BOOK REVIEWS

An Aifrionn, Comunn Gàidhlig na h-Eaglais Easbaigich, Inbhirnis, 1974. n.p.

It is a bold enterprise for anyone to attempt the translation of 'The Liturgy' 1970 of the Scottish Episcopal Church into Gaelic. Without being unkind, even a cursory reading of this work reveals that the translator undertook a task beyond his capabilities.

In the first instance the title *An Aifrionn* shows a lack of knowledge of the historical and theological implications of the Reformation Movement. 'An Aifrionn' is not the equivalent of 'The Liturgy'. 'An Aifrionn' is a title which was entirely associated with the Roman Catholic Mass. Because of the interpretation of the Sacrifice involved in the Mass neither the Church of England nor the Episcopal Church in Scotland continued the word Mass in their Ordinals and Liturgy for the worship of their Churches. It is the 'Book of Common Prayer' in the Church of England and the 'Scottish Book of Common Prayer' in Scotland. Certain individuals could disagree with this but only at the expense of overlooking the basis on which they justify the existence of these two Churches.

There are so many examples of defective Gaelic in this translation that it would be tedious to enumerate all of them or even most of them. One or two examples will suffice. The infinitive construction is repeatedly used after 'tha sinn a' guidhe' when it should be a dependent clause. An example of this is his phrase 'tha sinn a' guidhe thu eisdeachd ruinn'. This should be 'tha sinn a' guidhe gun eisdeadh tu ruinn'. The word ADHRADH (worship) is treated as if it were the verbal noun of a transitive verb. The translator renders the phrase 'who is worshipped' as A THATHAS AG ADHRADH when it should be DH' AM BHEILEAR AG ADHRADH. Several words and phrases are obviously dictionary uplifts, as it were, and not idiomatic, liturgical and most certainly not biblical usage. BUIDHEACHAS is better than TAING, UILE is more Gaelic than GU LEIR. The General Confession on page 16 is so full of defects that I would offer a different one to the author if he so required it. I do not know of any Gaelic congregations which could use it except perhaps St. Mary's, Glencoe. It could be that the intention is to use it in services under the auspices of the National Mod. If so, there will be strong reactions from many in the audience.

R. SMITH, Edinburgh

The Church Hymnary, Third Edition (Sol-fa) (Oxford University Press, 1975). Pp. xxv+917. £2.20.

The Oxford University Press have now brought out a sol-fa edition of the Church Hymnary (Third Edition). The format of the book is attractive; it is well printed and, at the price, cheap for the wealth of material it contains. The contents of the book have been reviewed elsewhere and so I confine myself to one or two observations on the use of sol-fa.

One has to assume that in producing this book the publishers are satisfied that there is still a market for a sol-fa edition. This is both interesting and, in view of the amount of money spent in musical education in schools in the past fifty years, depressing. As an aid to reading staff notation sol-fa is invaluable, but where it is treated as an end in itself it postulates a limitation in musical experience. The sol-faist who has the ability to auralise the removes in a tune like Frederick Rimmer's Iona and in so many other modern tunes in the book is surely capable of tackling the visual difficulties of staff notation. It is in modern tunes like the one just mentioned that the value of sol-fa tends to break down; the mental effects of the syllables are lost when no clear tonality exists in the tune. The average chorister indeed is more likely to learn the tune by ear! And although those responsible for carrying out the work of sol-fa transcription have done it according to accepted sol-fa practice one cannot help wondering if it is necessary to introduce modulations or removes quite so frequently. Why, for instance, should the tune Harington be sol-fa'd as if it were in two different keys while the tune Surrey, which has the same structure, is sol-fa'd without the use of a remove? Inconsistencies like this do occur in the book. Regardless of these personal reservations, however, let us hope that the book will be used to the full by those who prefer their music written this way.

ERIC W. REID, Edinburgh

History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland: 1893–1970. Ed. A. MacPherson (Publications Committee, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Glasgow), 1975). Pp. 427. £2.00.

