

Faith and Worship

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Editorial: *Northern Lights*

The *Blackburn Papers*, along with the *Manchester Papers* (two of which have been reprinted here, in Nos. 44 and 49), represent some of the best work done for the Prayer Book Society since the death of George Millington, whose *Lancashire and Cheshire Bulletin*, edited from his Liverpool base, used to provide a forum for branch members to engage in controversy outside the purview of *Faith and Heritage* and *Faith and Worship*—which magazines had themselves begun life as branch publications, in Carlisle and Lincoln respectively.

Blackburn's just published *Turn-of-the-Century Papers*, edited by Neil Inkleby, comprises nine addresses, mostly sermons, delivered over the period 1999–2001. —Mostly sermons? Keith Jones did speak from the pulpit, but it is his serious analyses—e.g. of 'the rhythm of doggerel' in parts of *Common Worship* and the failure of focus in ASB's much lauded 'Father of all, we give you thanks . . .'—that makes his sermon matter, indifferently, to the worshipper, the historian and the literary critic. Geoffrey Moorhouse, speaking later the same day, shows the same literary acumen and the various marks of a civilized man, whose worshipping life started in Bury parish church when Geoffrey Williams was curate there. Canon Williams, topically good on September 11th and Foot and Mouth, shares with David Frayne a knowledge of the Brontës that is both scholarly and pastoral—and of Dean Frayne it should be added that he had to '[come] to the north of England' to grasp, quite recently, what Haworth means to us.

'They all shall have prizes'—all nine show that they can speak from their anchorage in the Book of Common Prayer with the kind of intelligent nostalgia that lifts *nostalgia* clear of the clutches of the sneering liberals and unites thinking and imagination on behalf of the faith. But first prize goes to the present rector of Bury, John Findon, of whose Ralph Assheton memorial address a friend has suitably written: 'It has become, as I have read and pondered it, one of the most personally sustaining sermons that I have come across.'

On Good Friday, at St. Oswald's, Lower Peover, I heard Ann Barlow, the lay reader, preach on the significance of the centurion's affirmation, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.' Her sermon exemplified the same qualities of historical and literary interest, and of faith in the ordinarily impossible, that I find in these papers; it is printed below, p. 31.

A. C. CAPEY

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With this issue I close down my 1954 Imperial Portable and wish the next editor—one who is sure to be computer-literate—good luck, in the Name of the Lord. My thanks are due to the many contributors over the past 16 years, and to our readers, for the stimulating support they have provided. Two of my earliest contributors were Ian Robinson, who has typeset this number, and Dewi Hopkins, who has for several years read the proofs; to them, and to Anthony Kilmister who in 1986 induced me to take on the job, I am especially indebted.

A.C.C.

‘UNDER HIS OWN FIG TREE’

(C.G.D. 1908–1996)

But as for prophets I have known just one—
Personally, that is, in long-term friendship—
Though others, two or three, I wish I’d known.
To look at him you’d never have suspected.
One of the academic middle class:
Tall, spare, his hair and beard grey;
Good jacket, dark grey flannels, shabby tie,
A shirt of tattersall check; but good stout shoes
Lest he should find a little wooded place
He must explore for fungi, wayward plants
Or any creature secretive and shy.
The only feature that struck me at all
As suggesting anything unusual
Was his face—which reminded me of the Turin shroud.

And not just little places, but the vast
And intimate loveliness of space, particularly
The beauty of our planet seen from there.
His intellect and sympathies, I’d say,
Confirmed this breadth of interest. As a boy
He’d made a piecemeal telescope; won a prize
For poetry. His science and philosophy,
His strict regard for truth, and for the word’s
Integrity; his readiness to face
A criticism as a welcome tribute
From one who shared his reverence for *things*
As given truths, to be explored in frank
And kindly mutuality; all this
Was what led me to think he was a prophet:
Not that he ever thought he could foretell
Future events; but that he saw through falsehood,
Folly and evil to their consequences.

And, as befits a prophet, here I tell
In paraphrase a few brief episodes
In tribute, and in hope that some might hear
And profit by the knowledge of my prophet;
Though for the full effect you’d have to hear
The slow and gentle speech, with thoughtful pauses.

One of those stupid television programmes
Brought him to mind this evening. ‘Cool, financed
Manipulation,’ he used to say, ‘is what
Decides the outcome of a referendum.
No government stages one until it’s sure
It will achieve what it desires; though if
It should miscalculate there’ll be another;

But if that works there 'll never be a third.'
This programme took ten 'random' audience members.
Six were against the Euro; four were for it.
A lady with a clip-board and a smile
Read out the benefits and drawbacks (many
And few respectively) and then counted again.
Now six were for it, only four against.
'You see,' said my sweet shade. 'It is that easy!
No principles, no genuine argument.
The dead and yet-unborn are disenfranchised
For ever in the fraud of a fickle moment.'

Dishonest men, dishonest words, we mouth
'Democracy', a shibboleth, 'The People',
'Society', while you and I, bemused
As things proceed from bad to worse, look on
And wonder where the world we knew has gone.

He went once to a bank, produced a note
And asked the manager to let him have a pound.

'That *is* a pound!' the poor man said.
'Oh no,
It can't be,' said my friend, 'because it says
On this pound-note the Governor of the Bank
Will pay me on demand a pound. That means
A pound is something other than the note.
A promise is a promise, and a word
Must have a meaning or it is dishonest.
The Bank of England cannot be dishonest.
Or can it?'

In the ensuing conversation
The banker learnt considerably more
Of money than he'd ever known before.

Once I was present when, by invitation,
He talked to pupils at a school. Five pounds
He held aloft.

'What difference would it make
To you, the world or any real thing
If I were now to burn this scrap of paper?
It is of no intrinsic worth—a token.
That's all that money is. Suppose The Works'—
Naming a local industry—'were closed:
It would be jolly good, you must agree,
For our environment. The Works makes nothing
That anybody wants—only a stockpile,
And lots of *these*! "But what about Employment?"
You ask. Well, must men labour all their days
For scraps of paper, when what they produce
Is surplus to requirement? Why not give them
A reasonable share of their inheritance?

I'm told that in the army sometimes sergeants
Set men to polish bins, whitewash the coal.
That's what Employment very often is,
Like digging holes and filling them in again.
Now what I'd urge you all to do is this:
Examine your words, and other people's too,
To see just what they mean. Never be *talked*
Into a world you do not really want.'

Hold fast the form of sound words. 'Listen and think,'
He'd say to his own students, year by year.
'Don't sit there making notes of all I say.'
To show them what he meant, for fairy rings
(A quite important topic in their subject)
He spoke of little creatures in the moonlight
Dancing in circles in a woodland glade.
Softly he spoke, and scribble went the pens,
As busy as a yard of scratching hens.
'You *see!*' said he. 'I'm not an operative
Supplying you with packaged goods, and you
Are not consumers of my product. I'm a man,
And you are men and women, rather younger.
A university's not a supermarket:
It is a conversation among friends.'

The word's integrity, reality:
These were his constant themes, a modern Amos.
'Your words are balances; do not debase them
To gain some brief advantage for yourselves:
One day you'll be on the receiving end.
The truth, the Way Things Are, will punish you.'

One trick with words he laboured to expose:
*The problem's global. Therefore the solution
Must be a global one.* Where one man cares
For his *own* manageable piece of earth
He knows it intimately. The relation
Is one of mutuality. He does
What most will please his plot, and is rewarded
With flowering and fruiting, as if he coaxed
And courted it, knowing its needs and moods.
If ever he were clumsy or mistaken
The effects would be unfortunate for him
And for his farm, perhaps his nearest neighbours.
The global planner loves no plot or nation
And cannot love the globe. His policies,
Should they be wrong, would lead to global ruin:—
*The problem is a global one. Therefore
To solve it we must break it down, distribute,
Give every man his due, his little plot,
And let him be responsible and free.*

But strident and unwomanly a voice
Is raised: 'And what about every woman too?
Equality of gender! Mind your language!
And while you're at it don't call me a *woman*.
A *person* if you *don't* mind. I've my dignity!'

'Well, madam, certainly, give every woman,
And every girl, and every boy, his due.'

'*Their* due, you mean. You see! You're at it still!'

'My dear lady——'

'*There!* I'm *not* your dear!

I'm not a lady either.'

'As you please.

Your dignity is what I would maintain,
More anxiously than you if you'd but listen.
Your words are more confused than you imagine,
But, since I'd not make this a grammar lesson,
Equality is nonsense: mathematics
Does not apply. *Gender* is not the same
As *sex*, and if you will adopt the term
Of broadest application you'll deprive
Yourself of human dignity more surely
Than if you used the plainly understood,
Old-fashioned words our parents used before us.
A man or woman's a more actual thing
Than is a person. "I see a person coming."
"A man or woman?" you'll most likely ask.
Which of these would you really rather be—
A person with no individuation,
Just arms and legs, a head, digestive system,
Or a woman, in all particulars individual?
If you consent to the exclusive language
That rules out man *and* woman equally
You'll be reduced in stark reality
To less than God created you to be.
A unit for officialdom to use!
The freedom that a woman's always had
You'll lose, and be a slave within a system.
Just like a man you'll have to go to work
To get the cash to go to work to get
The cash to go to work to get the cash.'
(A prophecy that's sadly been fulfilled!)
'To be a man or woman is to be
A creature self-aware and ever grateful
For our creation and for the Creation—
The given actuality of things.'

Thus it was always to the word, whose truth,
Observed, embodied real facts, real truth,
That he returned with patient, calm insistence.

I heard a townee once, with better instincts
Than understanding, say indignantly,
'They treat us as a herd!' (His reference
Was to a tiresome measure of so-called
Preventive public health imposed on all.)

'Ah, there, you see, I don't think you are right.
The better sort of stock-breeder or farmer
Is far more like a fond and anxious parent
Than you suppose. He has the gift—perverted
By those who would destroy our lives and language
Into a fault—of keen discrimination
And doesn't treat his animals all alike
But each according to its own condition;
And when you see a herd destroyed for one
Infected animal, not even on
That farmer's land, it's not he you should blame
But tuck-fed bullies, ignorant of all
Save how they love the exercise of power:
Servants and ministers of the global policy.'

