

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue no. 112

April 1984

Editorial

Well, I went to the House of Lords' debate. I decided I ought to see this attempted re-run of Henry VIII's nationalization process, so I dropped everything and scooted off to London. Lord Sudeley was introducing again for a Second Reading his 'Prayer Book Protection Bill', the text of which follows on page 3. Readers who think they are suffering from a *déjà vu* are accurately diagnosing themselves and should read *NOL 76*, of April 1981, if they want the original experience again. Personally, having decided to get the experience to the full in the gallery of the House of Lords, I do not want to get it again.

I missed the beginning of the debate, and thus missed the Archbishop of Canterbury's reply to the mover—but I heard many congratulations to him by later speakers, apparently because he had somehow given the Lords a reassurance that the wicked theological colleges would from now on be ensuring that the 'young men' (who actually are frequently over 30, and are not infrequently women . . .) were so trained that they would *love* 1662. Investigation afterwards suggested that he was being credited with an undertaking he had not given, and certainly could never have honoured. The theological colleges were lumped together and once again made whipping-boys in the debate, and I hope to return to that at some point.

The bishops had come in force, but the four-hour debate really only had around 20-25 Lords and 12-15 bishops present at any one time. The speeches were marked by a degree of ignorance and parochialism, which I suppose was to be expected, and also by protests that worshippers were being turned into 'outsiders' by the coming of modern services. There was a widespread conviction held by the Sudeley supporters that it was only the wicked clergy who were forcing these modern appalling rites through and thus alienating ordinary people. There was the old chestnut that the new services had been introduced in order to get people into church, and they had done nothing of the kind, so that they had failed in their rationale.

How did the bishops respond to all this? Well, they put up a spirited and good-humoured defence. They referred to places in their dioceses where old services were alive and flourishing. They gently denounced as lies some of the things alleged about them in publications of the Prayer Book Society. And they said good things about the modern services. They even urged the noble Lords to come off their thrones and get onto their PCCs, or even General Synod, and take their place in the right place in the decision-taking process.

However, I was left with a nasty feeling that the total impact of the bishops' defence gave exactly the wrong impression. What they were saying was: 'You are wrong about the BCP being crowded out—it is alive and well'. This is to give great hostages to fortune; I longed and longed

for a bishop to get up and say: 'You are right—although the BCP may be in use in some places the trend year by year is against it. By the year 1990, or 1995, it may have virtually ceased from the land. There is no power which can keep it alive if *no one wants to use it*. We bishops do not particularly want to keep it alive ourselves. We want modern-language confirmation and ordination services almost the whole time. We know in which direction the Church of England is heading. We would not mislead you—rather, what we want to do is to help you to mature Christians to come to terms with it'. But the bishops had no such stomach for marching towards the gunfire. As a result they will probably be having to answer again in the future . . .

There were some tiny notes of hope. There was a suggestion that the Lords should not try to *compel* the Church of England, but should try to *counsel* it (rather as the General Synod at intervals calls upon Her Majesty's Government to take specific action). There was a response to the idea that Lords should get into the synodical process. And there was very great distrust of the proposal for a 'Select Committee' which would keep the Church of England under state surveillance.

The real fireworks came at the end. Then the Lord Chancellor (Hailsham) spoke for the government and simply dismembered the Bill *as legislation*—quite apart from its intrusion into the life of the church. The type of service from 1662 to be used was undefined; the arbiter at various points would be the incumbent—but the Bill started from the premise that he is untrustworthy; the requirement was without sanctions and was thus unenforceable. Indeed, the mover had given no proper time to speaking of his Bill (except—which to the Lord Chancellor was an enormity—to say that he did not actually want the Bill, only that dreaded 'Select Committee' which would have come on a following motion). The Bill was not about theological colleges nor about modern services, and the debate had hardly touched the Bill, etc. etc. The mover could scarcely summon words after this scorching to ask leave to withdraw it . . .

This editorial is left with the synodical question to ask which I pressed in July 1981. As the Lords have been handling business which would have seized again for Parliament powers devolved in 1975 to Synod, what has the Standing Committee been doing on behalf of the powers of Synod? Can ordinary backbenchers in Synod, like the undersigned, look forward to having a report in July from the Standing Committee which tells us how they fought on behalf of our powers and kept them safe? They need not fear even to be self-congratulatory if it was their efforts which won the day. In such a case, we too would be congratulatory.

The last word must be with the noble Lords who so outbid their own case as to say 'There is magic in the Prayer Book' . . . !

