Reformers' attitude to "stated" prayers, or to the frequency of Holy Communion? How should a hood be worn? Need robes be of silk? . . . We do not know whether such questions are dealt with in Theological Colleges, but we do know that these and many others of like nature are frequently asked by young ministers. The answers are all in Dr Maxwell's latest book. Here and there individuals may question their correctness, but only here and there. *Concerning Worship* is a real *vade mecum* for the minister; it is a book which should be in every manse, a book which has placed the Church most deeply in Dr Maxwell's debt.

It differs in kind from his previous volumes, on *John Knox's Genevan Liturgy* and the *Outline of Worship*. It originates from a series of lectures delivered to the chaplains of a Canadian Division during the war. Throughout Dr Maxwell wears his learning lightly: it is scarcely necessary to add that the learning is unobtrusively there. There are instructive chapters on Worship and Belief, on Form in Worship, on the place of the Sermon, on Worship as a Heritage, on the Church Building. There is a wise little chapter on the distinction between public and private prayer, and a valuable appendix giving specimens of different types of liturgical prayer. Throughout the centrality of the Eucharist is insisted on: "No other act of Christian worship can so completely show forth the

fulness of the faith." The implications of this may still give rise to difference of opinion, but there can be no difference of opinion as to its essential truth, and none as to the magnificent service Dr Maxwell has rendered the Church in this timely little volume. The Oxford University Press is further to be thanked for offering it to us in these days at an extraordinarily cheap price. Our Scottish Episcopal brethren are apt to be critical of Presbyterian liturgics ; it is all the greater a pleasure to note the comment of the *Scottish Churchman*: "It is not often that one can recommend a book by a member of another denomination unreservedly. Yet here is a book from which many of our Church people could learn a good deal about the Catholic faith and could find a salutary corrective to many of our prejudices." That sound judgment will be very widely echoed throughout the whole Church.

PRAYERS FOR PARISH WORSHIP, by Colin F. Miller, B.D. London, Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press. 10/6.

This is an interesting volume which is obviously the product of much reading and immense industry. Its 279 pages contain complete Morning Services for every Sunday in the Christian Year and also for the days of Holy Week, and there is a lengthy and valuable introduction on Christian worship as it ought to be rendered, and on the Christian Year. It might be said that Mr Miller's book is an attempt to express practically Dr Maxwell's teaching as to the order and content of the Morning Service of the Reformed Church. Perhaps necessarily, it is an attempt which, in detail at least, will not meet with universal approval, even from those who fully admit the truth of that teaching. The "great" prayer after the sermon and offering contains a variable Preface, with the Sanctus, and then this invariable "Consecration" prayer: "Wherefore, O most merciful Father, we humbly pray and beseech thee through Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lord, whose body was broken for us, to receive and bless this offering of worship which we make unto thee ; and to send upon us thine Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, to bless and consecrate our bodies, minds, and spirits, that we may give ourselves to thee, a living sacrifice, holy and without blemish . . . Father, into thine hands we commend our spirits." This invariable

form will not commend itself generally, we feel, as the best means of reminding the people that the Sunday Morning Service ought to be Eucharistic. It seems to us that few will wish to use these services as they stand, but they are full of interest and instruction, and Mr Miller is to be thanked for a notable contribution to liturgical discussion, though the actual phrasing of the prayers invites some criticism. One unfortunate and unnecessary mis-statement must be pointed out as apt to create confusion, especially in the minds of those outside the Church of Scotland. At the beginning of the Introduction a quotation from the 1905 edition of *Euchologion* is ascribed to the "Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland." Such a title was never claimed by *Euchologion*, which was of course the production of the Church Service Society, and which never sought the formal approval of the Church.

JOHN WILSON BAIRD.

SERVICE BOOK FOR THE YOUNG. Prepared by the Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion of the Church of Scotland. London, Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press; 4/6.

BOOK OF COMMON ORDER FOR USE IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. Compiled by William M'Millan, Ph.D., D.D. London, Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press; 1/6.

Both books have great merits and are to be warmly commended to ministers and Sunday School superintendents looking for guidance in the conduct of worship amongst the young. The wide introduction of either of these manuals in Sunday Schools will inevitably raise the standard of public worship more speedily than by any other means. In both books worship is rightly conceived as a corporate offering of praise and prayer, in which all are given opportunity to join with heart and voice. It may not be easy, in view of its comparatively high cost, to use the first-named book in the manner clearly intended. We are therefore glad to know that the publishers are shortly to issue Sections I and II—for Uniform Schools and Children's Services—separately, in cheap form, to put into the hands of the children.