'The given actuality of things';
'Our own creation and the whole Creation':
These underlay his whole philosophy
And faith. 'For everything we see is marked
With grace, the Maker's mark of love; and all
Is triune: is a world of trinities;
A world of three dimensions; three-fold time;
Of equilibrium upon three points;
Of solids, liquids, gases; earth, air, water;
The trinal constitution of a kingdom;
Father, mother, family; body, mind
And soul proceeding. Live your life towards,
And in obedience to, reality:
The life abundant promised by the Love
That showered love upon us by becoming
The visible, incarnate, Life of God.
If we reject this Way, this Truth, we will
Accept the crooked words, the Will to Power,
Enforced obedience, impotent and dumb:
No faith, no love, no hope of joy to come.'

DEWI HOPKINS

(Geoffrey Dobbs wrote at least three essays for *Faith and Worship*: 'Trinity and Reality', No. 15; 'The Second Collect, for Peace', No. 39; and 'On Non-political Correctness', No. 41.—ED.)

CHURCH MILITANT

by Gerald Barnett

September the Eleventh gave rise to all manner of debate concerning what response barbarism should meet from members of the Christian community. For many, it had particular relevance to the Prayer for the Church, which prays 'for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth'.

To reconcile the church militant with the behaviour of clergy who ban the singing of 'Onward, Christian soldiers' is tortuous enough. Even less comprehensible is the stance of the Church of England's General Synod, which declined to back the government in its campaign against the terrorist organization, al-Qa'eda. Sundry bishops, including candidates for the Primacy of All England, eagerly identified themselves in public with this mindset.

To turn the other cheek when confronted with personal violence shows true Christian valour. By contrast, the failure of church leaders to give full support to Caesar in his right and lawful armed response to international evil and terror seems to act in defiance of Christ's teaching in St. Matthew 22.15-21.

To render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's is central to the received wisdom that 'you can't have it both ways'. Leaders are not elected to sit on a fence looking both ways while instructing some committee to report back with a recommendation as to which way to look and lead.

The summons on behalf of Christ's church militant is not a call to indulge in some kind of Jihad or medieval crusade. It certainly is a call to Christians to put their armour on and make whatever contribution individual talent may best provide to counter evil.

militant, a. Engaged in (esp. spiritual) warfare, as the Church m., combative. (O.E.D.)

To interpret it as a convenient opportunity to promote currently fashionable socio-economic ideology, as some have done, can scarcely be the purpose of this specific prayer for the church.

The Church of England has disowned benevolent authority and become smothered in synods, structures, constitutions, committees and sub-committees. Its governance is politically correct and faithful to European consensus and orthodoxy. As such, the Prayer Book Society must fear that our church's bureaucrats would prefer to expunge the 'Church militant' wording from their 'flexible' liturgy rather than respond in true Christian combative spirit when the forces of evil rear their ugly heads.

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EQUALITY, LIBERTY AND FRATERNITY

by Roger Homan

Introduction

The liturgical changes that have gathered momentum in the wake of the Second Vatican Council have had among other purposes the aim of establishing a reformed dynamic within the worshipping community. The congregation was to be more friendly, more active and participant, some rôles were to be devolved, the worship to be more accessible and the professional ministry less remote.

It must be emphasized that rites which are meant to be celebrated in common, with the faithful present and actively participating, should as far as possible be celebrated in that way rather than by an individual and quasi-privately . . .

To develop active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalm-antiphons, hymns, as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes.¹

The Roman Catholic church continues to set trends as the dominant—even in England more numerous—party in an ecumenical movement that uses liturgical change as a strategy of alignment. It is instructive, therefore, to monitor practice in today's Church of Rome for an insight into tomorrow's Church of England: 'What doth he know of England,' asked Kipling, 'who only England knows?'

What we find in the most recent practice in the Roman and Anglican churches is a saturation of the time of worship by announcements, a script that cannot be followed without a guide, the consequent emergence of a culture of dependence, the establishment of a lay élite having the conduct of worship as its defining activity and a mode of rehearsal, repetition, bodily activity and all manner of outward behaviour instead of an engagement of the inner self.

Equality

The traditional prelude to Anglican worship is a period of adjustment and focus. This may take the form of a devotional silence or of an organ piece, the commencement of which prompts the congregation to subdue any conversation that might be in process. The choice of music is appropriate to the season or occasion. Such a principle of adjustment is not peculiar to traditional worship in the Church of England: Quakers, for example, think of 'resting into' worship and the interior of the meeting house is ordered accordingly with neither too much ornament to provide distraction nor so much austerity as to cause discomfort.

In three Roman Catholic cathedrals recently visited, each in a different country, mass was introduced by another method. With a minute to go the buzz of conversation persisted. Few were observed to make a private prayer on arrival although this would not necessarily have been conspicuous. Then there was a crackle on the amplification system, a tapping of the microphone to see that it was working and a hiss; this combination of cues was effective in securing attention for the voice that followed.

‘Welcome to today’s mass,’ said the voice. ‘On your way in you should have collected three things, the mass book, a hymn book and the weekly sheet. Those of you at the back will find them where you came in. For those of you nearer the front they are at the side doors. If you don’t have them will you go and get them now?’

There was something of an upheaval while strangers like myself went to collect our worship resources. Then the voice came on again:

‘My name’s Sean and I’m your cantor for today’s mass. If you follow me we should not go wrong.’ Clearly this was going to be an intrepid journey and we needed a pilot. He got us to open the mass book at two pages and to keep a finger in one ready to turn over. Meanwhile—with the other hand, I supposed—we found the opening hymn and started singing it.

It is even at this stage evident that there are some very significant changes in the nature of worship. Traditional Anglican worship does not need the principal actors to be introduced at all, let alone by first name. We have not come to church to meet them. They are not there as personalities but as servants. One of the purposes of the robes they wear is to suppress the cult of the personality which now breaks out even before we have got started.

The traditional function of the celebrant is to take a leading but an equal rôle in worship. We all use the same words, sometimes together and sometimes voiced by one on behalf of the others; we face the same direction. There are certain sacramental duties that only a priest can fulfil and there may be places where only a priest can go. These are ways of signifying the sacred. But what we learn from Sean’s opening words is a new kind of relationship of dependence: so complex is the order of service that we are made to need him and to be grateful for him.

But there is another change that is still more radical. The devotional silence or the organ voluntary disposed our inner selves for worship; they were forms of spiritual preparation. Sean’s role is to prepare us physically, to equip us with resources and to establish a working relationship so that we will stay in touch. Traditional worship offers a way of being, modern worship gives us things to do. The first is about the inner life, the second is about patterns of outward behaviour.

As the mass proceeds these patterns of collective behaviour displace private intention. The organ plays a short melody, Sean then sings a few words to it and we all imitate Sean. Then we move on. We will never again need those words and that tune. We thought we were rehearsing it but we found that the final utterance was over and done with even before we’d had time to register the words. A similar hazard besets the responsorial psalm in modern Anglican usage: the congregation is assigned a few words, memorizes them, listens for the end of the verse and then repeats them. The skill is to distinguish the end of the verse from the halfway stage; if one fails, one is uttering the words alone. The task of concentration and coming in on cue is a feat of performance that allows no attention to the possibility of intention or the reflection upon meaning. The service is being ‘got through’ but it is not being used as a devotion.

The lesson is read by somebody who has a good clear voice. They are lucky to have him. Maybe he is a teacher or even an actor. The cantor who conducts

us and whom we imitate is one of a range of intermediate controls that have been introduced in the name of lay participation since the Second Vatican Council. The readers of lessons, the singers of versicles, the lay ministers of the chalice constitute a new literate élite. They are the few in relation to whom it can be said that the laity is involved. Previously, we were all equally engaged but now some have star parts and the rest just have a part in the crowd scenes.

Liberty

In the new dispensation there is bodily freedom but not freedom of thought. Freedom is not inhibited by inconvenient thoughts like the Commandments or the Confession. we are spared the checklist that Moses provides and Cranmer adopts to take stock of our private lives and resolve to improve our ways. If we want to acknowledge our part in the depths to which our human race can fall in places like East Timor and Kosovo and Belfast, we have at our disposal the words 'we are truly sorry'. Such a sentiment might be expressed by a child who has not done his homework and the teacher's response would be, 'Well, that's not good enough.' When I reflect upon the events in New York and Washington on 11th September 2001 I need to say 'the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable'. The prayer-book is no hiding place for the guilty-minded. If they want to avoid being reminded of the shortcomings of their daily lives, they should go to places where 'praise' is the order of the day. They will find in the collection of hymns and choruses called *Mission Praise* 800 songs that lay no moral obligations upon them. They need not even know that slavery or exploitation of the poor are wrong in the eyes of God. Without a prayer for the church militant they will not have to address current issues such as 'wickedness and vice' and 'the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue'. There is no better method of getting away from the Sunday newspapers than by the singing of countless Hallelujahs. Praise has its place but if it is exclusive of the other elements of Christian worship it is the opiate of the people.

Liberty takes other forms. It takes the form of an assertion of rights over the fabric of the building and over the entitlement to quietness. These are expressed in the introduction of coffee to sacred space, in the indulgence of children's exuberant tendencies and in the conversion of parts of the church to exhibition areas; display boards are installed, sometimes with the purpose of appeals for fabric or mission but increasingly for the purpose of self-promotion by means of photographs of the nouveau élite. While at school children learn to adapt themselves to socially acceptable patterns of behaviour, the practice in many churches is to accept them in the natural state and to learn to celebrate it; meanwhile, the church adjusts itself exclusively to the young, who will therefore outgrow it and leave.

But the most fundamental liberties of all, the freedom to be and freedom of thought, are thwarted by the voice that comes incessantly from the walls like *Big Brother*. Who knows whether Sean is a real person who is heard but not seen, or an audiotape that is available to churches when they buy so many mass books, or something downloaded from the internet? The fact remains that he or it is controlling our every move and making sure we have no time to think independently. The amplification is on high but the voice stays soft and friendly: he has what would be called in another profession 'a good bedside

manner' and he uses it to stage-manage and choreograph our every moment. We once gave time to that great consecration prayer, 'who in the same night that he was betrayed . . .', dwelling privately on the critical moments as the drama proceeded. Now it is broken into sound-bites so that we are kept 'active': the celebrant periodically says 'This is our story' and we respond 'This is our song'.

