

cause of dissatisfaction was that this liturgy was 'catechetical, sermonizing and polemical' and that 'it had cut itself adrift from the ecumenical tradition' (J. D. Benoit, *Liturgical Renewal*. London, 1958). After various experiments dating back to the 1880s the result has been the appearance since the last war of a series of new liturgies in France and French-speaking Switzerland. These liturgies have the advantage of being in modern French and of being the fruit of much liturgical scholarship. The resulting work avoids the danger of merely aping Rome and produces an effect somewhat like a modernized Book of Common Prayer.

Meanwhile, a similar movement had been at work in the Church of Rome. As one might expect from a body which is so centralized and rigidly governed, the changes here have not been anywhere near as thorough. Stemming particularly from the feeling in France that the church had lost touch with the masses, there has come a series of reforms or attempted reforms and the growth of a number of centres advocating change. One of the reforms, which has never been officially sanctioned, is the abandonment of the Eastward position and the practice of facing the congregation at the celebration of the Mass. More important in our eyes have been the attempts at substituting the vernacular in various parts of the service, but up till now this has not received official sanction. Similarly protests on the use of wafers and the withholding of the cup have appeared, only to meet with strong official opposition. The main changes sanctioned so far have been the grant of permission to celebrate Mass in the evenings to suit the needs of a modern industrial community and the revision of the complex Services for Holy Week, bringing them back closer to the order of events in the Gospels.

Most encouraging from our point of view has been the renewed interest in the Bible. New translations into the vernacular have appeared and the writings of Roman Catholic scholars begin to sound notes which are very similar to those which Barth and his followers have been sounding. Louis Bouyer, for instance, says in *La Maison-Dieu*, the organ of one of the centres mentioned above, 'Let us make God's word the whole of our inner life, in order to make it the whole of our ministry.' There has also been a new emphasis on the need for preaching, although again this is more a matter of promise than of fulfilment. The movement is still largely for scholars and the *avant-garde*. As Benoit says, 'There may be signs of a thaw, and a certain fluidity, but everything could be frozen up again the moment it appeared dangerous to the Holy See'.

How is all this ferment in liturgical thinking on the Continent connected with architecture? It was in France that the liturgical movement was first joined to the modern movement in architecture to create a modern church. In 1918 the parish priest of a Paris suburban church was faced with the problem of building a new church. The funds of the congregation were totally inadequate to meet the expense of a large church in the style approved by the ordinary ecclesiastical architects. The priest was a man of courage and turned to an architect, who had never built a church before, but was already a master of the new reinforced-concrete construction. The result was a church to accommodate two thousand people at a much lower figure than the other architects had dreamed possible. As Hammond puts it, 'the consecration of the church of Notre-Dame du Raincy in 1923 marks the opening of a new chapter in the history of ecclesiastical architecture.'

This church would not be considered revolutionary on the Continent today, but as an attempt to bring the people back to a sense of communion and fellowship, the one room plan of this church was a great innovation. Like the other forces at work in the liturgical movement, the new architectural movement attempted to break down the barriers between priest and people especially in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

On the architectural side this new 'reformation' attempts to provide the best setting possible for the worship of God's people. For those in the Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic traditions the main problem is the celebration of the Eucharist. This problem has been solved fairly successfully on the Continent and in one or two churches here by bringing the altar, or the Lord's table (this word is again in vogue!), out from the East wall of the church and into a part of the church where all the people can hear and see and take part. This change combined with the practice

## LITURGY AND ARCHITECTURE

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TO INTRODUCE the subject of liturgy and architecture into this Bulletin may seem a retrograde step. Yet if, as was announced some time ago, the Bulletin is in future to take an interest in pastoral matters, I am sure that all who are called to be ministers of God's Word and sacraments are going to find both these subjects demanding some attention from us. In fact, this article's title and subject are suggested by the book *Liturgy and Architecture* by Peter Hammond (London, 1960), which has caused somewhat of a stir in both clerical and architectural circles recently.

The new ideas which this book champions in the field of church architecture spring not only from the modern movement in architecture (see J. M. Richards, *Modern Architecture*, in the Penguin series), but also from what is known as the 'Liturgical Movement'. Therefore to understand this new outlook on architecture it is necessary to discover its roots in the liturgical movement.

At the beginning of this century in France there was at work in both the Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches a deep dissatisfaction with the existing state of the liturgy. In the French-speaking Reformed Churches the dissatisfaction was with the basic liturgy. This liturgy could be traced back to the Genevan liturgy produced by Calvin, which in its turn was based on the liturgy of the Protestant church at Strasbourg. The major

of the celebrant facing the people across the table is claimed to have brought about a new sense of communion.

For churches, which have as a result of the sixteenth-century reformation placed more emphasis on the preaching of the Word, the architectural problem is not so simple. The older solution still found in most Free Churches is a complex structure in which the pulpit dominates the table and normally overshadows it. As a result of the liturgical movement on the Continent, with the renewed emphasis on the sacrament of Holy Communion there has been an attempt to give the pulpit and the communion table a place of equal importance in the church. For example the plain but attractive Bullingerkirche in Zurich has most effectively given equal emphasis to the preaching of God's Word and the breaking of bread by placing the pulpit and the communion table side by side in a spacious chancel.

How much has all this ferment on the Continent affected the church in England? As Hammond trenchantly pointed out, nearly all the churches erected since the first world war have been costly failures. In the majority of cases (see *Sixty Post-War Churches*, London, 1956) these churches are 'antiquarian and medievalist' in their plans. They are attempts to 'infuse new life into forms' . . . 'which belong irrevocably to a vanished culture'. Why modern Evangelicals should still hanker after designs which largely reflect the thought of the Oxford Movement is inexplicable. St. Andrew's Felixstowe, an evangelical church, one of the first to be built with modern materials in the 1920s, and the reconstructed Islington Parish Church, excellent though they are in many ways, are still basically medieval in their planning.

The second type of approach in England has been that of the conscious modernizers (see E. D. Mills, *The Modern Church*, London, 1956). 'Merely having an odd look, being the possessor of a Dreamland lookout tower, having a glass wall that at touch disappears beneath the floor, displaying a mosaic of obscure symbolism constructed of broken bottles or exhibiting a statue by a name guaranteed to strike terror in the conservative simple', does not constitute a new approach to church building. Most of the modern Free Churches in England belong to this variety and to them must be added the costly example of the incomplete Coventry Cathedral. They are all failures because though they may be functional in structure, none of them have an adequate liturgical programme to make them suitable to their purpose.

Some readers by now may be saying that all this is irrelevant to them. Yet at any time in their ministry they may be faced with the question of building or restoring a church. The question of liturgy in churches is no longer restricted to those who have always had one. (See E. A. Payne and S. F. Winward, *Orders and Prayers for Church Worship*. Carey Kingsgate in church architecture and a desire to approach the unconverted in language and materials that they will understand. (See F. G. Timmins, 'New Lamps for Old' in *The Witness*, January, 1960 — this magazine is one Press, London, 1960.) Even the Brethren have recently shown an interest good example of enlightened church printing.)

Hammond sums up the present problem in liturgy and architecture by saying, 'The key to its solution lies in the hands of the biblical theologian and of the parish priest, charged with the task of building up the body of Christ, the temple of the living God in the waste-lands of our sprawling dormitory suburbs and in rural areas which are just as much a *pays de mission* as New Guinea or the forests of the Amazon.' Stripped of its unfamiliar language it is a question of our turning to the Bible and testing our modes of worship and our places of worship against the biblical and theological insights we find in our study of God's Word. To say this is to open the problem again and this would need another article.