The *Service Book for the Young* provides five orders for use in Uniform Sunday Schools, with four additional services for festivals of the Christian Year, services for Primary, Junior and Senior departments, together with a Christmas Gift Service and a Promotion Service, and selected lists of Scripture passages, psalms and hymns. Its authors have obviously been much more conscious of children's needs and interests than has Dr M'Millan ; but the fact that it does not adhere to one Order of Service makes it rather puzzling for children to follow. "The Sunday School order of service is necessarily determined by the special interests and limited experience of the children, but it is advisable that the order of service in the Junior and Senior departments should conform generally to that followed in the congregation." This sound advice from the Report of the Scottish Advisory Council on Christian Education might have been followed with advantage, and all the services been arranged according to the order in the *Book of Common Order* 1940 (as is actually done in the fifth Uniform service).

Dr M'Millan retains the one unvarying order throughout, although the above criticism also applies here. Amongst much excellent material, however, he has made some unhappy choices for children's worship. Furthermore, there is no attempt at grading, which surely is essential if there is to be any serious attempt at *training* in worship. Services for two months, and other additional forms are provided.

Both books are beautifully produced, and should be available not just for Sunday School teachers, but also for all those who work amongst young people in every congregation. Day school teachers will also find here much helpful material. These manuals should help to destroy the common conception of the so-called "children's portion" in public worship, which is so often based on a misconception both of what children are, and of what worship is.

JOHN HOWAT.

THE WORSHIP OF THE ENGLISH PURITANS. By
Horton Davies. Westminster : Dacre Press ; 25/-.

This excellent book is carefully documented, and Professor Davies shows himself master both of his sources and his subject. The book in many ways breaks new ground, for,

while many works have been written regarding the puritans, this appears to be the first book (at least in recent times) dealing specifically with their modes of worship. The puritan was an individualist and his forms of worship reflected his attitude to life. It may fairly be said that he failed to recognise fully the difference between private devotion and public prayer. Hence his repugnance to set forms of prayer (and even occasionally of praise) in the worship of the sanctuary, although this repugnance was not so widely spread as is sometimes imagined. It was a Scottish puritan minister who, when examined with regard to his views, replied that "set forms of prayer were lawful but free prayer was better." Many to-day would agree with him. Professor Davies can see and describe the weakness as well as the strength of the puritan position. He has a keen eye for their excellencies, but also for their deficiencies. He is not blind to their faults, their pedantry and prolixity, or to their virtues, their seriousness, faithfulness and knowledge of Holy Scripture. At times their attempted adherence to the Word of God led them into queer positions, though the author does not mention what is surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of such views; that of the minister mentioned by Wodrow, who objected to responses in worship on the ground that it was written "Thou shalt not eat of a cuckoo."

Two of the most interesting and instructive chapters of the book are those which deal with puritan criticism of the *Book of Common Prayer* and with puritan prayer-books. In the former we come across objections which are still being made, and in the latter there is much which to many will be quite new. In view of recent discussions the Appendix on the Puritan Attitude to the Creeds should be specially interesting.

A BOOK OF PUBLIC WORSHIP. By John Huxtable, John Marsh, Romilly Micklem and James Todd. London, Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press; 8/6.

Though this book is concerned primarily with worship among congregationalists it will, we are sure, find a welcome among other communions. Its compilers repudiate any idea of trying to foist anything in the nature of uniformity upon local congregations, and the book is meant as a

Directory rather than a book of common prayer. The compilers have drawn from many sources and there is ample material here for any minister who wishes to enrich the worship of his own flock. The book is in no sense sectarian and many will use and adapt it for their own devotions.

DRAW NEAR TO GOD : A BOOK OF MEDITATIONS.

By D. H. Southgate. London, Geoffrey Cumberlege :
Oxford University Press ; 6/-.

This book is written on a somewhat different plan from most books of devotion, but it is not the less valuable on that account. It was compiled by a lady missionary for her own needs and is based to some extent on the Christian Year and the Way of Christian Discipleship. Though of no great size (it contains about 140 pages) it should prove most helpful to all who use it as it is meant to be used. Here are rich supplies for the individual who wishes to deepen his own spiritual life.

WILLIAM M'MILLAN.