Fraternity

Big Brother's opening words about going to collect the three books we forgot when we came in sorted out those who belonged from those who did not. There are then opportunities for social intercourse that celebrate membership of internal networks. In modern Anglican usage, the exchange of the Peace is often a most exclusive ritual. Some members of the congregation migrate considerable distances to seek out their friends. One has heard 'Did you have a nice holiday?' and 'How 's your leg?' and from the celebrant 'Don't forget it's Eb's birthday'. While some are locked in enduring embraces, the unkissables exchange polite handshakes. And later at the communion rail, the minister uses the names of nuclear members but there are others whose names he does not know. The effect of intruding personalities in worship has been to give expression to the painful and shameful divisions, even cliques, within the worshipping community.

The serving of coffee in church has been noted above as an expression of freedom over the preciousness of sacred space. It has another function as a means of coercive fellowship. At the Consistory Court at St. Helen's Abingdon, one of the reasons given for serving refreshments in the church rather than the hall just outside was that people might slip away.² In some places this kind of entrapment achieves its purest form in the observance of the Peace as a means of confrontation.

So the fraternity that is contrived in the context of worship is liable to become a synthetic, exclusive and coercive kind of fellowship. When the cathedral mass is ended the priest must hurry to reach the door before those he has previously addressed as 'my dear friends' escape homeward. There has to be a better kind of fellowship than this. Up and down the country there are prayer-book communion services, often held at eight o' clock on a Sunday morning during which barely a word of greeting is exchanged until the blessing has been given and the celebrant has reached the porch. Most commonly the people linger in the church or the car park and do not go home to breakfast without long and caring conversations. The ritualized Peace seems to have supplanted the fuller expression of human concern; it is not an enhancement of fellowship but a detraction from it.

Conclusion

It is often suggested that the case for the recovery of traditional worship is premised upon aesthetic considerations, nostalgic sentiment and a preference for comfortable words. This article has addressed some of these misunderstandings. No mention has been made of beautiful language. The critique of current trends is that they detract from the meaning of worship. The quest for participant modes of worship finds ways of occupying the body but not of engaging the spirit. Modern worship occupies the individual with activities but

these prevent an engagement of the spirit. The emphasis is upon outward and observable behaviour but not upon inward intention. We are learning, rehearsing or doing but seldom praying. In 'sparing no effort' to address the habit of those it misleadingly calls 'silent spectators',³ the church dishonours and disrupts a manner of devotion for which traditional worship continues to offer a secure environment.

Far from being cosy and comforting, forms of worship in the Cranmer tradition lay an heavy burden on the faithful. The Commandments and Confession are means of searching their private lives and demanding resolutions for personal reform: modern worship allows little space for reflection of this kind.

References

1. Flannery, Austin (ed.), *The Basic Sixteen Documents: Vatican Council II* (New York: Costello, 1996), pp. 128–9
2. Howell, Peter, 'The reordering of churches: a reply', *Victorian Society Annual 1994* (London: Victorian Society), pp. 17–22
3. Flannery, *op. cit.*, p. 135

Street-Fighting

They come, in pairs, to ram Jesus down
Fallen throats, blast with magazines—
Nothing there about the gentle man
Who guarded on the cold mountains
The frightened sheep, or the little boy
Blessing from his young mother's knees
The wilderness around him. And now,
Soldiers of Christ in smart suits, these
Raid the sinful roads, knock on the doors
Like secret police at the first light,
On the trail of wanted volunteers
Huddled in back rooms out of sight.
But Satan strikes through the curtains, cocks
A snook at the weird panoply
Of Bible words, up to his old tricks
With tunes, the huge artillery
Of drums, guitars, keyboards turned up loud,
Videos hurling hand-grenades
Of blasphemy at the troops outside,
Those angels unsheathing their swords.
So the street-fighting is waged until
God's warriors, their banners furled,
Retreat to await again the call
To fire their gospels at the world.

And, secure in their castles, the foe,
Reading the black communiqué,
Pull faces at the stalemate, and throw
The high-explosive tracts away.

The battle is over, but the war
Goes on. Regrouped, they will be back,
The crusaders, freshly armed for more
Holy campaigns, a new attack,

While Satan, drilling his countless host
With promises of gold, can well
Brag of how in a garden he first
Met a simple, wandering girl.

JULIAN ENNIS

THE CAMBRIDGE CAMDEN SOCIETY:

(1) *origins and ambitions*

by Christopher Webster

The Cambridge Camden Society not only had a profound impact on most facets of the early-Victorian Church of England, but its physical legacy is still to be seen in almost every Anglican church built before about 1950.¹ Yet despite this undoubted influence, it remains widely unknown, both inside and outside the Anglican community.² This article will examine the Society's foundation, aims and achievements, setting them within the context of contemporary theological and architectural debates.

The Society was started at Cambridge University in 1839.³ The driving force behind it were two energetic undergraduates, Benjamin Webb and J. M. Neale, the latter now better known for his hymns. In an age when the study of the architectural remains of the Middle Ages was becoming an increasingly popular subject for study and enjoyment, the Society's stated object was unremarkable and ostensibly uncontroversial. It was 'to promote the study of Ecclesiastical Architecture and Antiquities, and the restoration of mutilated Architectural remains.'⁴ Taken at face value, this was hardly the stuff of revolution! However, although the Society would never commit itself to anything more controversial on paper, it is clear that it had a much more ambitious agenda, that of reviving the very roots of Anglicanism by revisiting the pre-Reformation and immediately post-Reformation principles of liturgical practice and the church arrangements which were necessary for the correct enactment of the prayer-book rubrics. Put somewhat simplistically, the Society wished to overturn the various 17th-century and Georgian developments within the Church of England, covering such things as the liturgy, the design and planning of churches and the conduct of the clergy. For its critics there was no ambiguity; the Society was pushing Anglicanism in a worryingly Roman direction.

The Society's rise to prominence was remarkable. It had started, let us not forget, as merely an undergraduate society; Neale and Webb were only 21 and 20

respectively when it was formed. Yet within only two years it had secured the patronage of the primates of England and Ireland, as well as twelve other bishops. Two years after that, the number of bishops had risen to sixteen and the Society could boast thirty-one peers and MPs, seven deans and diocesan chancellors and twenty-one archdeacons and rural deans.⁵ Membership peaked in 1845 at around 850. It was in that year that the Society decided to move its base from Cambridge to London and to rename itself ‘the Ecclesiological (late Cambridge Camden) Society’, eventually becoming ‘the Ecclesiological Society’. It ceased to be active in 1868. Subsequently, a new society was formed using the same name which exists today with a membership of around 800.

Anglican worship, and the buildings in which it takes place, are subject to almost constant evolution. Yet one set of initiatives for change stands out: those of the Cambridge Camden Society. Indeed, so comprehensively and firmly were its ideas established that, looking back from the beginning of the 21st century, there is still a widespread belief that churches and services have *always* looked the way the Society battled to make them look. For those who rarely enter a church, except, perhaps, for a wedding or a funeral—just as much as for those who worship regularly—there is, this writer believes, a clear notion of what it *should* look like. It conforms almost exactly to the ideals first put forward 160 years ago by the Society: the building should be Gothic in style; it should contain stained-glass windows; there should be a long chancel, lined with stalls containing a surpliced choir; the focus of attention should be a decently adorned altar, raised on several steps; there should be a robed priest intoning the collects and responses; communion should be the principal weekly service. That all these remain fundamental features of the popular image of Anglicanism—despite the best endeavours of later modernizers—is due, to a considerable extent, to the battles fought and won by the Society.

So comprehensive was the Society’s victory that relatively little accessible information exists about the pre-Victorian Church of England: only a tiny fraction of churches remains unaltered, or rebuilt, by those filled with Camdenian zeal;* and one would search, almost in vain, for any published account of the history of Anglicanism written much more than a generation ago which didn’t adopt the Society’s contemptuous language to discredit the Georgian church as an institution. Only recently have historians begun to take a more objective look at the subject and accept that while the buildings, attitudes and services of the Georgian period differed from those of Victoria’s reign they were, nevertheless, not without merit when considered—as they should be considered—in the context of their own period, rather than that of a later one.⁶

In examining the changes which the ecclesiologists initiated, it will be helpful for us to consider the Society’s perceived shortcomings of the Anglicanism the Victorian age inherited. The Society devoted much energy and many printed words to the ‘appropriate’ design of new churches and the restoration of existing ones. However, while it was tireless in its campaigns to discredit the Georgians, its criticism extended well beyond architectural issues; the churches were merely the physical setting for a form of service the Society found unacceptable, one that looked to a post-Reformation, Calvinist tradition. Furthermore, that these buildings and this form of service were not only

* St. Mary’s, Whitby, is perhaps the most spectacular surviving example.

unquestioned but were comfortably accepted by the vast majority of Anglicans was, in part, a symptom of the Church of England's sense of worldly self-satisfaction that the Society felt compelled to denounce. In short, it attacked the church on three fronts: for its architecture; for the form and conduct of its services; for its lack of spirituality and piety. Yet such a separation is potentially misleading since, for the Society, these three facets of Anglicanism's shortcomings were interlinked: only if services followed fully the rubrics of the prayer-book would the internal arrangements of pre-Reformation churches have any validity, and only if both clergy and laity became more pious would the church as an institution be receptive to the spirituality that had been lost since the Reformation. The root cause of these problems was, the Society concluded, no mystery: Anglicanism had lost sight of the Catholic tradition from which it had been born. It seemed clear to the ecclesiologists that, rather than treasuring medieval churches, fittings and the associated ritual for the links they provided with Anglicanism's Catholic roots, the Georgians had done almost everything they could to disguise that tradition. Indeed, so far away from its origins had Anglicanism moved that it hardly dare mention them for fear of the highly emotive and often mindless charge of 'Popery' from its evangelical and low-church constituencies.⁷ *The 'Restoration of Churches' is the Restoration of Popery*, the title of a pamphlet by Francis Close, published in 1844, reflected widely-held opinions.

The Society's condemnation of Georgian Anglicanism was indeed comprehensive, but in the context of this paper it is instructive to identify a number of key issues which were the focus of sustained criticism by writers in *The Ecclesiologist* and other Society publications. A primary concern which drew together architectural, liturgical and spiritual shortcomings related to the Georgians' emphasis on the pulpit rather than the altar.

