

## A Course of Reading on Christian Worship.

THE Editor has asked me to suggest a brief course of reading in liturgics for the ordinary interested member of the Society and for students. I accept these limitations with pleasure, and shall try to select a few well-known, non-technical and, so far as I know, easily obtainable books. It will be understood, of course, that the selection is made from a bewildering number of volumes; and in such circumstances it must be an arbitrary choice. It is enough, however, to open up the subject for any interested person, and will lead him on, I hope, to further inquiry. I should, perhaps, add that in making this selection I am handicapped by the fact that, since the outbreak of war, I have had no access either to my study or to recent books.

In order to simplify the approach to this vast subject of Christian Worship, I have subdivided it into sections, mentioning a few books under each section, with brief comments.

1. THE THEORY OF WORSHIP. As introductory books, I rate very highly Dr R. S. Simpson's *Ideas in Corporate Worship*, Edinburgh, 1927, Dr H. J. Wotherspoon's *The Pentecostal Gift*, and Dr Oswald B. Milligan's recent Warrack Lectures, *The Ministry of Worship*, Oxford, 1941; all of these write with a truly catholic viewpoint from within the Church of Scotland. Dr J. E. Rattenbury in *Vital Elements of Public Worship*, London, 1936, writes as a Methodist, and he too is catholic in outlook; his short book contains many wise and penetrating comments which bring a new and rich understanding to his readers. I hope that Dr Percy Dearmer's *The Art of Public Worship*, London, 1919, is not out of print, for what he said then still needs to be said to-day, especially in Scotland. From the point of view of liturgy and life, A. G. Hebert's *Liturgy and Society*, 1935, is of great value and should not be missed. An accepted standard is Evelyn Underhill's *Christian Worship*, London, 1936. Anything by Miss Underhill is worth reading and pondering, and this book contains some of her best work. The first half, on the meaning of worship, reaches a high level; the second and historical half, however, does not carry the same authority. On the sacraments there is no better introductory work than Dr H. J. Wotherspoon's *Religious Values in the Sacraments*, Edinburgh, 1928. The problem of how to train children to worship is one which presents itself to many; a little book has recently appeared by Dewar & Dent, which is quite the best I have seen: it is entitled *Training in Worship*, in the 'Needs of To-day' series, London, 1942. Finally, although an immense number of books keep springing to mind which I should like to include in this list, I shall content myself by reminding you of Heiler's great work *Das Gebet*, translated into English and abridged, and published by the Oxford Press under the title, *Prayer*. It is the most considerable work of those mentioned here, but I think it is an advantage to read some or all of the others first.

2. THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. Here, Duchesne's *Christian Worship, Its Origin and Evolution*, though a little out-of-date in some respects, is a standard work which has stood the test of years and is, I am sure, the best book to begin with. For those particularly interested in the Jewish sources there is W. O. E. Oesterly's *Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy*, Oxford, 1925; and there are useful essays on that subject in *Liturgy and Worship*, which I shall mention later. The best work on the Roman Rite has been done by the Benedictines, but they have not given us much in English; most of it is in French or German. So probably still the most useful and accessible work on the Roman Mass is A. K. Fortescue's *The Mass, A Study in the Roman Liturgy*, London, 1922. Dom Cabrol's *The Mass of the Western Rites*, London, 1934, which deals with the non-Roman rites of Western Christendom, would, if it were read, correct much false teaching which is disseminated by those to whom F. E. Warren is still Gospel; and there is also his *Liturgical Prayer*. Covering the whole field, but in parts inaccurately, is Y. Brilioth's *Eucharistic Faith and Practice, Evangelical and Catholic*, London, 1930, which, translated from the Swedish, has had a great vogue in this country. Almost as

wide in scope is Dr D. H. Hislop's *Our Heritage in Public Worship*, Edinburgh, 1935, which comes from the pen of a saintly Minister of our Church. Its pages reflect the broad and deep qualities of his catholic mind, but it is necessary to say that it tends to be misleading on several points both of judgment and fact, as a result of Dr Hislop's failure to master fully the technicalities of the subject. It is essentially the work of a gifted and devoted amateur. Here again are an overwhelming number of books, but there are two others, series of essays, which I feel I must mention. One of these is by a scholarly group of Congregationalists and is edited by Principal Micklem; it is entitled *Christian Worship*, Oxford 1936, and though now unfortunately out of print, is well worth having if a copy can be found. It is by no means a purely historical work, for in it the meaning of worship is ably and devoutly dealt with. The other volume is *Liturgy and Worship*, London, 1932, edited by W. K. Lowther Clarke, and chiefly the product of high Anglican scholars. It is not surprising to discover that it is somewhat sectarian in outlook and, where it deals with the rites and practices of the Reformed Church, abounds in blunders of a particularly diverting nature, pompously supported by references to texts magnificently misunderstood. Nevertheless, it is a storehouse of much interesting knowledge. Another book which contains out-of-the-way information is *Christian Myth and Ritual*, E. O. James, London, 1933; its title indicates its scope and it comes from the pen of a most competent scholar. Nor do I think that Bishop Frere's collected essays published by the Alcuin Club should be omitted, for they are packed with the wisdom and knowledge of a very learned, great, and devout mind. In conclusion, may I be forgiven for mentioning my own *Outline of Christian Worship*, Oxford, 1936, which provides skeleton outlines of the principal rites of Christendom, with particular attention to those of the Reformed Churches, which have been so much neglected. It is intended as a "beginner's book," an introduction to the whole subject, and is furnished with a copious bibliography at the end. I venture to mention it partly because it fills a vacant niche, and also because in the reprint now available it can be obtained quite cheaply.