Colin Buchanan

LAUGHTER IN LITURGY

The Bishop of Birmingham (in that museum-piece debate on Series 1 on 29 February) said by a slip of the tongue:

'It [Series 1] enables you to have the offertory after the ablutions.' And the new Bishop of Bradford, when asked how it felt to have 36 bishops lay hands on him, said:

'I felt as though I was supporting a double-decker bus.'

A

BILL

INTITULED

An Act to provide for parishioners of any parish to require certain forms of service to be used in the parish church. A.D. 1984.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1.(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in section 1 of the Measure of 1974, where not less than the requisite number of persons whose names are on the church electoral roll in a parish make representations to the incumbent of that parish in accordance with the requirements of section 2 below, the provisions of subsection (2) below shall have effect.

Form of service.

(2) In the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) above, it shall be the duty of the incumbent to ensure that on not less than one Sunday in every month the form of service contained in the Book of Common Prayer (with such variations as are permitted by the Measure of 1974) is used at the morning service or, if there is more than one morning service, at the principal morning service at the parish church.

(3) Without prejudice to the making of further representations under subsection (1) above, the duty under subsection (2) above shall subsist for three years from its commencement.

2. Representations under section 1 above shall—

Content of representations.

- (a) be made in writing;
- (b) be submitted to the incumbent;
- (c) request the incumbent to ensure that on not less than one Sunday in every month the form of service contained in the Book of Common Prayer (with such variations as are permitted by the Measure of 1974) is used at the principal morning service;
- (d) be signed by the persons making the representations;
- (e) sufficiently identify the signatories to enable it to be ascertained that their names are on the church electoral roll in the parish.

3.—(1) In this Act—

"the Measure of 1974" means the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974;

"principal morning service", where more than one Sunday morning service is usually held in a church, means that Sunday morning service which the incumbent considers would, but for this Act, be normally attended by the greatest number of people;

"the requisite number" means 20 per cent. of the total number of names on the church electoral roll in the parish;

and the expressions "Book of Common Prayer" and "form of service" have the meanings assigned to them by section 5(2) of the Measure of 1974.

(2) This Act may be cited as the Prayer Book Protection Act 1981.

(3) This Act shall apply throughout the provinces of Canterbury and York.

Interpretation, short title and extent. 1974 No. 3

This month's booklet . . .

. . . is Worship Series no. 88, *Welcoming the Bishop*, by David Cutts. The author is chaplain to the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and is thus heavily involved in seeing the possibilities and the pitfalls of parishes doing it right or wrong. We anticipate total saturation of one diocese with this booklet, and are taking our risk on the others. It is certainly far more practical and generally useful than the Alcuin/Church Union production of three years back, *Episcopal Services*, and, indeed, is not intended so much to help bishops (for which there would be too small a market anyway) but to help *parishes*.

. . . and next month's

is Pastoral Series no. 18, *What? Me a House Group Leader?*, by Patsy Evans. Previous booklets have handled in various ways the use of house groups, including Eddie Gibbs' *Grow Through Groups* (Ministry and Worship no. 64, now in its third printing), and David Prior's *Sharing Pastoral Care in the Parish* (Pastoral no. 3, now in its second printing). This new booklet concentrates specifically on the choice of leaders and assistant leaders, and the training and equipment of them for their task.

. . . and next month's Spirituality booklet

is no. 9, *Approaches to Spiritual Direction*, by Anne Long. Anne Long teaches Spirituality at St. John's, Nottingham, and is uniquely qualified by her own experience and interests to write about what has been usually seen as a 'catholic' practice from an evangelical standpoint.

. . . and reprints

in May are Ministry and Worship nos. 20 and 24, *A Case for Infant Baptism*, by Colin Buchanan, and *Infant Baptism under Cross-Examination* by David Pawson and Colin Buchanan.

. . . and do you want to buy titles cheaply?

Well, if you do, we recommend the shops which keep a full stock—the Church House Bookshop, Mowbray's, SU, and SPCK in London, and similar institutions in Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham, and Manchester. Slow-moving titles are often still in stock at old prices (especially Liturgical Studies). Buy from them, and help yourself—and them—and us!

. . . and subscriptions to Anvil

which we mentioned two months ago, can, as we meant to imply, be sent in the same envelope as Grove Books payments, but should not (as we seem to have conveyed) come on the same *cheque*. Single copies of *Anvil* can be supplied on the Grove Books standing order at £2.75, but subscriptions (£7.95 for 1984) must be made out to *Anvil* itself. If you purchased issue no. 1 on its own, then a cheque for £5.50 to *Anvil* will take a subscription to the end of 1984.