One of the great abuses of modern times is the monstrous size and untoward position of the pulpit. It, with the reading pew and clerk's desk, are in most modern churches placed immediately before the Holy Altar, for the purpose, it would seem, of hiding it as much as possible from the congregation. How symbolic is this of an age which puts preaching in place of praying! If prayer were the same as preaching, such a position would be more natural: but as the prayers are not offered to the people, but to God, our Church instructs us far otherwise.

With such a practice widespread, it is hardly surprising that the chancels of medieval churches were neglected,* and in newer churches they were reduced to the absolute minimum of area—often no more than a shallow recess—in the interests of economy and since they no longer served a liturgical function. In addition, the Society expressed uncompromising views about church furniture, especially box pews and galleries. Much energy was devoted to the removal of pews, not only because they were wasteful of space,⁸ but because they were also without pre-Reformation precedent. Most significantly, as rented space, they represented an unacceptable 'private' domain within the house of God. It was widely acknowledged that their introduction had generated valuable funds for the upkeep of churches and for the paying of clergy stipends but, for the Society, the evils they represented more than outweighed any economic benefits: they were socially divisive and encouraged smugness and self-

* For instance, at Howden Minster in Yorkshire the chancel had been allowed to collapse from lack of maintenance. Elsewhere, the chancel might be walled off and used as a schoolroom.

satisfaction.⁹ The potential for personal comfort and unseemly behaviour was a further cause for concern. Neale quotes the example of Tong church: ‘The squire has built a pew in the chancel; when the Commandments are begun, a servant enters at the Chancel door with the luncheon tray!’¹⁰ Such activities may well have been exceptional, but many pews were fitted with tables and comfortable chairs, and stoves for individual pews were not unheard of.¹¹ Such evils were compounded since the excessive space they consumed restricted the free seats available for the poor. In many parishes—and especially in urban ones—the number of free seats was nowhere near adequate to satisfy demand; in some the poor were totally excluded because all the seats were privately rented by the better off, for instance in Rochdale, Lancashire, in 1819.¹² Much of this criticism was equally applicable to galleries but in addition they made interiors of churches cramped and dark. ‘GALLERIES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES ARE TOTALLY INADMISSIBLE. The greater part are, of course, nothing but raised platforms of pews; and all that has been written about pews is doubly strong against these,’ the Society thundered.¹³ Although the almost universal acceptance of Gothic as the most appropriate style for churches clearly predates the Society’s inception, there remained much scope for stylistic pronouncements in the pages of *The Ecclesiologist*. Such comments focused on two areas: Classicism was wholly inappropriate for churches as a result of its pagan origins; secondly, it was not enough for a church to be nominally Gothic, but its plan, silhouette, details and decoration needed to be ‘correct’. After 1839, establishing Gothic as ‘the only Christian architecture’ was largely uncontroversial, but the battle for the acceptance of ‘true’ Gothic with all its Catholic symbolism and pre-Reformation details proved more difficult. Nevertheless, victory on this front was an integral part of the Society’s agenda. Like Pugin, it was intent on pushing popular taste beyond an interest in Gothic merely for its picturesque or associational qualities. However, the Society claimed the roots for the malaise in Georgian Anglicanism went beyond its architecture and worship:

Let us look at a Protestant place of worship. It is choked up and concealed by surrounding shops and houses, for religion, nowadays, must give way to business and pleasure: it stands North and South for all idea of fellow-feeling with the Church Catholick is looked on as mere trifling, or worse: the front which faces the High Street is of stone, because the uniformity of the street requires it: or, (which is more likely) of stucco, which answers as well and is cheaper: the sides, however, are of brick, because no one can see them: there is at the entrance a large vestibule, to allow people to stand while their carriages are being called up, and to enter into conversation on the news of the day, or the merits of the preacher: it also serves the purpose of making the church warmer, and contains the doors and staircases to the galleries. On entering, the pulpit occupies the central position, and towards it every seat is directed: for preaching is the great object of the Christian ministry: galleries run all round the building, because hearing is the great object of a Christian congregation: the Altar stands under the organ gallery, as being of no use, except once a month: there are a few free seats in out-of-the-way places, where no one could hear, and no pews would be hired, and therefore no money is lost by making the places free: and whether the few poor people who occupy them can hear or not, what matters it? The Font, a cast-iron vase on a marble pillar, stands within the Altar rails; because it there takes up no room: the reading pew is under the pulpit, and faces the congregation; because the prayers are to be read to them and not addressed to God. Look at this place on Sunday, or Thursday Evening. Carriages crash up through the cast-iron gates, and, amidst the wrangling and oaths of rival coachmen, deposit their loads at the portico:

people come, dressed out in the full fashion of the day, to occupy their luxurious pue, to lay their smelling-bottles and prayer books on its desk, and reclining on its soft cushions, to confess themselves—if they are in time—miserable sinners: to see the poor and infirm standing in the narrow passages, and close their pue doors against them, lest themselves should be contaminated, or their cushions spoilt, at the same time beseeching GOD to give their fellow-creatures the comfort which they refuse to bestow: the Royal Arms occupy a conspicuous position, for it is a chapel of the ESTABLISHMENT: there are neat cast-iron pillars to hold up the galleries, and still neater pillars in the galleries to hold up the roof; thereby typifying that the whole existence of the building depends on the good-will of the congregation: the roof is flat, with an elegant cornice, and serves principally to support a gas-lighted chandelier: and the administration of this chapel is carried on by clerk, organist, beadle, and certain bonnetless pue-openers.

We need not point out how strongly all this symbolizes the spiritual pride, the luxury, the self-sufficiency, the bigotry of the congregations of too many a PUE-RENTED EPISCOPAL CHAPEL.¹⁴

There is ample evidence that the fundamentals of Georgian Anglicanism were indeed ripe for reform. Critics could point to the widespread practice of absentee clergy: in 1810 no less than 47% of Anglican clergy did not reside or do duty in their parish.¹⁵ There was enormous inequality of clergy stipends: in the early part of the 19th century, the archbishop of Canterbury received £27,000 per year while there were thousands of parochial benefices worth less than £150, many of which did not include a house.¹⁶ The close ties between State and Church were a further cause for concern. That the church failed to push far political reform in the 1820s and '30s caused much resentment and even riots in some places, and political interference in the administration of the church—for instance in the suppression of the ten Irish bishoprics in 1833—was equally unacceptable elsewhere. On a local level, compulsory church rates caused much resentment. That the church was ultimately subject to secular control *via* parliament—rather than divine intervention—was confirmed by the Royal coat of arms hanging in every church.

That the Georgian Church of England had changed radically within a generation of Victoria's ascending the throne is not in question: its function, especially in the socially problematic industrial towns, was rethought; diversity in liturgical practice continued, but few parishes remained untouched by the move towards the incorporation of ritual in the services; and Georgian buildings, or the Georgianization of medieval ones, began to be replaced by elaborate Gothic structures complete with their associated details. The extent to which this change can be attributed solely to the ecclesiologists is more contentious. Parallels between them and members of the Oxford Movement—which started slightly earlier—will, no doubt, have already been identified by a number of readers. The relationship between the two organizations will be examined in more detail in the concluding part of this paper.

The writer is most grateful to Canon Graham Smith, rector of Leeds, for advice in the preparation of this article.

Notes and References

1. Had this article been written (say) 25 years ago—before the widespread practice of moving the high altar slightly away from the east wall and of introducing nave altars—this statement would have been even more valid.
2. It is, for instance, significantly less well known than the contemporary Oxford Movement.

3. The standard account of the Society is to be found in J. M. White, *The Cambridge Movement*, Cambridge, 1962. In addition, the formation of the Society is dealt with in G. K. Brandwood, 'Fond of church architecture', in C. Webster and J. Elliott (eds.), *'A church as it should be': The Cambridge Camden Society and its Influence*, Shaun Tyas, 2000, pp. 45–61.
4. The Cambridge Camden Society, *Laws*, Cambridge, 1839, p. 1
5. E. J. Boyce, *Memorial of the Cambridge Camden Society, Instituted May, 1839, and the Ecclesiological (late Cambridge Camden) Society, May, 1846*, London, 1888, p. 10, quoted in Brandwood, *op. cit.*, p. 56
6. Those seeking more balanced accounts of the late-Georgian Church of England are directed to the following: H. Davies, *Worship and Theology in England. from Watts and Wesley to Martineau*, W. B. Eerdmans, Cambridge, 1996; I. Collins, *Jane Austen and the Clergy*, The Hambleton Press, 1994.
7. *Petition of the Inhabitants of East Farleigh to the Archbishop of Canterbury respecting the alleged Popery of their vicar, Henry Wilberforce*, 1844, concludes: 'Our minds are deliberately and firmly made up to resist, by all legitimate means, the introduction of any modified system of Popery in our parish.'—Quoted in N. Yates, *Kent and the Oxford Movement*, Gloucester, 1983, pp. 37–41.
8. Cambridge Camden Society, *Church Enlargement and Church Extension*, Cambridge, 1843, p. 4
9. *Ibid.* Yates sees their removal as one of the Society's four principal aims. See N. Yates, *Buildings, Faith and Worship*, Oxford, 1991, p. 134.
10. Quoted in J. White, *The Cambridge Movement*, Cambridge, 1962, p. 4
11. White, *ibid.*, p. 7, quotes the example of Exton Church in Rutland.
12. F. Beckwith, 'Thomas Taylor, Regency Architect, Leeds', *Publications of the Thoresby Society*, monograph 1, Leeds, 1947, p. 7
13. *Church Enlargement . . .*, *op. cit.*, p. 6
14. J. M. Neale and B. Webb, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: a Translation of the First Book of the Rationale Divinorum Officiorum of William Durandus*, Leeds, 1843, pp. cxxviii–cxxxix
15. C. Brooks, 'Building the Rural Church: Money, Power and the Country Parish' in C. Brooks and A. Saint (eds.), *The Victorian Church*, Manchester U. P., 1995, p. 55
16. S. C. Carpenter, *Church and People, 1789–1880*, London, 1937, p. 56. See also J. Wade, *The Extraordinary Black Book*, 1st edn., 1820–3; reprinted (Shannon, Ireland) 1971. This important radical text contains almost 100 pages of supposed abuses of power and privilege by the clergy.

