

THE HYMN SOCIETY

OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

BULLETIN

89

VOLUME FIVE

NUMBER ONE

PAGES 1-20

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THE PUBLIC SCHOOL HYMN BOOK, 1949 & 1959

by JOHN WILSON

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL HYMN BOOK. With Tunes. Edited by a Committee of the Headmasters' Conference. Revised Edition, 1949. Supplementary Revision, 1958. Published for the Proprietors by Novello & Co., London. (Price 14/-).

Librarians should note that in spite of the "1958" this edition was not published until the end of 1959. It is substantially the book of ten years ago; but readers may remember that when the 1949 edition appeared our Editor pointed out in this Bulletin (July 1950) that its "errors of typography and fact" were so numerous that the book must await review until they were corrected. As a result of this and similar criticisms, the Committee of the Headmasters' Conference invited Mr. Leonard Blake of Malvern College to check the text of every hymn and tune, to remove inconsistencies of presentation, and to overhaul the ascriptions, acknowledgements and indexes.

Let it be said at once that Mr. Blake has done his necessary and tedious task in a way that will earn the thanks of all users of

P.S.H.B., whether they sing from it or only refer to it. A few further emendations are still desirable, especially in the ascriptions, and these will be mentioned later. But we are no longer greeted in these pages by obvious misprints, differing versions of the same tune, wrong or missing dates, and endless repetitions of the same footnote; and we no longer have to hold the book sideways in order to consult the general index. Details are given of some small changes necessarily made in words or music; apart from these the whole contents, and their order, remain as in 1949, except that the supplement of Canticles and Psalms is omitted, and the tune of one hymn (545) is changed. The book now before us, then, is the Revised Edition of *P.S.H.B.* as it *ought* to have appeared in 1949, and this review will discuss it as if it were now newly published.

The Public School Hymn Book has won a place as a distinctive and important book, widely used and with great potential influence in schools. A new revision of it was undoubtedly needed, and the Committee are to be thanked for producing a book which, though not strong in novelties, contains probably nine-tenths of the existing hymns and tunes that one would hope to find in it. Before discussing the contents in detail, it may be worth while to recall the history of the book and to say a word about the "Headmasters' Conference" itself. This illustrious body, which meets annually and has various standing committees, had its origin in 1869 at a meeting of twelve men in the house of Edward Thring, Headmaster of Uppingham. It has now a membership limited to 200 headmasters, drawn from those schools—including all the chief Public Schools—that are eligible for representation under certain specified conditions. An outline of these conditions, and of "H.M.C." activities in general, is given in *The Public and Preparatory Schools Year Book*.

No work of the Conference has been more far-reaching than its promotion of *The Public School Hymn Book*, of which there have been three main editions, each the work of an anonymous "Committee of the Headmasters' Conference". The first, published in May 1903, was a compact book of 349 hymns, differing little in style from its contemporaries, but having several hymns by schoolmasters such as H. I. Buckoll, T. W. Jex-Blake and J. H. Skrine. It had also six Latin hymns, including the "Dies irae" set to Percy Buck's fine tune *JUDICIUM*—regrettably dropped from later editions. Chief among schoolmaster-composers in this pioneer book were W. S. Bambridge of Marlborough with 15 tunes, E. D. Rendall of Dulwich and Charterhouse with 7, and Basil Johnson of Rugby and Eton with 4; but of all these tunes only Rendall's *DULWICH COLLEGE* has now survived.

One or two other features of the enterprise were noteworthy. The book was offered for sale in two forms—either bound in the usual way or else as sheets, so that (as the advertisement said) "a

special supplement may be added" by any school. And in 1904 there followed a short but scholarly *Companion to the Public School Hymn Book* by Dr. W. M. Furneaux, Dean of Winchester and formerly Headmaster of Repton. This gave biographical details of the authors (but not the composers), and indicated the sources of hymns and any changes made in their wording. It was obtainable either separately or bound up with the music edition.