Scottish Calvinism expressed itself in worship, doctrine and discipline. During the nineteenth century its discipline quietly slipped out of sight in each of the Presbyterian Churches. In the Church of Scotland the signs of its decline were in worship, in the work of

Robert Lee in Greyfriars and in the founding of the Church Service Society in 1865. The first evidence that even the Free Church was departing from Calvinism was in matters of doctrine and arose out of the ill-fated negotiations with the United Presbyterians which began in 1863. In this case there was a resolute minority – sometimes called the Constitutionalists – led by James Begg of Newington and John Kennedy of Dingwall. Strong enough to halt the union negotiations for the time being, in the end they were unable to resist the majority. In 1892 the Free Church passed a Declaratory Act limiting its adherence to the Westminster Confession, and in 1900 it united with the United Presbyterians. To the Constitutional party this seemed disastrous, a token that even the Free Church had betrayed the Gospel. On 27 July two ministers and the schoolmaster of Raasay dissociated themselves to form the Free Presbyterian Church. In 1900 a much larger minority refused to join the United Free Church, successfully claimed the property of the whole Free Church, was deprived of it by Parliament, and formed the Free Church as we know it today. It is hard to understand why they did not go out in 1893 with the founders of the Free Presbyterian Church.

By most standards the Free Presbyterian Church in modern Scotland is a very small body, confined to a West Highland membership and exiles in the south. It does not publish statistics but, contrary to general opinion, there is no doubt that it has grown and reason to think that it is growing. Convinced, whatever the chapter on the Civil Magistrate in the Westminster Confession may say, that the society of Christ can have no fellowship with the society of this world, in some ways it resembles the Donatist Church of North Africa, rigorous in morals and doctrine, uncompromising, intensively orthodox and conservative, and with a distinct racial and cultural basis. In one respect it differs, for it has never had a single outstanding exponent like Donatus himself. This is a Church of the people, springing from the grass roots. Like the Donatist Church it spurns the majority Church and, indeed, all the ways of the modern world.

Living an isolated life as much as the Closed Brethren, the Free Presbyterian Church has no direct knowledge of the Church of Scotland and judges it only by what appears in the press. 'The Church of Scotland', we read, 'is saturated in its theological colleges and pulpits with Modernism, Arminianism, Scoto-Catholicism and Antinomianism. One of her Professors, shortly before his death, said that he did not believe there was a single minister in the Church of Scotland today so obscurantist as to believe such out-worn and long-since-exploded theories as the Virgin Birth and the physical resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Another Professor, Dr. Cox, a fortnight before his death, declared that he never believed in either

theory.' For its part, the Church of Scotland is every bit as ignorant and prejudiced about the Free Presbyterian Church. This is a tragedy for both. One finds the Free Presbyterians condemning bitterly all sorts of things from Dramatic Societies to the Boys' Brigade and the New English Bible. But if they have their prejudices they also have principles which, though out of fashion today, merit respect and most serious consideration.

The Free Presbyterian Church is explicitly based on the Bible and on the Bible alone. It sees the Church as a divine institution, commanded to obey God's law to the letter, adding nothing and detracting nothing. To the outsider this is most evident in its worship, where any aid not prescribed in the Bible is prohibited. No praise may be sung except the psalms, and these unaccompanied, thus creating objectivity in worship and avoiding the subjectivity and sentimentalism of too many hymns. The present writer is inclined to see not principle, but prejudice, in adherence to the metrical psalter and Scottish tunes, and the refusal to use the prose psalms, so much closer to the original, and the Gregorian chant. However puritan prose psalm and chant may be, they carry the stigma of Romanist associations. Similarly, it seems prejudice that a Church so explicitly biblical adheres to the Scottish custom of occasional communion and adds that of late admission to the Lord's Table, and has no thought of a weekly celebration as the norm of worship for all believers.

One of the marvels of modern publishing is the success of the Banner of Truth Trust, but until recently the Free Presbyterian Church has scarcely deigned to present its case to the outsider. Whether we like it or not, there is a public waiting for such an austere statement of the Gospel. Only a few congregations of the Church of Scotland present it, but where it is found there is always a strong if limited response, not so much to its forms of worship as to the clear and unflinching statement of Christian doctrine.