(Mr Webster addressed the PBS conference on this subject in September 2001.)

ON SINGING 'BENEDICITE'

by Stuart G. Hall

The canticle *Benedicite omnia opera* is appointed in the 1662 prayer-book as an alternative to *Te Deum* at Morning Prayer. It is especially convenient and appropriate, following some old monastic practice, to use it during penitential days, especially Lent, Advent, and ferial Fridays. Cheerful as it is, choirs and congregations find the constant repetition of 'praise him and magnify him for ever' in all 52 verses wearisome. It is not surprising therefore that it has been neglected, even where Morning Prayer still figures in the daily or weekly programme of prayer-book churches. This is regrettable, especially at a time when our responsibility to the wider creation, our natural environment, should and does figure more largely in our thoughts and prayers. My purpose is to suggest a suitable and convenient way of abbreviating the hymn without sacrificing any of its meaning. The 1662 prayer-book does not divide the verses into larger paragraphs, or suggest any abbreviation. The same is true of *Common Worship* (pp. 807–8). Nevertheless devout and serious congregations in my experience usually abbreviate: a cathedral where I worshipped for a few weeks recently simply grouped the verses in threes, with the chorus omitted after verses 1 and 2, so that we said, or sang to a double chant:

O all ye Works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord:
O ye Angels of the Lord, bless ye the Lord:
O ye Heavens, bless ye the Lord:
praise him and magnify him for ever

—and so on in groups of three to verse 30. The last two verses were recited complete. That is reasonable, but has unfortunate consequences: it rides right over the natural divisions of the hymn, which come at verse 3, verse 18 and verse 27. These divisions are clearly recognized in the 1928 Alternative rite and in the Scottish prayer-book of 1929, and are marked both by the grammar of verses 18 and 27, and by the content. Verses 1 and 2 are about God himself and his Angels, 3–17 about the heavens above, 18–26 about the earth beneath, and 27–32 about God's people. The 1928 revisers suggested leaving out 'praise him and magnify him for ever' except in some specified verses, and on weekdays omitting all but the first and last sections, and the Scottish prayer-book has similar provisions, though not identical. The trouble with the latter proposal is that it omits the hymn's very valuable call to the heaven and earth to praise God, leaving us only with the angels and the church (Israel). Furthermore, none of these proposals takes account of an important feature of *Benedicite*, which is that, after God in his holy place (verses 1–2), the whole falls into a continual series of three-verse sets. This has gone unobserved, partly because it is least obvious in the earlier verses 3–8. Starting with the third section it becomes obvious: 18–20 have the earth, and specifically the mountains and the growing plants; 21–3 have the waters, specifically wells (i.e. water-springs), seas and floods, and all that live in the waters; 24–5 the land animals, i.e. birds, beasts and men. A similar structure applies in the last section: 27–9 have Israel the holy people, with their priests and (temple-) servants; 30–2 have individuals, the departed, the living and the three holy martyrs Ananias, Azarias and Misael, who are the ostensible authors of the Hymn, and who can be seen as representing either the Noble Army of Martyrs, or every individual (Tom, Dick and Harry). If we then try this structure on the fifteen verses 3–17, it works most clearly in the later verses: 9–11 represent heat, once it is remembered that mighty winds are the hot winds from the desert; 12–14 represent the cold, with frost or ice in each verse; 15–17 have three contrasts of light and dark, the nights and days, light and darkness, lightnings and clouds. We are left only with six verses: 1–3, which refer to the heavens, the waters above the heavens (in the biblical world-view) and the Powers who control the heavenly bodies; and 4–6 which call upon the heavenly bodies themselves, which in ancient times included the clouds as well as sun, moon and stars.

If this structure of the text is recognized, the best way to shorten *Benedicite* for recitation is to say (or sing) verses one and two entire, and the rest in groups of three verses. This preserves both the four major divisions and the groups of three which constitute the subordinate structure of verses. I have tried this with a congregation, and they liked it.

A PROBLEM OF MAGNIFICATION

by Andor Gomme

'My soul doth magnify the Lord.' *Magnify*: I wonder if we're all sure of just what we mean when we sing that exultant opening—particularly since, a few verses later, we meet the word again: 'For he that is mighty hath magnified me.' Ho ho! He magnified me, I magnify him. How polite of Mary to return the compliment; to a cynical outsider it might suggest a two-person mutual admiration society. Since plainly it is neither this nor a question of swapping courtesies, how should we understand the word, and how did it come about that, alone in the prayer-book versions of the *Magnificat*, there is this duplication?

For in all the three translations of the Gospels which preceded the prayer-book of 1549 (including of course Cranmer's) Luke 1.49 is rendered, 'For he that is mighty hath done to me great things'; and the three later versions up to the Authorized repeat this word for word with only a trifling change of order in Rheims. Interestingly therefore all these translations encourage us to make what we may think an appropriate distinction between the Lord's doings and Mary's by making use of the wonderful flexibility of English deriving from its dual origins—Latin for 'magnify', Teutonic for 'great'. [How different would be the effect if they had written 'hath done to me magnificent things'!] Neither the Greek nor the Vulgate (whose version the Latin *Magnificat* precisely follows) can do this; yet both, using different words of the same root, do nevertheless maintain a distinction. In the Greek, Luke 1.46 reads, 'Μαᾶᾶἔΐᾶέ Π ὀδ÷Π ἰῖ ὀῖ Ἐΐῆῖ', and 1.49, 'ἄῖβçóŸ ἰῖέ ἰᾶῖῖᾶ [in some texts 'ἰᾶῖῖᾶᾶᾶ'] ῖ ἄῖᾶῖῖῖ'; in the Latin, 'Magnificat anima mea Dominum' and 'Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est'. Of both Greek and Latin of 1.49, the *biblical* English versions can be regarded as an exact translation; and no-one will have any difficulty with 'done to me great things'. But what to do about 'Μαᾶᾶἔΐᾶέ' and 'Magnificat'? The problem, it might be said, has only arisen in comparatively modern times, for, according to the O.E.D., 'magnify' in the sense of 'exaggerate' first appears in 1759 and in that of 'produce an enlarged image of' in 1665. Before that it could apparently only mean either 'to speak or act to the honour or glory of [a person or thing], to glorify, extol', or 'to praise, render honour to [God]'. If God can be the 'person or thing' of the first of these, the two merge into what was clearly the intention of the early translators; and it is simply our bad luck if we are in difficulties because these meanings have dropped out of use and been replaced by ones that in the context obviously won't do. And yet, in the prayer-book *Magnificat* we still have the obvious problem of the same word's being used to mean what are surely two different things. Liddell and Scott give not only 'to extol, magnify [!]' as translations of Μαᾶᾶἔΐᾶέ, but also 'to make great or powerful'. This indicates that Luke could have used the same word twice over, first for Mary's act of homage, then for her statement of how she had been 'made great'. Surely wisely, he chose not to; and the biblical translators (including Cranmer) followed his lead.

Why then did Cranmer not do the same in preparing the version to be sung or said during Evensong? The Latin *Magnificat* had of course been sung for centuries during Vespers in the English church as throughout Christendom. (It

is not to the point here that, especially in the post-Tridentine Roman church, the *Magnificat* has had a particularly significant place in *Marian Vespers*; but it is an interesting reflexion that, though for example ‘Paternoster’ for the Lord’s Prayer would not since the Reformation be common form in the English church, we still use the Latin names for all the canticles—*Venite, Te Deum, Benedicite, Benedictus, Jubilate, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, Deus Miseratur.*) And even those without Latin would by sheer repetition have come to notice the similarity between ‘Magnificat’ and ‘magna’. If they had had the benefit of a Lewis and Short to hand they would have found a remarkably relaxed definition of ‘magnificare’—‘to make much of, set a high value on’. I am not enough of a Latinist to be able to say whether this is how those in the 16th century or earlier would have understood the word in the Vulgate. Did Wiclif really think that Mary was saying that she set a high value on God?—which no doubt she did, but it would sound uncharacteristically impertinent to put it in just those words. And the O.E.D. gives no licence to believe that such a reading of ‘magnify’ would be entertained in the 16th century. Was Cranmer, whose prayer-book for the Reformed church kept notably close to a literal translation of the Latin liturgy which it was designed to replace, consciously or not influenced by the remembered sound of the familiar Latin in creating a canticle to be sung by those in whose ears the old would still resound and to those who could certainly not yet be counted on to be familiar with any English Bible? Or—since it survived the thorough going-over of 1549 into 1552—is it meant to register at the very least a *likeness* between Mary’s adoration of God and his tribute to her as a woman found worthy to bear his son (which is surely something different from ‘regarding the lowliness of his handmaiden’)? That sounds an improbably mariolatrous intention to attribute to Cranmer, especially in the revision years. Is there a better explanation?

COMMON PRAISE *surveyed*

by Ian Robinson

Common Praise: a new edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern,
Canterbury Press, Norwich, 2000.

Most of the hymn-books currently in print are just awful, both because their critical standards are low and spasmodic, and because their editorial methods are very dubious. They belong with the new versions of the Bible and the new liturgies as symptoms of national feebleness of mind.

This is the best hymn-book of the last twenty years except for a recent Roman Catholic one. But to say that something is the best of a bad bunch need not be very complimentary, nor that there is no room for better.

The name is unfortunate, tying the fortunes of the book to the Church of England’s *Common Worship*. ‘Ancient and Modern’ is a name that may arouse mixed feelings, but if this book is as subtitled the name should have been retained.

The distinguished committee of *Common Praise* suffered a good deal from pusillanimity. Of recently written hymns: ‘Where older forms or exclusive language have remained, the committee has generally rejected the hymn or

verse altogether, or sought amendments to make them acceptable to contemporary worshippers' (p. ix). That is shameful censorship and a kow-towing to modern mindlessness. And, 'The texts of hymns have often been altered to make them suitable for worship in a later age from [*sic*] the one in which they were written' (p. xi). The examples given are bowels (modern ecclesiastics are no doubt without bowels; Cromwell would no longer be allowed to beseech anyone in the bowels of Christ) and, of course, 'gay'. Must the devil have all the best words? The Committee actually boast about replacing 'sons' in 'till, at last, her sons are gathered' to 'till, at last, we all are gathered.' But ... we are not all members of the Body of Christ, and that we should all be gathered is at best a wistful hope. (By the way, though the human race is no longer allowed to be grammatically masculine, it is still, apparently, correct to make the Church feminine.) Their other example is a twentieth-century line, 'When in man's music, God is glorified'. This becomes 'When in our music, God is glorified', which just loses the contrast of man and God. 'Mindful of the needs of the church in today's world, therefore, the committee . . .' (p. ix) begins and ends by writing like a committee. Is 'mindful' ever found outside resolutions and motions? Their tinkering with old texts, however, are far less drastic than some. Bunyan, for instance, is allowed 'Who would true valour see, / let him come hither.'

