

OBITUARY

The Rev. John Alexander Lamb, D.D., B.D., Ph.D.
obit 4 February 1976

Brotherly, scholarly, conscientious, unassuming, deeply devout, Dr. Lamb exercised not one but a variety of ministries spread over a span of half a century. For these his academic training was thorough. Arts and Divinity at Aberdeen and St. Andrews were followed somewhat later by a Ph.D. degree at Edinburgh. Later still it was St. Andrews that was to honour him with the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

When he was appointed Librarian at New College, Edinburgh, in 1951, he was able to unite a thirty-year-long pastoral experience with the knowledge, the discrimination, the catholic taste of the true bookman, so to become a servant of the wider Church.

With Shakespeare's Prospero, musing on his lost dukedom, he might have said: 'My library is dukedom enough'. But Dr. Lamb was no recluse. A theological library with its broad highways of required reading and its byways of specialized and even curious learning, exists for the service of a living Church, and Dr. Lamb never forgot it. With him the difference was this, that while all too many students, and even ministers, regard liturgical study as a by-way to be glanced at and thereafter ignored, Dr. Lamb knew it to be a highway of essential exploration, pointing to the place where individual faith finds its fulfilment in corporate worship.

The list of his involvements in this and other cognate fields is impressive. In addition to his membership of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society and the (former) Ecclesiological Society, he served as President of the Scottish Church History Society and of the Church Service Society, as Convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Public Worship and Aids to Devotion, and as an active member for seven years of the Joint Liturgical Group.

In addition to all this, he was Editor of *Fasti* of the pre-Union U.F. Church, and of Vol. IX of *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*.

Contributions from his pen appeared in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* from 1952 onwards, as well as in other periodicals. Always his over-riding concern was the fostering of a truer and deeper understanding of the worshipping Church; and it is significant that when, in 1962, The Faith Press published his book on the psalms, its title was *The Psalms in Christian Worship*.

John Lamb has a special niche in the affectionate memory of

members of the Church Service Society. Year after year his alert and discriminating pen prepared a critical selection and review of recently published liturgical literature, a service surely most helpful to many a preoccupied parish minister.

His formal retirement took place in 1965, but not the cessation of tasks, which inevitably still came to his hand.

The work Dr. Lamb accomplished we acknowledge gratefully before God. But we do not forget that this work has to be done again and again in every fresh generation; and it is this, beyond all praise that we can give, that John Lamb would most devoutly have desired to see, successors to continue his work.

T. H. K.

David Alexander Hodges, M.A., B.D.

David Hodges died in December 1975 barely four weeks after his seventy-ninth birthday.

He was born in Melbourne, Australia, but when his university studies were coming to an end, he was in a position to take up the appointment as the first senior and ordained assistant to Charles Warr, who had recently at that time been inducted as Minister at St. Giles' Cathedral.

After a five-year ministry at St. Andrew's Church, Bendigo, in his native Victoria, he came back to seek a charge within the Church of Scotland. He first served as assistant at Gladsmuir in East Lothian, and in June 1935 he was inducted to the charge of Ayton in Berwickshire, where he exercised a much appreciated ministry until he retired in 1969. For twelve years he was, in addition, Clerk to the Presbytery of Duns.

Immediately on his return to Scotland David Hodges evinced a continuing interest in the work of this Society. He had helped to found a Church Service Society in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and he wrote to the Secretary of this Society suggesting that copies of the Annual be sent to that Society. Such interest, not surprisingly, led to his election to the Council in 1936, and thereafter other offices followed. In 1942 he became editor of the Annual and a year later added to that the position of Secretary. For nine years he carried the double responsibility until in 1952 he was elected Vice-President and gave up the secretaryship. In 1954 he was elected President. But all the time he remained editor of the Annual, finally completing twenty-five years in that exacting position.

During his editorship the Annual maintained its high standard and this might have been thought to have been the service to the Society for which David Hodges would specially be remembered. In fact, however, his most notable contribution to the welfare of the

Society was what might be called 'the revival', which he was instrumental in initiating before he became Secretary and which he maintained after taking up that position. It all started when as a member of Council he was asked, or perhaps more accurately he himself asked, to convene a committee to rouse new interest and gain more members. Correspondents were appointed in Presbyteries, the colleges were visited, links were established, or strengthened, with similar societies overseas and the holding of day conferences in different parts of the country was revived. David Hodges' enthusiasm was the main driving force and providentially, as we can see now, it was exercised just at the right time, for otherwise the Society might have suffered irreparable damage during the war years. As it was it survived and was strengthened through David Hodges' careful nurturing.

In this Society we enjoyed his companionship, we appreciated his enthusiasm and we are grateful for his outstanding service in a multiple of offices. Remembering all he was and all he did we give God the glory for the life and ministry of David Hodges: and to that same God, the Father of Jesus Christ, whose he was and whom he delighted to serve as a Presbyterian within His Church, we commend his wife and family in their bereavement.

W. R. S.

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For details see page 63.