A second edition of *P.S.H.B.*, now enlarged to 426 hymns, appeared in September 1919 and had very evidently been inspired by *E.H.* and other recent books. Its editors stressed the need for musical reform and pointed out the value of regular congregational practices. Tunes were chosen for their "broad melodies, strong harmonies, dignity, vigour and sincerity", and any that savoured of "weakness or false sentiment" were "rigidly banned". A number of "old favourites" were nevertheless permitted in an appendix, among them *EVENTIDE*, *ST CLEMENT*, *MELITA*, *DIADEMATA*, *EWING* and *DOMINUS REGIT ME*. Pride of place among musical sources now went to "English Traditional Melodies" with 29 entries, followed by "German" with 20, "Anonymous" with 17, the brothers Shaw with 16, "Welsh Melodies" with 14 and "Genevan Psalter" with 11. The anonymous group included *SINE NOMINE* and *RANDOLPH*, and also five tunes by W. H. Ferguson, who had been in charge of chapel music at Lancing and was now a headmaster. These five were characteristic "public-school tunes" of their day—certainly broad in melody, often but not always strong in harmony, and yet sometimes showing (as in *CUDDESDON* especially) that very weakness of sentiment that the editors hoped to eradicate.

Work on a further revision of *P.S.H.B.* began in 1937 but was interrupted by the war, and the third edition did not appear until 1949. Though the general editors remain anonymous, we are told that the heavy task of editing the music was carried out by Dr. C. S. Lang, formerly Director of Music at Christ's Hospital. We learn also that the book was "carefully revised" by Dr. Vaughan Williams—a vague statement that ought, for the sake of posterity, to be clarified.

In their new edition the compilers have dropped about 100 of the hymns in the 1919 book. The sifting has been judiciously done, except for the loss of "Jerusalem, my happy home", which was worth preserving if only as a poem, and "Commit thou all thy griefs", which is replaced by the weaker cento "Put thou all thy trust in God", (This should be attributed to "John Wesley and others".) To the remaining 320-odd hymns the compilers have added about 230 new ones, and after this sweeping change *P.S.H.B.* is now a large book of 554 hymns and 484 tunes. The hymns are grouped according to seasons and purposes, but the pages (as in the 1919 edition) have no headings to match. If this omission was deliberate it should be reconsidered; a long book without subdivisions is awkward for reference and looks monotonous.

The new edition handles well and is better printed than its predecessor, in which the words and music were alike too small. The music is now amply clear, though the engraving is rather severe in style. The hymns are set in an 8 point "modern" type (so called), similar to that used for many 19th century books and for *E.H.* in 1906. Such a type-face is not characteristic of today's best typography, and is less easily readable than the same-sized Plantin type used for *S.P.* and *B.B.C.* A large initial to each hymn would have improved the appearance, and it is convenient if hymn-numbers on right-hand pages are placed on the right, as in various American books.

The 1949 revision has brought in a number of well-known hymns whose presence greatly strengthens the book. The opening pages now include "When morning gilds the skies" (17), though without Barnby's successful tune; and for Evening there is Robert Bridges' "The duteous day" (46) as well as Catherine Winkworth's "Now all the woods" (31). Advent has acquired "O come, O come, Emanuel" (60) with the old *A. & M.* form of the tune, and also "Sleepers, wake" (62), whose tune is used again for Montgomery's "Praise the Lord through every nation" (492). Holy Week has "Sing, my tongue" (123) with the Mechlin version of *PANGE LINGUA*; the older and easier Sarum version would have been worth a place too. For Easter there is Alington's "Good Christian men" (140), and for Whitsuntide the indispensable "Come down, O Love divine" (159). A special effort has been made to provide fully for Saints' Days, where out of 34 hymns no less than 24 are new to the book. The section for Holy Communion is also expanded, but lacks "Let all mortal flesh keep silence". The National section is uneven in quality, but now has "Rejoice, O land" (288), "I vow to thee, my country" (294), and "Turn back, O man" (304). Among the many additions to "General" hymns are some of Bridges' best (339, 447, 448); and equally welcome are "My soul, there is a country" (456), even with a verse missing, "O praise ye the Lord" (478) to Parry's tune. "Sing Alleluia forth" (504) to Buck's MARTINS. "Thy hand, O God" (534) to THORNBURY, and Bunyan's original "true valour" (547).