In ordinary English grammar (we are talking about grammar not sexuality, and you are in queer street if you confuse the two) the masculine, as in many languages, often includes the feminine. To suppose that mankind excludes women is just to be ignorant of the language. I think we should follow the example of the most brilliant female of the Victorian age, and one devoted to giving women a proper rôle in the public world, George Eliot, *née* Marian Evans: 'What is virtue, the excellence of man as man? Manhood. Of man as woman? Womanhood. But man exists only as man and woman. The strength, the healthiness of man, consists, therefore, in this: that as a woman he be truly woman, as man, truly man.'*

Editors of hymn-books ought to be setting the tone not dragged along by the world! The modernizations of *Common Praise* are not, however, on the scale of *Hymns Old and New*, which won't allow military metaphors and offers instead 'Onward Christian Pilgrims', or *Mission Praise* which won't allow Bishop Ken to address God as 'thee'.

Unless there is an absolute collapse of taste, three quarters of a hymn-book chooses itself, and so it is with *Common Praise*. But there are flaws and lapses. It was a stroke of genius when Vaughan Williams set 'I heard the voice of Jesus say' to the folk-tune *Kingsfold*, thereby redeeming a certain plangency in the words. But *Blow the Wind Southerly* is much too tender a lovesong to be useable with verses rhyming triply ('Spirit of holiness, wisdom and faithfulness')—though perhaps nothing could redeem a line like 'you came to interpret and teach us effectively' (576). Similarly *O Waly Waly* is too married to the folksong words to be useable instead of *Rockingham* for 'When I survey the wondrous cross'. Why ever does anyone want to replace *Rockingham* anyway? The *Dambusters March* of Eric Coates would not be a good hymn tune even if it could be dissociated from dambusting. It is anyway quite out of the mood of the words it is set to (443).

In accordance with their rather feeble policy of accommodation, the editors include some 'worship songs' like the much-sung 'Give me joy in my heart,

*Marian Evans, (transl.), Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, 1854, p. 91; cited A. N. Wilson, *God's Funeral*, 1999, p. 144

keep me praising' (433), the tune of which could not possibly have been included on merit. But again, they don't go to the mindless extremes of some of the space-occupants of *Mission Praise*.

478 was no doubt included because of the prayer dear to the heart of church bureaucrats, 'God, in us abolish faction', but is elsewhere obscure:

Height and depth beyond description
Only life in you can prove

—what does that mean? 210 takes to an extreme the style of informing the LORD of things of which he is presumably well aware, that has been often and rightly mocked in these columns as well as those of *Private Eye*, and compounds the error by being written in rhyme doggerel:

Your mind conceived the galaxy
each atom's secret planned,
and every age of history
your purpose, Lord, has spanned.

Spanned? And need we speculate that the galaxy was a conception or the atom a blueprint before an actuality? Etc., etc. In short, as usual, too much space has been given to nonentity and too little to Wesley and Watts.

Having said all which, I repeat that this collection is the best of a bad bunch. It isn't as heavily edited as the *New English Hymnal*, which jettisoned the principles of the original edition. It has more Watts and Wesley than we expect in the *A&M* tradition. And the mindless and stupid pieces do not outweigh the real things, nor is the music bowdlerized as in *Mission Praise*.

What is good amongst the recent compositions? I admire the Jesuit James Quinn (205, 314—but why is this eschatological hymn in the Holy Communion section?) and it can now be seen that a few twentieth-century hymns have made their way into common acceptance. J. Anstruther's 'When a knight won his spurs', for instance, though *Hymns Old and New* disallows it as militaristic. 'Contemporary' need not even mean new. A twentieth-century brainwave was to use the Purcell alleluias known as the tune *Westminster Abbey* for J. M. Neale's translation 'Christ is made the sure foundation', though to find this in *Common Praise* you will have to look up 'Blessèd city, heavenly Salem' where it is found as Part Two.

Common Praise is useable. This still leaves a good hymn-book as a *desideratum*, especially for prayer-book churches. Is it not time we began thinking of making one? I would like to raise that question seriously, but on another occasion. To start with I just offer the following four principles for discussion.

1 Hymns must be theologically sound and the more Bible-based they are the better.

2 There should be no great clash between the language and music of the hymns and that of the liturgy.

3 Hymns should be at least in competently written and singable verse, and should preferably be poetry. Their tunes should also be at least musical.

4 Texts of hymns and music of tunes should wherever possible be left as the author wrote them. Where that is impossible the original text should be recorded in the margin.

ANGLICAN VOICES

by Raymond Chapman

It is to be hoped that the false idea that the Anglican church has no clear identity or character of its own, but is merely a kind of 'bridge church' between Rome and Dissent, has been disproved. Works like Arthur Middleton's *The Peculiar Character of Anglicanism* have demonstrated that we have a very positive image to set before the world. This volume of extracts* from Anglicans across more than four centuries is the best source book for Anglican identity that has yet been produced. It is edited by three bishops, with a Foreword by the archbishop of Canterbury and an Afterword by the archbishop of York. Each editor has been responsible for the selection and introduction of one of the sections, 1530–1650, 1650–1830 and 1830–2001. The great names are here, from Cranmer and Hooker, through Keble and Pusey to Temple and T. S. Eliot, only living writers being excluded. But there are many less known, and some to which even the more informed readers must confess to being strangers. The middle section, which can too easily be dismissed as a lean and fallow period for the holiness of the Church of England, proves to have more riches than many might imagine. The modern period brings contributions from Anglican churches overseas. Every writer is well documented, with brief biography and references by which the extracts may be followed to their sources. It is in fact a thoroughly scholarly book which is yet totally accessible for the reader who wants to dip at random, to follow a theme or to go more deeply into the writers of a particular period.

What then is the 'holiness' which such an army of writers have sought? The old test of Scripture, Tradition and Reason stands over all, with the fourth criterion of Experience which has become something of a catchword today. This last can be dangerously subjective, but an injection of it helps to keep theology in touch with the realities of this life, and a dose of commonsense may be counted another Anglican characteristic. More distinctive is something which has been apparent from Cranmer to the present day: a genuine appeal to Tradition as a source of judgement, not to confirm a stance already determined. Our divines have made good use of their predecessors, the Fathers of the church both East and West. Patristic scholarship, to learn not to prove, has undergirded all the great Anglican movements and revivals. Tradition and change are frequent, but not essential, rivals. Even the most fervent admirer of the Reformation settlement in England will not deny that things have moved on, and that not all has been loss. It was after he turned to Rome that Newman wrote his great essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, but he spoke with an Anglican voice when he urged us to distinguish between true developments of what was inherent in the past and corruptions which have no root. Judicious development has given our church its strength; today, the passion for novelty threatens to weaken it. The spirit that emerges from this approach is one of quiet, unspectacular devotion. There is little time for elaborate 'methods' of spirituality, but rather a patient discernment of how people may best receive and respond to divine grace. The approach is through awe and mystery, with the 'reserve' which the Tractarians valued so highly. This is indeed the essence of the Book of Common Prayer and is sadly lacking

* *Love's Redeeming Work: the Anglican Quest for Holiness*, compiled by Geoffrey Rowell, Kenneth Stevenson and Rowan Williams, OUP 2001, ISBN 0-19-122476-6, £40. 00

in many parts of more recent liturgies. It is not incompatible with triumphalism of the right kind—not assertion of the civil power which the Church of England monopolized for too long, but the confident assertion of Christ as King.

These are qualities which have brought us through bad times as well as good, have sustained a church truly both Catholic and Evangelical, and are strongly represented in this book. In all that time, until a few decades ago, the Book of Common Prayer was the undisputed source of worship and doctrine. Its primacy is still acknowledged in the prefaces to recent revisions, but not often honoured by those who go only for the new. It is encouraging to remember that the writers here represented found their public expression of worship, and much of their private devotion, in the pages of the prayer-book. The editors give honourable regard to this fact. Geoffrey Rowell, in a masterly introduction to the period after 1830, approves of some of the effects of new liturgy but also says, ‘If there is gain . . . there is loss undoubtedly in the weakening of the memory of common prayer. The days when the Sunday collect was learned by heart have gone for ever.’ For ever—well, that should be a stimulus to greater efforts by the Prayer Book Society. Fine writing is not itself a guaranteed way to holiness, but the language of the prayer-book has without doubt been a powerful aid to devotion, and it is no coincidence that many Anglican writers have been masters of prose or poetry—or sometimes of both. This is not a book for the pocket or even for the bedside table; it is big enough to need a comfortable chair and a firm hand. But it will supply enough devotional material for all seasons and for many personal moods. Here is the work of centuries, set to outlast many shelves of lesser volumes.

INSIGHTS INTO THE LITURGY

by J. R. Scrivener

In this eloquent and learned book* Cardinal Ratzinger intends, by his own account, not ‘to give instructions for liturgical practice but only insights into the spirit of the liturgy’ (p. 207), and it should be said at once that he says nothing about the language of worship and little in detail about rite in the strict sense. He seeks rather to bring before the reader the liturgy’s grandeur, the scope and scale of its setting and implications, and in so doing to bring together history, creation and cosmos in the one focus of the Eucharist. At the centre of his argument is an analogy between the Incarnation as an actual event in time which draws to itself all the meanings of ‘salvation history’, and the Eucharist, in which there is a making present of the past event which is at the same time a reaching out to the future (what he calls its ‘eschatological dynamism’ [p. 59]). The liturgy is thus ‘the concrete form of hope’ (p. 14). But though we ‘already reach out to lay hold of [that hope] . . . at the same time it is ahead of us’ (p. 97). So Christian liturgy is ‘liturgy on the way, a liturgy of pilgrimage towards the transfiguration of the world which will only take place when God is all in all’ (p. 48; it is in this context that Cardinal Ratzinger argues for the symbolic expressiveness of the ‘Eastward position’). We cannot talk ‘as if the New Heaven and New Earth had already come’ (p. 53); we must recognize rather that the Christian existence *in via* is ‘a peculiar kind of “in between”, a mixture of “already and not yet”’ (p. 54); and that in this ‘time of images, in which we now find ourselves . . . we do indeed participate in

* Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ignatius Press 2001. ISBN 0-89-870-7846, £13.95

the heavenly liturgy, but this participation is mediated to us through earthly signs' (pp. 60–61). The signs are not just arbitrary however, for the other very valuable emphasis in this book is on 'the *givenness* of the liturgy' (p. 165), in which 'the great reality comes to us that we ourselves do not manufacture but receive as a gift' (p. 168). The great rites are seen as 'forms of the apostolic tradition . . . unspontaneity is their essence. In these rites I discover that something is approaching me that I did not produce myself . . . something greater than myself which ultimately derives from divine revelation' (pp. 164–5).