ISSN 0263-7170

(£3.45 by inland post for the year 1984 – £4.00 with *News of Hymnody* added)

GROVE BOOKS

BRAMCOTE NOTTS. NG9 3DS (0602 251114)

16p

THE LITURGICAL COMMISSION AND DIOCESAN SECRETARIES

The Liturgical Commission is holding its annual meeting for diocesan liturgical committees' secretaries in London on 10 May. There are three items on the agenda paper:

1. The Commission will introduce drafts of the Holy Week and Easter material which is in preparation.
2. The Commission is seeking to discover the use of the remaining lawful services in Series 1, 2, and 3, to see which should have their use prolonged beyond 31 December 1985. There is also a discreet enquiry into the use of the unlawful services! The Commission's questionnaire to diocesan secretaries is reproduced below.
3. The Commission is also seeking to get initial official come-back on the character of the ASB services, as a starter towards the 1985-90 review. The questionnaire about this is also appended, though there will be group work on the day.

The Commission is ending the secretaries' day, and beginning its own private overnight session with a surprise. In the overlap, and somewhat unofficially, the Commission is announcing its evening meal that day to be an agape to which the secretaries can stay on. *NOL* hopes to report this new departure by the Liturgical Commission into semi-public love-feasting next month.

QUESTIONNAIRES (reproduced without all original blank spaces)

DIOCESE OF.....

[A] AUTHORISED ALTERNATIVE SERVICES
(authorised until 31 December 1985)

Approximately how many parishes in your diocese are at present using, and are expected to continue to need beyond 1985 the following services: (Guestimates or percentages would be acceptable if figures are not available).

SERIES 1

Solemnisation of Matrimony.....

Burial of the Dead.....

SERIES 2

Holy Communion.....

Baptism and Confirmation.....

SERIES 2 REVISED

Morning and Evening Prayer.....
(excluding Table of Psalms)

SERIES 3

Holy Communion.....
(excluding Tables and Psalms and Lessons)

In addition, if the information is available, it would be helpful to know which if any of the following unauthorised services are thought or known to be in use, and expected to remain in use.

SERIES 1

Holy Communion.....

Baptism.....

Morning and Evening Prayer.....

THE SHORTER PRAYER BOOK.....

Signed.....

[B] A.S.B. 1980

A. Comments on the Book in General

1. Mistakes.....
2. Infelicities.....
3. Sexist or racial difficulties.....
4. Clarity - Rubrics.....
- Layout.....
5. Omissions.....

B. Comments on Particular Services

1. Initiation Services.....
2. The Eucharist (which options appear the most and least frequently used).....
3. Marriage.....
4. Funeral.....
5. Lectionary.....
6. Offices.....

Signed..... Diocese.....

THE ASB CORRECTED

We are told that the ASB will be printed in June with errors corrected. This is of course great gain in public relations, as hitherto odd bits and pieces have been corrected without any admission that actual error has previously occurred. *NOL*, which has not been consulted by the presses as to error, and therefore may have missed a chance to help the publishers, nevertheless takes its usual stance of *pro bono publico* and suggests the following policy:

- 1) Let the presses publish (or give *NOL* to publish) their own official list of corrections they have made re earlier errors they now admit;
- 2) Let them not repeat that unctuous stuff we noted in the Desk Edition which suggested that previous errors were actually in the customers' interests;
- 3) *NOL* will go back into the prize money enterprise, and will offer £1 in respect of new errors spotted in the new printing;
- 4) *NOL* will do its own checking re old errors (from our previous issues in 1980 and 1981) and will publish fearlessly its own appraisal of how far true errors have been eliminated.

So come on, SPCK *et al.*, be a bit transparent and do your own PR work.

THE ASB's RIBS ARE SHOWING

Very hesitantly, I ask whether ASB has got policy right re petitions for the departed. The real problem lies not in the text of the communion rites or burial rite, but rather in prayer no. 53 on page 334. The origin of this curious form is that when a special group of anglo-catholics and evangelicals from the old Church Assembly tried in 1968 to find agreed ways through the difficulties about these prayers, this particular form was part of the package. Under great pressure the evangelicals on the group decided that adding 'according to your promises' made it just possible to pray for 'light and peace' for the dead. But they did so as part of an overall compromise package. In May 1968 the Convocations altered most of the rest of the disputed prayers back in the direction of their previously unreformed

character, but left this one. The House of Laity in November 1968 then declined to discuss the Series 2 texts any longer. But the residual effect of all this was that the 'according to your promises' stuff was thought to be part of an agreement, and not therefore to be amended again, and it went into Series 3 Funerals and the ASB on this basis. It also went into the intercessions in Rite B, which we mentioned last month. Indeed, the phrase 'according to your promises' even got proposed to the Revision Committee on Rite A for the paragraph about the departed in the main text of that rite—and was accepted by the Revision Committee and then by the Synod. Actually that passage did not need the 'according to your promises', as it was a prayer for the living on the analogy of the 1662 paragraph in the Church Militant prayer. But someone who had been on the 1968 group had decided that internal disputes in the Church of England on the issue could be resolved by this phrase, and thus proposed it. What is now needed is a hard look at prayer 53 in the funeral provision, and then at no. 21 in Rite A.