Hymns by former headmasters include two by the Revd. H. C. A. Gaunt—his "Praise the Lord, let earth adore him" (182), well matched to Bach's fine chorale ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN, and "Ride on, ride on, my heart" (321) set to LEONI. Frank Fletcher's well-known "O Son of man" (479) is given the alternatives of Parry's ENGLAND and the inevitable LONDONDERRY. Either of these tunes is certain to obscure the hymn with extraneous sentiment, and neither, in the present writer's opinion, should appear in a hymn-book. Those who knew the author know that he was far from sentimental and meant exactly what he said. They know also that R. S. Thatcher's tune NORTHBROOK in *The Clarendon Hymn Book*

is so far the best tune available. It was written for the hymn when both men were at Charterhouse.

The book has retained some questionable verbal changes from its earlier editions. In "Dear Lord and Father" (369), for example, we are still "feverish" instead of "foolish". And in the middle of John Newton's "Glorious things" (385) we run into sixteen lines of Cowper's "Hear what God the Lord hath spoken"—lines now asterisked, so that Cowper's splendid hymn is almost wasted. A more entertaining relic is in v. 4 of "Christian, seek not yet repose" (87), where the authoress—referring to "victors who o'ercame"—wrote blamelessly that "All with one sweet voice exclaim, 'Watch and pray'". The first editors of *P.S.H.B.*, with surprising foreknowledge of heavenly choirs, thought "one *deep* voice" more likely. Their successors, less sure, ventured on a sinister "warning voice", which still remains. Alterations of this kind are not needed by modern congregations. Has the Committee lately reviewed them?

Turning now to the music, we find that from the 1919 appendix of outcasts the following are reinstated, in most cases understandably: EVENTIDE, HURSLEY, ST CLEMENT, RIVAULX, MELITA, EWING, KNECHT, DOMINUS REGIT ME, and ST OSWALD. Tunes of proven excellence now appearing in *P.S.H.B.* for the first time include H. P. Allen's MIDIAN (96) for "Christian, dost thou see them"; Stanford's ENGELBERG (216) as alternative to SINE NOMINE; Parry's REPTON (369) as second choice for "Dear Lord and Father"; Henry Ley's admirable SAVILE (alias RUSHFORD) (378) for "Fight the good fight", and OTTERY ST MARY (379) for "Firmly I believe"; Sir William Harris's ALBERTA (429) for "Lead, kindly light"; and Basil Harwood's LUCKINGTON (432) as second choice for "Let all the world". We may welcome also Ronald Dussek's GORRAN (314), set to an attractive paraphrase of Psalm 121; and Herbert Howells's SEVERN (466), though unfortunately not also his tune for "All my hope on God is founded".

Among a few oddities are a highly-seasoned tune (382) adapted from one of Karg-Elert's organ pieces, and a psalm-wise setting of "Come, my soul, thou must be waking" (5)—surely one of the most metrical of hymns—to a double anglican chant. In the same class, perhaps, are Wagner's imitation chorale from *Die Meistersinger* (228), and the awkwardly-fitting YMDAITH MWNGC (196) for "What are these that glow from afar"—doubtfully a hymn, at best. We must regret the sad perversion of Handel's CANNONS (26)—compare No. 468 in *B.B.C.*—and the perpetuation of the dance-tune (from *E.H.*) undeservedly named ANIMA CHRISTI (362), a truly depressing choice for "Come, O come, in pious lays". Another lightweight folk-tune, SHIPSTON (446), is the surprising first choice for Wesley's "Love divine". Editors have already begun to rescue "Firmly I believe" from SHIPSTON; the tune's association here with another hymn of high calibre is unfortunate.

