

Diarmaid MacCulloch Editor, 1995–2014

Diarmaid MacCulloch's departure as co-editor of the *Journal* after almost twenty years of engaged, imaginative and unstinting service is a sad moment but one both for expressions of deep appreciation as well as optimistic reflection.

When Diarmaid came to the *Journal* he was just beginning his magisterial rise up the *cursus honorum* not just of academic life, but of public life too. A chair at Oxford, Fellowship of the British Academy, authorship of a number of weighty, significant and successful publications, literary awards and, more recently, a regular, enthusiastic and always provocative, presence on our screens, not to mention a knighthood, have all been achieved since 1995. During that time, however, and not least since I became editor in 2003, his commitment to the *Journal* has never flagged. Visits to Cambridge, to the *Journal's* office at Robinson College, either by train or car from Oxford, have been frequent; judgements on a variety of issues, sometimes sensitive, sometimes trifling, have been measured and wise, but always clear, delivered promptly and always reflecting a refreshingly independent cast of mind. His assiduous attention to the dull business of proof-reading, and his unerring capacity to construct an appropriate paragraph when dealing with a difficult author have been invaluable.

In the odd duopoly which the two editors of the *Journal* occupy, acres of chronological space divided up in what can seem an arbitrary way, it has been a real boon to have the copious range of Diarmaid's knowledge freely available to this editor, whose hold upon his own part of the empire has sometimes been reminiscent of the later years of Byzantium, whether in helping to locate an appropriate reviewer, or to ponder the academic standard of another article. All judgements, thoughts, even straightforward opinions, have been proffered undogmatically in a manner which many of his Reformation subjects and indeed others would find it difficult to recognise. On a more personal level Diarmaid's commitment to the well-being of, and appreciation of, everyone in the *Journal* team, have created an outstanding working environment. That, together with a wicked sense of humour that enlivened our regular 'working lunches', will be sorely missed.

What is equally striking, not least amidst the ever-growing *cornucopia* of awards and distinctions, is the fact that Diarmaid has always been keen to recognise his debt to the *Journal*, noting in the preface to one voluminous work, that 'Even though the task [of editing the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*] has necessarily involved administrative and editorial drudgery, it has also been an exciting privilege: an unrivalled chance to see the extent of research and the emergence of original thought across the whole field of ecclesiastical history.' That the quality of the *Journal* has been maintained in the way Diarmaid hints at is in no small part the result of his own incisive and assiduous editorial input, nurtured by his commitment to scholarship of the highest order, some of which he has made helpfully accessible to a much wider readership. Diarmaid leaves the *Journal* in rude health, boasting more pages than it ever had before, an ever-increasing readership, and a sense of a new and developing future.

But departure of one editor brings with it the arrival of a new one, and it is a real pleasure to end this brief editorial by welcoming Alec Ryrie. A pupil of Diarmaid's, like Paul was of Gamaliel or Irenaeus of Polycarp, he brings with him not only a *regula fidei* of impeccable origins, but an excellent reputation as a scholar. I much look forward to working with him in another duopoly over an empire which will continue to develop in fruitful and imaginative ways.

JAMES CARLETON PAGET