

Reviews

FOUR CENTURIES OF SCOTTISH PSALMODY. By Millar Patrick, D.D. London, Geoffrey Cumberlege; Oxford University Press; 12/6.

We have waited long for this book, the summary of well-nigh a lifetime's patient research into the origin and development of Scottish psalmody, the distillation of over half-a-century's thinking upon its historic past and its possible future. Now that the book has come to us at last, it is as noble as we had expected. It is all so typical of the writer: the beautiful printing and production—the kind of thing the author, almost fastidious in his tastes, delights in. He is one who writes as he speaks. The multitude of his friends, in the Church of Scotland and far beyond it, will hear the well-known voice in almost every sentence—even in some of the “practice-verses”! Here is the carefulness, the accuracy, which we have come to depend on (though James Beattie, the author of *The Minstrel*, was not alive to write a letter in 1829), and no writer has been more ready to share his finds with those who, either by temperament or because of prior claims of work, wanted some fact handed to them on a platter. Here is the characteristic dislike of exaggeration, the refusal to indulge in any purple passages—and what chances there are for inaccurate and maudlin sentiment when writing of Scottish psalms and psalm-singing!

Because the writer's initial purpose is to celebrate the tercentenary of the publication of the 1650 Psalter (the psalm-book still in use in Scotland), that psalter, its making and its contents, forms naturally the centre of the book. What led up to it, what has happened to it since, precede and succeed the central theme, and there is a short epilogue on what may happen in the future.

All that led up to the making of the 1650 Psalter—its early Reformation precursors: the French Psalter of 1541-62, the Anglo-Genevan Psalter of 1561, the English Psalter of 1562, the first Scottish Psalter of 1564; the influence of other psalters published by individuals such as that by Francis Rous—all this is most carefully analyzed.

Dr Patrick rightly stresses that the 1650 Psalter is essentially Scottish. So often it is said that the Psalter came, like many other things at that time, from England. Dr Patrick sums up:

“ . . . we may hold it proved beyond controversy that to ascribe it either to Rous or to Westminster is completely unjustified. It is the product in the main of prolonged and devoted Scottish labour, and bears deeply upon it the imprint of Scottish care and piety. It is fully entitled to the distinctive name by which it is commonly known, ‘The *Scottish* Psalter’ ”

Alas that the publication of this noble book should have been almost immediately followed by a remarkable and tragic decline in the quality of church praise in Scotland, the various reasons for which are carefully assessed by Dr Patrick. “The Great Eclipse” is his name for these hundred years. But long after Channon’s reformation in 1753 the praise of the Church seems to have been almost unbelievably poor. Yet it seems from contemporary accounts that the people sang—sang lustily if very inharmoniously. It is not just that our idea of the harmonious differs from theirs. Does the church praise of any age truly reflect the kind of religious life dominant at the time? Did the singing of the psalms in Scotland at that time hold in it the rancour, the intolerance, the uncharity, which marked the religion of Scotland then?

If the congregational praise of any age reflects the religious feeling and life of the time, what of the future of psalmody in a Scotland whose religious characteristics we cannot all foresee? Dr Patrick makes some suggestions: the possible use of an abridged psalter, lest what is (to our thinking) of abiding value should be lost with what has proved ephemeral; or the inclusion in later hymn books of some portions of the psalms (but is a book of 700 hymns not already too large?). The root of the matter is: Will Scottish church praise of the near future tend, as it has done these past hundred years, to the *hymn*, the writers sitting loose to the more circumscribed thought and mode of expression of the *psalm*, which draws its essential spirit, imagery and rhythm from the Biblical psalms? William Canton’s “Hold Thou my hands” is essentially a hymn: Marriott’s “Thou Whose almighty word” (the two examples are taken almost at random), though modern, though Christian, though not in psalm-metre, is (we ourselves should say) in the psalm tradition. Along which line will Scottish church praise develop? It will depend

on the religious experience and witness of the Scottish people in the days to come ; and that means largely, to what extent Protestantism in Scotland will have to suffer persecution or to fight for its life. In a time of change it is good that not only we but those who come after us should have a book of the quality and authority of Dr Patrick's to establish the facts of what has been and what at present is in Scottish psalmody.

G. T. WRIGHT.

THE PRESBYTERIAN SERVICE BOOK, FOR USE IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF ENGLAND AND WALES ; issued by Authority of the General Assemblies. Publications Committee of the Presbyterian Church of England. London, 1948. Cloth, 8/6 ; Leather, 10/-.