A committee appointed by the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church has now produced a book which is at once a history and an apologia. Unfortunately it is a compendium of information for those already in the fellowship and therefore extremely unlikely to be read by outsiders. This is a pity, for it deserves to be widely read by all concerned with the Church in modern Scotland. The questions it poses are fundamental ones which the Church of Scotland today dismisses in all too cavalier a fashion. The book is well produced and at a price of £2 for well over 400 pages in hard cover is incomparably cheap by modern costs. Besides a great deal of trivia it contains a full account of some important though little known events in recent Scottish Church History and some documents otherwise almost unobtainable. Its writers deserve both sympathy and respect.

It is conceivable that the Catholic Church was in error when she accepted Constantine and all that went with him by way of compromise with society and in doctrine, and that the Donatists, if defeated, were right. In the same way a Church which has accepted the modern world might consider whether, possibly, the Free Presbyterians are right after all.

JAMES BULLOCH, Stobo

The Church of the Province of South Africa: *Liturgy 1975 – Minister's Book* and *Pew Book*. (Braamfontein: Publishing Department of the Church.) Pp. 218 *and* 56. n.p.

In a time of rapid and unceasing liturgical change it would be too much to expect to find much resemblance between the Order for the Eucharist issued by the Church of the Province of South Africa in 1975 and the South African Rite of 1929, and in truth there are no discernible links between them. The 1929 Office was one of a family of Anglican rites issued between 1928 and 1938 – England, Scotland, South Africa, America, India and Ceylon – all of them strongly traditional in their flavour. The 1975 order, by contrast, is related to other recent revisions which repudiate tradition. It contains express acknowledgements of copyright material taken from American, English and Roman sources.

The structure of the new Communion Office has a general resemblance to the English Series Three, the main change being the transfer of the Confession and Absolution to the initial Preparation. While there is indeed a structure, there is a wide measure of flexibility in the individual parts of the service, with four forms for the Intercession (the fourth of them being 'free and spontaneous prayers') and three versions of the Eucharistic Prayer. With so many options, this is hardly a liturgy in the old sense. Such an impression is strengthened when we turn to the orders for Morning and Evening Prayer and find that nearly all the versicles and responses and fixed prayers have been excised.

The Archbishop of Cape Town, in his Foreword, remarks that the use of contemporary language is consistent with the Anglican tradition that we should worship in a language understood by the people and adds that Cranmer's English, either original or imitation, is no longer a language men use. But at the present time, when so many people cannot open their mouths without resorting to a string of clichés which vary from year to year, it is vain to try to keep up to date. However, if modernity was one aim, brevity was another.

While the pruning of the language at every point may reasonably be praised for giving directness, the impression made on many who have been accustomed to more expansive phraseology is that the new orders are bald and meagre in the extreme.

One refreshing feature is the enrichment of the Calendar by the addition of recent names, so that, for instance, Perpetua and her Companions, Martyrs, 202, stand next to Maqamusela Kanyile of Zululand, Martyr, 1877. This removes the reproach that Anglican Calendars have for generations given the impression that sanctity did not extend later than the thirteenth century. The Minister's Book has a series of useful historical notes on the festivals and commemorations in the Calendar and might well be worth possessing on this account.

Another valuable feature is the inclusion of no less than twenty-one canticles (besides the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*), mostly drawn from various books of the Old and New Testaments. It is, however, startling to find the *Te Deum* compressed into thirteen verses, which surely carries the craze for brevity a bit too far. The lectionary is based, with only some minor modifications, on *The Calendar and Lessons for the Church's Year*, published by S.P.C.K. in 1969.

While the production of a 'Pew Book' and a 'Minister's Book' has obvious advantages in economy and convenience, it seems contrary to Reformation principles. This, in conjunction with the authorization of so many variants, perhaps makes it as well that the time-honoured title 'Book of Common Prayer' has been dropped.

GORDON DONALDSON, Edinburgh