If what Cardinal Ratzinger has to say is not in substance unfamiliar (to readers of Evelyn Underhill's *Worship*, for instance), there is a good deal of detail new, at any rate, to this reviewer. What its influence will be in Roman Catholic circles one can only guess, but it can be recommended to Catholic-minded Anglicans of a conservative temper, who will enjoy, with minimal adjustment, the pungent observations on 'liturgical activism', 'participation', kneeling for prayer, applause in church ('wherever applause breaks out in the liturgy . . . it is a sure sign that the essence of liturgy has totally disappeared, and been replaced by a kind of religious entertainment' [p. 198]), liturgical dance ('dancing is not a form of expression for the Christian liturgy' [p. 198]) and other matters. There are thoughtful discussions of art and music in relation to worship, and the author shows a remarkably sympathetic interest in Eastern Orthodoxy as well as evidence of wide reading in several European languages (his bibliography includes a title by the Anglican writer Edward Norman). It is hardly a criticism of the book that it can be of use only to a very limited number of people in the Church of England, but reading it has made me feel our want of something similar. There is the Underhill mentioned earlier of course, but that is perhaps more often respectfully referred to than read through and few lay people will be at pains to peruse so large a volume. The principal defect of *The Spirit of the Liturgy* for Church of England use (and perhaps even for the modern Church of Rome) is, I think, its glancing and incidental treatment of the theology of the Holy Spirit. The English church has lived longer than the Roman with pulls towards non-conformity and away from set forms, and has been less inclined to see Church Tradition as the principal, if not the exclusive, dwelling-place of the Spirit. There are numbers of sincere and active church-people who, looking to that 'liberty wherewith Christ has made us free', are suspicious of what may only be 'vain repetition'. But we should hesitate to think of the church as divided into hostile and mutually-exclusive camps on these matters. The recent *Church Times* survey indicates otherwise. The support for traditional services, for old hymns, and for silence and ritual in worship is strikingly high (69%, 70%, 80% and 73% respectively find them 'helpful to their faith'), suggesting preferences which would be received with polite bafflement by some 'worship leaders' and 'advisers'. Support for new forms of service and hymns is lower (52% and 60%), but there is a good deal of overlap and a substantial number of people seem able to live with, and even value, both. There is room surely for patient exploration of these questions at parochial level—where practical decisions about worship are made, after all. If the general case for formal public worship is not articulated and understood (in spite of enjoying high levels of tacit support) the special case for the Book of Common Prayer can hardly expect to get a hearing. For discussion purposes we need something more like a primer which would do for our day what Colin Dunlop's excellent little *Anglican Public Worship* did a generation or so ago. Is there such a book?

SCRUTINY (31): ‘*This Little Light of Mine*’

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

by Dewi Hopkins

In the first of his *Letters to Malcolm*, on prayer, C. S. Lewis explains that he avoids being drawn into disputes about the liturgy and so will get the subject out of the way by saying briefly what little he has to say about it. He then succinctly makes out what amounts to a fairly comprehensive defence of the prayer-book; but he does concede that there is a case for slow, imperceptible revision at the rate of about ‘one obsolete word in a century’. (One wonders, incidentally, whether this is the sort of flexible attitude that the Prayer Book Society ascribes to itself when it rejects ‘prayer-book fundamentalism’. There are those who would be interested to know.) Then he goes on to say that there are things that even he would wish to delete and specifies the sentence prefatory to the Offertory on the ground that ‘it sounds, in that context, so like an exhortation to do our alms that they may be seen by men.’

And it does sound rather like that: uncomfortably so. Still, it is a dominical utterance and cannot have sounded like that when it was first spoken. I wonder whether it could even now, and even in its prayer-book context, be spoken in a way other than to seem to encourage an obnoxious form of pharisaism. After all, it is the *sound* of it that Lewis objects to. Perhaps we could say not that it should be removed from the Offertory but that clergy should reflect upon the sentence in order to discover how it might be *spoken* most appropriately.

As with any extract the first thing to do is to look at the original context, and I suggest that Matt. 5.14–16 reports our Lord’s telling his listeners that from now on they are to be ‘the light of the world’. They are to cast upon the world the light of the holiness which they have seen and which is now to inform their whole lives.

We know that there is a strong temptation to respond to this by ostentatiously parading virtuous deeds: by showing to the world not righteousness but self-righteousness. The Offertory or the collection is only the most obvious point where the danger lies, and sometimes bishops’ letters have done little to help parishioners to avoid it.

Perhaps we have misunderstood the prefatory sentence, which should always by some means be related to its original context. At present perhaps the oral stress is upon the works, which emphasizes the virtue of contributing handsomely, when it should be very firmly upon *light*. In other words in just this context the sentence could be seen as a rather severe warning (much as some would regard St. Paul’s passage on charity / love, without the starry-eyed sentiment that has lately been bestowed upon it): a warning at the start of the Offertory to this effect: ‘You needn’t think that a show of material largess is going to see you all right. What God wants of you is the holiness that leads to good works. As for the collection, of course, give what you can give with a good grace (all the following prefatory sentences show the importance of that), but it is not the first or main thing that is required. *That* is the light itself.’

Then the sentence would sound right. It might even provide the text for an edifying sermon. It would take some courage on the part of the parson, certainly, but it is not the prayer-book that needs revision.

SHORTER NOTICES

Kenneth E. Kirk, *Conscience and its Problems—An Introduction to Casuistry*
Longmans 1927 and later editions; republished James Clarke 1999
With introduction by David H. Smith

This reissue is a reminder of the fruitfulness of its decade of origin for Anglican theology. While civil society faced social and industrial unrest and religious opinion was polarized by the Revised Prayer Book, the generation which had come through the furnace of the Great War (to echo the title of a book by chaplains to which Kirk contributed) was making its mark. Kirk, in particular, had spent the whole of the war as a chaplain on the Western Front, and when he began to work as an Oxford don in 1919 he inaugurated a one-man campaign to revitalize the study of moral theology in the Church of England. This he achieved by three major works—*Some Principles of Moral Theology*, 1920, *Ignorance, Faith and Conformity*, 1925, and finally in 1927 the volume under review. His best-known work, however, based on the Bampton Lectures of 1928, was *The Vision of God* (also reissued by James Clarke and reviewed in F. & W. No. 31). The Chair of Pastoral Theology at Christ Church was renamed and redefined, virtually in the expectation that Kirk would succeed to it, which he did in 1933, going on to become bishop of Oxford four years later. Though he continued to write and edited such influential volumes as *The Study of Theology*, 1939, and *The Apostolic Ministry*, 1948, there were no more major works like those of the 1920s, and he declined to undertake an extensive revision of *Conscience and its Problems* when the opportunity presented itself in 1948. Neither of these limitations is surprising. His brief tenure of the professorship was overshadowed by the untimely death of his wife and the care of their young family. The diocese of Oxford over which he presided from 1937 until his death in 1954 is famously unwieldy and the see has convoluted relations with Christ Church Cathedral and the University. It is a testimony to his stature that his scholarship held up as well as it did.

Kirk's public image was of a staunch upholder of a conservative and catholic churchmanship, and it might be assumed that his moral theology was the same. In fact it was not. Kirk was sensitive to the Vatican's over-reaction to the modernist movement, and he had served as a chaplain in Flanders—though opinions vary about the effect on him of this experience. His theology was thoroughly Anglican (like his liturgy: his episcopal mass was unforgettable—amidst the distinctive splendours of Christ Church—arrayed in full vestments and stage-managed by Arthur Couratin, Kirk in his fine voice spoke the words of the prayer-book with warmth and simplicity). In his moral theology he accepted the structure of thought supplied by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century and already adapted to the post-Reformation situation by the (then largely forgotten) Caroline divines—especially Jeremy Taylor (1613–67) and Robert Sanderson (1567–1663). Though aware of Roman developments which assumed a more far-reaching authority than the Church of England either had or wanted, and of the verbal niceties which had given the necessary science of casuistry a bad name, he sought to provide a system both rational and flexible. In the volume under consideration he defines in Part I the different aspects of decision-making, and in Part II applies them to contemporary problems. Part I might seem rather dry, as grammar is when studied by itself—but any

developed use of language cannot do without it, and the objective study of decision-making is a necessary defence against the irrational and over-emotional. Part II, on the other hand, is easily dated, as Kirk himself realized—and his (often very lively) discussions of particular topics need a degree of historical context.

In treading his *via media* he had to avoid both an over-assertive ecclesiastical authority and also the proud conscience proclaiming itself ‘the voice of God’ without qualification. If at this distance of time there is a consideration markedly lacking from *Conscience and its Problems* it is that notably provided by C. A. Pierce in *Conscience in the New Testament*, 1955, the year after Kirk’s death. Pierce argued for a clear distinction between conscience which refused something urged on it by outside forces (conscience as the New Testament understands it) and that which claims to provide authority for some positive course of action, including violence (which has no such support). It is this latter, of course, which is the basis of religious terrorism. The old writers were familiar with arguments about the right of resistance and passive obedience (remember the Vicar of Bray?). But such matters seemed remote in the 1920s; unhappily, not so now.