This book is evidence of the increasing liturgical study and quickened liturgical sense in the non-Anglican Churches in England, and is to be welcomed as such. It is dependent for much of its material upon other service-books, and has borrowed considerably from the *Book of Common Order*, 1940, though not always the best things from that book. Notable among the exceptions is the Order for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, which is taken almost entirely from the *B.C.O.* (the first Order), with some improvement in the intercessions, taken from the Alternative Order for Morning Service in the *B.C.O.* It is gratifying to see this manifestation of unity at the central service, and to find the influence of the *B.C.O.* making itself so strongly felt. It is right that it should do so, for this Communion Service is one of great merit and ecumenical importance.

The Lectionary of the *B.C.O.* has also been embodied in the book, this too representing a central principle of the true proportion of God's word to be read at the Sunday services, and the inclusion of the Gospel. In the ordering of morning worship, liturgical principles (if, indeed, any can be very clearly detected) are confused. The structure is broadly borrowed from Anglican Matins, but it is dislocated and garbled. There are also such amateurish innovations as permission to read the Old Testament lection "antiphonally" : such permission should be confined to the Psalms, and should never extend to the Lessons. Lessons should invariably be read by a single voice, as

instruction ; psalms, as hymns, should properly be read or sung by some method which includes more than one voice, and preferably congregational participation. It is a pity, at this time of day, to find elementary principles confused in this way.

The liturgical fitness and sobriety of the other Services and Ordinances of the Church attains a high level, and here again there is marked dependence upon the *B.C.O.*, so that once more unity is preserved with the usages of the Church of Scotland. Some practices, curious to us in Scotland, are to be found in the section of the book specially for use in Wales, but that is not a matter for wonder, except perhaps that some of them are done at all ! An instance is the Order for the Release of a Minister from his Pastoral Charge, surely a gratuitous operation. What precisely happens at the Ordination of Ministers in both Wales and England is somewhat vague—what is the exact meaning in these Orders of the word “Elder” (p. 116) and “Presbyter” (p. 141) ? Is it Presbyter in the strict Scottish use of the word, or does it include Elders in the Scottish sense ? The same question must be asked of the word “Elder.” These matters are of great ecumenical importance.

An interesting feature is a gracious little Order for an Evening Service based upon Vespers and Compline, and did space permit other observations might be made. There is no doubt, however, that the Service-Book is a marked improvement upon the older book it now supersedes ; and if there are mistakes which more liturgical knowledge would rectify, the traditions of the two churches must be properly taken into account in our judgement of the book. It is then seen that the merit of this book is very high, and that the compilers are wholly deserving of our cordial congratulations upon what they have achieved.

WILLIAM D. MAXWELL.

ENGLISH ART, 1307-1461. By Joan Evans. Oxford Clarendon Press, 1949 : 30/- net.

This is the first instalment of the *Oxford History of English Art*, although of course not the first in point of date, for volumes on the earlier periods are still to come. It is a first-class piece of work and is indispensable to the

student. It covers the period of a new and more elaborate development in all forms of medieval art which followed on the rather more formal and restrained work of the 13th century. The period covered runs well on into the next artistic period, associated in England with the Perpendicular style in architecture, though it stops short of the later phases of that style. In describing the sphere of the book in these terms we are well aware that any hard and fast division of style is apt to be misleading, and that variations in taste and expression occur according to locality as well as in time.

The 14th century artistic development which produced so immense an amount of splendid work in England coincided with the very lean period in Scotland due to the English wars. The wonderful promise held out by the 13th century work at Glasgow was unfulfilled, and the 14th century nave reverts to the plainer conceptions of earlier days at the time when greater richness was arising in England. And even that nave stands well nigh alone in its period in Scotland. It is not till the second period covered by this book that Scotland saw any revival of church building and by that time the English influence had gone and any comparison is difficult. And moreover the destruction of woodwork, stained glass, painting and sculpture have left us without any detailed knowledge of the arts in Scotland during this long period. Of illuminated manuscripts of the time there is nothing left. We cannot complain that there is nothing in this book about Scottish work, for there is little if any Scottish art of the period to describe.