3. SCOTTISH WORSHIP. Blackwoods, I hope, have still available the series of texts edited forty years ago by Sprott, Leishman, Cooper and Wotherspoon. Beside these should be placed Sprott's *Worship and Offices of the Church of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1882, which should be known and studied by every minister of the Church of Scotland and every student at its Divinity Halls. Dr Wm. McMillan's *Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church (1550-1638)*, London, 1931, now obtainable in an inexpensive edition, is a mine of quaint, curious, and ordinary practice, and should be in every minister's library. For the origins and texts of early Scottish Reformed worship I have no alternative but to refer to my *John Knox's Genevan Service Book*, 1556, Edinburgh, 1931, for it alone covers this ground. With these must be mentioned Wotherspoon and Kirkpatrick, *A Manual of Church Doctrine*, London, 1919, a book not to be missed. There are many older books, some of them really valuable, which I might mention, e.g., Leishman's *The Ritual of the Church of Scotland*, buried away, unfortunately, in Principal Story's *The Church of Scotland, Past and Present*, vol. IV., and by far the ablest survey of the general history of Scottish post-Reformation worship; but I refrain from doing so, as most of them are out of print and unobtainable.

4. ANGLICAN WORSHIP. The standard work is Procter and Frere's *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, London, 1925, an excellent and easily comprehensible survey which links up modern Anglican worship with the worship of the Western Church. With this may be read Frere's *Principles of Religious Ceremonial*, rev. ed. London, 1928. Certainly Dr Percy Dearmer's *Parson's Handbook*, Oxford, which has run into numerous editions, should be read by all who wish to be informed upon vestments, the differences between scarfs and stoles, communion tables and their apparel, and general ceremonial. Written by an Anglican for Anglicans, it is by no means merely Anglican, and should be on Scottish bookshelves almost as much as on English ones. It would go far to save us from being the victims of many modern crudities and perversions in our worship. If a slighter but competent history of the Book of Common Prayer is desired, there is Dearmer's *The Story of the Prayer Book*,

Oxford, 1933, which may be read in place of Procter and Frere. The literature here is vast, but the books I have mentioned are basal.

5. CHURCH ARCHITECTURE. I am almost afraid to begin to make a selection here, but a good standard general work, highly readable, is E. H. Short's *A History of Religious Architecture*, London, 1936. Batsfords publish a long list of popular works on this subject, excellently and generously illustrated; and for those who love Scotland there is Ian Hannah's *The Story of Scotland in Stone*, Edinburgh, 1934. Full of enlightenment if slight in content is A. R. Powys, *The English Parish Church*, London, 1930. Here I stop with this section; the interested reader will soon be led on until he has read an alarming number of books, each one more absorbing than the others. Need I add that this is a subject we dare not longer neglect, unless we would betray a sacred trust?

6. CHURCH MUSIC. Here again it is extremely difficult to make a fair selection, for there are so many books of almost equal merit. But I must keep the beginner chiefly in mind, and suggest R. Aigrain's *Religious Music* (Sands, London), as a compact and general survey. A popular treatment is *Music and Worship*, London, 1935, by Walford Davies and Harvey Grace, which also contains a bibliography sufficiently comprehensive to keep the inquirer engaged for some time. I must also mention two extremely useful books by our own scholars, Dr Millar Patrick's *The Story of the Church's Song*, Edinburgh, 1927, and Dr Wauchope Stewart's *Music in Church Worship*, London, 1926. And for the prevention of cruelty to plainsong, I do most strongly recommend a perusal of Arnold's small, inexpensive and extremely valuable *An Introduction to Plainsong through the Office Hymn*, published by the Oxford University Press for, I think, one shilling and sixpence, a trifling price to pay for so great a deliverance.

7. LITURGICAL TEXTS. I had proposed to set down a list of easily available texts, but here I am honestly baffled as to where to begin and where to end, whether they are to be ancient or modern, translations or originals. Certainly no student of the subject can afford to be unacquainted with the texts, unless he is content to be like the people who read about the Bible, but never read the Bible itself. They have an immeasurable enrichment to bring us, and many are easily obtainable. But in an article as brief as this, I have no choice but once again to refer to *My Outline of Christian Worship*, pp. 188-194, where an extensive selection will be found, the study of which, I venture to hope, will create in many a love for the rich variety and beauty of the worship of the Church of God, and introduce them to a literature of prayer matchless in its glory.

WILLIAM D. MAXWELL.

#### CONCERNING THE COLLECTION.

In some of our old church-yards there stands at the main entrance a stone-built edifice of small dimensions. At Liberton Kirk, Edinburgh, it is known as the Offering House, and there in former times the Elders congregated to keep watch and guard over the plate at the door for the offerings of the faithful. In most churches this arrangement has given way to the orderly collection during Divine Service by means of bags. These are received from the Elders by the Minister on an Alms Dish and reverently placed upon the Holy Table. The Elders remain standing while the Prayer of Dedication is offered, and thereafter occupy their appointed chairs or stalls. In one Edinburgh church, at least, the congregation also stand as the Elders enter by the West Door, bearing the offerings, and remain standing during this prayer. After the Benediction and the private prayers of worshippers, the Elder appointed should return to the front of the Holy Table and receive the Alms Dish from the Minister, who then follows the Elders in procession to the Session Room or Vestry.

In some churches the empty Alms Dish may be seen lying on the Holy Table during the Service and before the collection is made. The Dish without the Offerings is meaningless and therefore out of place. Its proper place when not in actual use is on a shelf or bracket in the Chancel, where the Minister may conveniently lift it to receive the Offerings.