JOHN THURMER

Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion
in an English Village*
Yale University Press, 2001, £16.95

About 200 churchwardens’ accounts survive from the Tudor period. Most of these are fairly routine notes of income and expenditure, which tell us little of the life and activities of the parishioners. From Morebath, however, a tiny Devon hamlet on the edge of Exmoor, we have a complete set of accounts, kept by the vicar and liberally embellished with his comments. From 1520 to 1574, Sir Christopher Trichay admonished, persuaded and encouraged his people to do their duty in church and parish. Everything he intended to say at the annual audit he wrote down, and it is this one-sided conversation of priest and people that comprises the story of ‘The Voices of Morebath’.

It is a fascinating story, covering the entire years of the Reformation. Sir Christopher was vicar of Morebath throughout four reigns, though he was no Vicar of Bray, changing sides with each reign. The disastrous involvement of the parish in the 1549 prayer-book rebellion taught him to obey the Injunctions and keep his own counsel. Yet it is clear where his own sympathies lay; he was a conservative vicar in a conservative parish. But he did not shrink from his duties, leading his people in prayer, and, unusually for those times, regularly preaching a sermon. The people of Morebath also had civic duties, for example, to maintain the local bridge, and so Sir Christopher included the transactions of the Manor Court in his accounts, thus completing the picture of the parish, both ecclesiastical and secular.

In *The Voices of Morebath* Dr Duffy has produced a most distinguished piece of historical scholarship. He handles his material with great skill and understanding, allowing the words in the records to speak for themselves.

There is no speculation, no over-interpretation. The reader is introduced to the people, their farms and cottages, the well-ordered parish organization in which men and women, young and old, rich and poor, all took responsibility in a truly democratic society. It is through the vicar's words that the brutal effects of the Reformation on one small parish are shown. It might be argued that Dr Duffy is guilty of bias; he has little to say about the equally brutal effects of the reign of Queen Mary in other parishes. But he stresses, more than once, that this is a record of a particular parish, and that churches in other parts of the country would present a different picture.

One surprising omission: we are told that the rite used for Mass at Morebath was the Use of Sarum, but nowhere is it mentioned that this was the basis for the 1549 prayer-book. And an unimportant detail: Elizabeth is described as Mary's step-sister, not half-sister, a strange slip for so eminent an historian.

The Voices of Morebath is provided with maps and photographs of county and parish, a very comprehensive index, chapter notes and bibliography. It will, I am sure, remain one of the outstanding books of the 21st century.

W. A. BULL

Digby Anderson, *Losing Friends*, Social Affairs Unit, 2001, £12.95

In *Losing Friends*, Dr Anderson considers male friendship today to be in poor shape, a pale shadow of what it ought to be, and was in the Golden Ages. In those Heroic Times friendship meant blood-brotherhood, integrity, loyalty, Give not Take, and it endured. In our reduced circumstances we neglect it, to our cost. The theme has some importance but an article might have sufficed (indeed there was one in the *Daily Telegraph* giving the gist of the argument). As it is there is much spinning and weaving for such a quantity of cloth. Dr Anderson analyzes the various factors militating against true friendship in our time. He thinks, rightly, that friendship need not imply inversion, but surely two of the cases he discusses, those of Saul, David and Jonathan, and Newman, did? In the chapter on Christianity he claims that our religion has little time for friendship, but, oddly, says nothing much about the social function of the church in promoting friendship through its various organizations. He prefers to make his friends in the pub, fortified by alcohol, at One in Spirit. The *enfant terrible* of the English Kitchen defends Gentlemen's clubs against slander, and even insider trading on the Stock Market is commended (it's friendship, you see). Old Boy networks are approved on the basis that the knowledge which comes from long association will be a better guide in choosing the best candidate for a job than the more conventional testimonial, curriculum vitae and interview. But—here's the rub—personal predilection or prejudice has not always selected the right man: far from it. Here and there Dr Anderson makes some acute observations, but equally much of what he says is blindingly obvious. However, if the book causes us to stop for a moment to take stock of the current state of our friendships, perhaps with some alarming insights, it will have served a useful function.

JOHN TASKER

LOWER PEOVER: GOOD FRIDAY: *a sermon*

by Ann Barlow

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

It is easy to forget when we read the gospels that first-century Palestine was a land under Roman occupation. Admittedly there was a Jewish ruler of sorts, Herod, but as we know he was really just a token ruler. It was Rome that was in charge in Palestine. It was the Romans that made the rules and the Romans that made sure that they were kept.

But as we read through the gospels there's very little mention of the Romans. Jesus conducted his ministry in Galilee—a rural, farming area where people went about their business on a day to day basis, so they could be left alone to get on with it. It didn't need great settlements of Roman soldiers to make sure that the farmers were doing what they ought to do.

It comes as a bit of a shock when we move into the stories of the crucifixion, then, to find that the whole event is being organized by the Romans. We've got a trial before Pontius Pilate—the Roman governor. We've got the soldiers mocking Jesus in a hall called the Praetorium—definitely a Roman establishment. And we've got the manner of death itself—crucifixion—a particularly inhumane Roman punishment. We suddenly see Palestine under Roman occupation.

We do know though from our own history that when the Romans occupied, they were quite capable of getting on with their lives almost as it were in isolation from the country they lived in. They built their villas to the same pattern as they would in Rome. They socialized within their own community, probably imported their own type of food from Rome and lived their own Roman lives. So while Jesus stuck to the rural areas of Galilee—which they didn't have much interest in—he would not come into contact with the Romans.

It was a different story in Jerusalem. The Romans were there in force—probably in their mind keeping the peace. It was the holiday season. If there was going to be trouble the military presence was there to stamp it out. So when the high priests brought a Galilean to Pilate saying 'This one's a trouble-maker', what could they do but get rid of him? And, they being Romans, the fact that the issue was that he was calling himself a Messiah was neither here nor there. Setting up as a Messiah meant nothing to the Romans. They worshipped their own gods: Diana, Juno, Jupiter and Mercury. They made them offerings and bowed to their statues. The Messiah meant nothing to them.

So when we get to the point when Jesus dies in the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark and John we find ourselves reading of a most remarkable incident. In the gospel of Mark, chapter 15 verse 39, it reads like this: 'And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.' The centurion was a Roman and an important enough Roman not to need to mix with Jewish rif-raf. He wouldn't have listened to the gossip about Jesus. He'd have done his job and gone home to his Roman life-style in a villa outside Jerusalem. He

wouldn't have known about the Jewish religion. Yet when he saw Jesus die he recognized him as the Son of God. Not one of the gods—as you'd expect a Roman to say—but the Son of God.

Crucifixion was a horrific event and we know that for Jesus's disciples it would have seemed like the end of his ministry. They had followed him because of his teaching, his preaching and his gifts of healing. It would have seemed that the whole purpose of that was lost when Jesus was crucified. Surely it was the ministry that made Jesus worth following. But Jesus had not come to the world to have people follow him as a man who could work miracles. Jesus had come to the world to bring the world to God, to make sure that people recognized God and followed his ways. It was when Jesus died that the centurion recognized God.

It was the cross that revealed God to the world in his Son. It was in Jesus's death on the cross that the pagan centurion recognized the true God. It was when the disciples thought that the ministry was over that Jesus in fact revealed his true identity to a much wider world.

In today's world Christ is put on the cross over and over again. Whenever we as society decide that the rules of our society are more important than our worship of God we take part in leading Christ to the cross. When we don't stand up to injustice we allow Christ's crucifixion to happen. Then when we do see what is going on in the world we ask 'Why did God let this happen?' as if we had nothing to do with it. And at the same time we find it very difficult to believe that God is recognized in today's world.

The first disciples did much the same. Judas betrayed Jesus; Peter denied Jesus; and I've no doubt that those standing at the foot of the cross asked 'Why . . .?' But unlike the first disciples we have a hope which they did not have. We know that no matter how many times the world turns its back on Jesus, he will be recognized as the Son of God. We know that even in his death on the cross Jesus was recognized as the Son of God by a man who would have had no knowledge whatsoever of what God could do for him. Even as he died the Son of God could make himself known for what he truly was.

We also know that the events of Good Friday were followed by the resurrection. So we know that Christ's death on the cross was not the end but the beginning of a new life—a new life in which God shows his forgiveness of all man's sins in time, for which Christ hung that day upon the cross. So on Good Friday we once again recognize that we have to take a first step towards a new life in Jesus and that that first step is to stand at the foot of the cross with the centurion and to say, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.'

And now to God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory from this day forth and for evermore. Amen.

The poem on pp. 2–6 was first published in *Domus* booklet No. 12, 'Tuning Up', which is available from the author at 15 Rhosfryn, Bangor, LL57 2DL, £2.00 post-free.

THE WAY OF THE CHURCH

by Rita Pimple

I could tell she wasn't quite herself. (Who she? Why, Celia Crumpet, of course, who she else?) She dithered, downcast, upon the doormat . . . and then she spake.

'Oh Rita, I've been through hell . . . "Morning Service" at St. Alternate's—I had to go there, because the dear curate . . . ' (*viz. Mr B. C. P. Approx, our ordinary minister*) ' . . . is on retreat at Whalley Abbey.'

'Noble of you, Celia!' I responded: 'I'm sure I'd rather scramble eggs in t' kitchen than pray in hell.' And I continued to stir the ovoids into submissive accommodation with the milk and butter and a pinch of salt.

'Never again!' cried the Crumpet. 'The "book" was a flapping sheet assembled by the liberal ladies, and about as far from the BCP—which, do we not know? is the peculiar expression of the real Church of England—as you could wish, if you were of the assembly-team.'

Then, at the clicking of the latch, there suddenly returned, fresh from paying peculiar honours to the King, the perpetual curate, never more his friends to leave.

'Fear not!' he thundered. 'I retreat no longer. Here am I, in perpetuity, prepared to pray and eat as is our wont. The church wants our money, as well as our submissive accommodation to its insolent ignorance of the Real Thing; it is of course free to *want*, it has not the strength to *require*. Come, let us sit, and eat this moist yet firm accommodation that Rita has labour-intensively stirred up for us.'

So we did sit and eat.

David Jones says, at the end of his preface to *In Parenthesis* (Faber 1937, paperback edition 1963 and 1969):

P.S. I find I have neglected one thing that I very much wanted to say. There is the debt I owe to the printer who will print this for me. He is more than an aid, he is a collaborator, and I know of no one else so aware of both the nature of a writing and of how to print it.

D. J. 1st March 1937