Dr Evans goes over the whole field of English art, and leaves us wondering at the vast amount that has survived. It seems rather a pity that the arrangement of the sections is not a little more orderly and easy to follow. And the wisdom may be questioned of attempting to deal with architecture, especially in having to include castles and houses as well as churches. Yet there is no denying the convenience of these excellent summaries in the same book as the rest, and it is hard to draw the line between the architecture of the structure and that of fittings. It is in the completeness of the survey that the book excels, for here we have textiles, glass, illuminations, sculpture, wall paintings, metal work—little left out, and numerous examples of each art and craft, a good index and a most useful bibliography.

The illustrations are extremely good, and include some things not well known. But we do feel that some at least of the stained glass should have been illustrated, for the book covers two quite definite periods of glass painting. A really serious defect which we hope may be corrected in another edition is the almost entire lack of notice of the rich and varied wooden roofs of parish churches. The time covered by this book is that in which these roofs developed, from the plain examples of the earlier part of the 14th century to the great rich roofs of East Anglia and the West of England. We would rather have sacrificed plates 12 and 19, and perhaps one or two very familiar scenes, to have some roof pictures. As a photograph, the one of the Gloucester cloisters seems scarcely up to standard. It is good to find that Dr Evans inclines to the English origin of the Wilton diptych, but we think her judgment of the parochial wall paintings, crude as most of them are, is a little too sweeping. We do not understand why she has ignored the outstanding painted screen at Ranworth, while including the inferior and much injured work at Woodbridge; Winchcombe is not a typical West country screen, and there are really important coloured ones in Devon. We notice a few slips, *e.g.*, Bishop Turvil of Exeter should be Quivil, p. 27. On p. 28, surely 1320 is a mistake for the date of the west towers at Wells? Dr Allen gives about 1386 for the Harewell or Southern, about 1424 for the Bubwith or northern. On p. 52, Cocker-mouth should be Cockersand. On p. 153, Bishop John de Sheppey in Rochester cathedral is shown in a chasuble and not a cope. On p. 178 the slab on Edmund of Langley's monument does not belong to it, but is part of an altar slab.

These very minor blemishes are of course such as are almost inevitable in a book of this size and complexity, and do not really detract from its value.

FRANCIS C. EELES.

THE LUTHERAN LITURGY. By Luther D. Reed.
Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia. 1947.

This study of the Common Service of the Lutheran Church in America, which comes to us in a handsome and well-printed volume of nearly 700 pages, should receive a warm welcome from liturgical students. The first part of the book deals with the history of the liturgy from the earliest times, with particular emphasis on the develop-

ment in Germany, the Lutheran Church Orders, and the Liturgy in Sweden. The early American Lutheran liturgies are then examined, and lastly there is a description of the preparation of the Common Service and the Common Service Book. The second part is a commentary, wherein each detail of the Common Service and also of Matins and Vespers is discussed from the historical, dogmatic and practical points of view. The Collects of the Day and the General Collects are printed in full with their sources. The Introids and the Graduals, the Litany, the Suffrages, and the Bidding Prayer also receive detailed consideration. There is a useful appendix, with an outline of the Byzantine Liturgy, comparative studies of the Roman, Lutheran and Anglican Liturgies and Litanies, and various extracts from Eucharistic prayers. The volume concludes with a good glossary, an extensive bibliography, and an excellent index.

It will be seen that this work covers a great deal of ground and presents much interesting material. It is indeed not all above criticism. Thus, a sufficient distinction is not made between Calvinistic and Zwinglian ideas of worship. To say that Calvin "failed to appreciate the highest objective sacramental values in worship or the Eucharist," and that for both Calvin and Zwingli "the sermon became the principal feature" (p. 70, Cp. p. 82) is misleading. Again, there is an obscuring of the difference in nature between the Gradual Psalmody which was an integral part of the Eucharist, and the Introit and the Offertory, which on the other hand were in fact originally accompaniments to certain ceremonial (pp. 252, 279). And it is scarcely correct to say of the Scottish Liturgy of 1937 that "the Scottish bishops with the aid of Archbishop Laud modified the English Prayer Book in the direction of Puritan desires" (p. 136).

Nevertheless, in spite of such errors, we should be grateful for this excellent manual. It opens the way to what will be a new field of study for many readers. While English-speaking Lutherans will no doubt regard this as a standard work, it will be found useful and full of suggestion to leaders of worship in other communions. It may be worth noting that the author appreciates *The Book of Common Order*, 1940, and speaks of the "Canon" of the Communion Service as "excellent" (pp. 318, 329n). We cordially recommend this work to all who are interested in the public worship of the Church.

JOHN A. LAMB.