

Notes and Comments

The Book of Common Order, 1940, has had a surprisingly large circulation, here and overseas, which is most gratifying. In Scotland, in so far as its recommendations have been heeded, it has served to crystallize the general pattern of worship which has emerged as a synthesis of the varying traditions of the past. At some time in the future, no doubt, a revision of the structure of some of its services will be desirable. In that event, it is suggested, a separate place, in the normal morning service, might be found for a brief General Thanksgiving. The combination of thanksgiving and intercession in one prayer makes it, in practice, unduly long. An appropriate place for the thanksgiving is immediately after the Creed, and followed by a great hymn of praise. The Intercessions would come more relevantly after the Sermon and the Offering, and thus be said at the Holy Table. The Sermon and, thereafter, the offering and reception of the gifts of the people, kindle a vision of the witness and work of the Church Militant, and our part therein. At this point the Great Intercession, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, would seem most fitting and significant. It would enable a return to John Calvin's practice of offering the Intercessions at the Holy Table, the focal point of Christian fellowship and prayer; and it would set the Sermon more obviously at the heart of the service.

In his article, in *Annual*, 1958, on "Scottish Worship: The Heritage of the Past and the Needs of the Present", Dr Gordon Donaldson, in his plea for the singing of the Canticles in Scotland, refers to "the prevalence of the notion that congregations are incapable of singing anything which is not in verse, and that prose items must therefore be left to the choir". He terms this nonsense. This has elicited the following comment from a rural minister: "It can be done. When I came to this small country parish I found I was in a very backward community, deeply suspicious of so-called 'innovations'. Before very long, however, we had all the children and nearly all the adults reading aloud with the minister the Canticles in the 'forgotten' back pages of the *Church Hymnary*. For our

play last Christmas the children of the Sunday School and their teachers learned the first (plainsong) setting of the *Magnificat*, and now, when we use it in church, the congregation are more and more joining in. Such unison settings are well suited for congregational use”.

In our Scottish tradition the office of Beadle is of considerable importance, and should receive fitting recognition. He has under his care the keeping of the sanctuary in cleanliness and beauty, and by his manner and deportment he can either greatly assist in creating an atmosphere of fellowship and reverence amongst all who come about the church and its precincts, or he can spoil it. With such considerations in mind the Minister of Glasgow Cathedral, some time ago, on the appointment of a new Beadle, prepared the following simple order for his installation.

Order for the Installation of a Beadle

Psalm 40 vv. 1-5

Prayers

Hymn 478

Reading of Holy Scripture

The Apostles' Creed

Introduction (*the Beadle comes forward*)

Minister : You have been duly appointed Beadle and Warden in this, the Cathedral Church of Glasgow. Do you promise, God helping you, faithfully to guard this ancient sanctuary from all harm, reverently to take your part in its worship, courteously to welcome all who enter its gates, and in all your ways and works to preserve its honour, beauty and peace ?

Beadle : I do, so help me, God.

Minister : May God who has called you into the service of this Church grant you happiness therein and strengthen you for all your duties and responsibilities.

“ A day in Thy courts, O God, is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the House of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness ”.

Let us Pray

Almighty and most gracious God who callest us to serve Thee in Thy Church in manifold ways : be pleased to accept Thy servant here present as he dedicates his gifts and strength for the care of this Thy sanctuary. Grant him needful help for all his tasks, and true satisfaction in the fulfilment of them. And, having faithfully served Thee here on earth, may be at the last stand before Thy face and serve Thee in that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens ; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to Whom with Thee, O Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

As soon as the Anthem begins the Beadle leaves the chancel.