Book Review

Michael Perham *Liturgy Pastoral and Parochial* (SPCK, 245pp., £6.50). Michael Perham is an author on liturgy, a member of the post-1981 Liturgical Commission, and, till recently, the chaplain of the Bishop of Winchester. Here he has written a most systematically thought-through guide for parish clergy (yes and other parish leaders) who wish to use the ASB services with just a hint of cautious progressiveness. The book includes discussion of the purpose of worship, the shape of Sundays, the use of music, the process of decision-making, and so on. It is thus a thousand miles from the old misconception that the worship of the Church of England was exhaustively described in its book of official texts and the accoutrements would take care of themselves. There is a wholeness to Michael Perham's treatment of the liturgical programme which deserves acclaim. Its subject matter is like that of a dozen Grove Booklets put together—though it also has to be noted that they would have to be toothcombed for anything dangerous or unusual, which would then be quickly excised. Michael Perham is nothing if not safe.

I suppose the book becomes a basic parish resource, and when I look at it in that light, I have a few tiny regrets.

1. It is clearly in the parish communion tradition, and, for instance, accepts almost without questioning that evening services are currently run down. On family services he merely refers us to Kenneth Stevenson's Alcuin Club booklet...
2. The book seems to be written almost exclusively out of his own experience and ideas, to judge by its lack of reference to others. It is not only that the Grove Booklets are conspicuously absent (three get one-line mention in footnotes)—it is rather that Michael Perry's *Handbook to Parish Worship* (Mowbray), the Group for Renewal of Worship's *Anglican Worship Today* (Collins), and the (old) Liturgical Commission's *A Commentary on the Alternative Service Book* (CIO)—to name some solid works—do not rate a mention. Surely a list of other resources would have been worth putting in?
3. Finally, I was left with an uneasy sense that Michael Perham wants liturgy done right and yet without a sufficient impression coming

through that he expects the power of God to be at work. It is only an impression, and I will gladly have it corrected. Perhaps a touch more passion from the author would have changed the feeling?

That said, everybody must have it...

C.O.B.

FOOTNOTE TO THE HOUSE OF LORD'S DEBATE

I deliberately wrote up the debate from my own memories (and some notes which I took illegally in the gallery), but I now have *Hansard* to hand. This has enabled me to check on a couple of points which I think are newsworthy:

- 1) The Archbishop of Canterbury (midst many congratulations on that oh-so-misleading article he wrote in *The Daily Telegraph* on 23 February) said: 'With my encouragement the bishops recently decided to ask the General Synod to re-authorise this service [sc. Series 1 communion]... The matter was debated in February, when it was agreed that the necessary legislation should be introduced. It will require a two-thirds majority in each of the three Houses... and, rather exceptionally perhaps, the House of Laity passed the motion in February by rather less than this. I hope, however, that the necessary legislation will in due course be passed...'

This reads like a massive understatement. The House of Laity only just achieved a 50% majority for the motion in Synod; this was by no means 'exceptional'—the same House had rejected two items of liturgical revision in the last eighteen months; and, what the Archbishop seemed to ignore, the House of *Clergy* also failed to give a two-thirds majority; and, finally, the Synod only 'requested' the House of Bishops to introduce legislation, and the House of Bishops would act entirely properly if it refused to proceed on the basis of such a divided 'request'. [Incidentally, an assiduous correspondent has taken *NOL* to task for last month's list of ways in which Series 1 differs from Rite B—nos. 4, 7, and 8 on that list are in fact *not* necessary differences, as the Series 1 order or text can be followed in each case by invoking opening Notes 12 and 4 in Rite B—thus moving the residual differences even nearer to vanishing point, and making it even easier for *NOL* to offer to stage a legal Rite B which lovers of Series 1 would be unable to distinguish from Series 1...]

- 2) Lord Glenamara said in his speech: 'Or how do we reach the Canon Colin Buchanans of this world who accuse us of outright deception?' This is an accusation I am unaware of having levelled against the particular Lord. The nearest point I have ever come to such an accusation is in respect of loaded and misinterpreted Gallup polls. No, my 'accusation' would be that the Sudeleys of this world are (a) self-deceived about what is happening in the church, and (b) unrepresentative feudal Lords who wish to impose requirements upon the clergy which are contrary to their oaths of canonical obedience (as well as being everything else the Lord Chancellor said), and (c) engaged in a form of spiritual self-indulgence.