Apart from contributions by the Musical Editor himself, the

book offers little from composers associated with schools. Dr. Lang's own eighteen tunes are a notable collection, ranging from the little PENRYN (231) for "My spirit longs for thee", and the orthodox PENDOGGETT (266) for "Hark the song of jubilee†, to the high-powered exhortation (with tuba *obbligato*) of BURREINGTON (500) for "Rise up, O men of God". His ST KEVERNE (383) is an undoubted success for "From glory to glory advancing", and ST DOMINICK (13) shapes well for "Now, when the dusky shades of night", an American hymn based on "Ecce iam noctis". ST ENODOC (327), for "O Jesu, strong and pure and true", has refinement in spite of its mannered close; O LUX BEATA, TRINITAS (179) is attractively Elgarian; and TREBETHERICK (313), with a touch of V.W.'s vagabond about it, struggles manfully on behalf of unworthy words. Dr. Lang's tunes are always bold in melody and adventurous in harmony. They are quick to catch the surface reflection of the words, but do not always suggest deeper meanings; sometimes the spirit of adventure leads him to blatancy, as in the last line of ST MINVER (464) and the whole of SAN SEBASTIAN (475). An unexpected omission is his popular setting of "Eastern Monarchs, Sages three", which he has already allowed to appear in hymn-tune form.

There are several extended musical settings, all well chosen and welcome—for unison singing Beethoven's CREATION'S HYMN (89) and Vaughan William's FAMOUS MEN (325), and for congregation-and-choir Stanford's full-dress arrangement of "St Patrick's Breastplate" (406). Notable omissions from the book, in addition to those already mentioned, are "Of the Father's love begotten" and its own beautiful DIVINUM MYSTERIUM: Brent Smith's impressive COME, MY WAY: Charles Wood's unique CAMBRIDGE for a commemoration hymn; the Dutch VRUECHTEN, for which both Christmas and Easter words are available; and Dykes's classis GERONTIUS for "Praise to the holiest" (494). (The limitations of RICHMOND for this profound hymn are not concealed by marking verses 5 and 6 for the choir alone.) Among older tunes, room might have been found for Lawes's WHITEHALL, and perhaps for one of Tallis's modal melodies. In the 1949 book TALLIS' ORDINAL appeared in two versions with differing harmonic detail; the version now retained is the less Tallis-like of the two.

It is noticeable that *P.S.H.B.* does not yet reflect our improved understanding of the rhythmic characteristics of the old tunes. Singers in the 16th and early 17th centuries could readily sing either "with" or "across" the beat—the beat being more of a time-keeping device than an indication of stress—and composers made frequent use of this ability to syncopate. In simple form it is needed for the proper singing of Genevan and other psalm-tunes, as well as for the melodies of Tallis and Gibbons. Where better than in our schools can the accomplishment be revived or consolidated? Editorial makeshifts, such as the triplets in LES COMMANDEMENS (45, 210) and the time-change in ANGELS' SONG (7), have perhaps

helped to bring the tunes into use; but the time has now come to print correct versions, as has already been done in *A. & M.R.* In Gibbons's SONG 22 (448) the ironing-out of the syncopation is inexcusable, since Bridges wrote his "Love of the Father" with the proper rhythm in mind.

Certain categories of older tunes are very strongly represented. There are 14 Genevan psalm-tunes, and almost 80 German tunes of pre-1750 date. Some of these are classics, and others are well worth learning. Some, however, such as REGNART (104), STETTIN (195), the minimised AVE VIRGO (309), BOHEMIA (491), and SALZBURG (30, 137, 266, 434), seem to lack the distinction that would justify their inclusion in a normal school repertoire. Modern hymn-books tend to be as full of dull and respectable tunes as their Victorian predecessors were of dull and sentimental ones.

There is a similar tendency to accumulate hymns that are unlikely ever to be used, and perhaps the strongest impression left by the enlarged *P.S.H.B.* is that with all its good things, new and old, it is carrying far too big a load of second-class material. How many hymns does a school really use? Boarding schools, often with a hymn each weekday and one or two full services on Sunday, are likely to use the most—perhaps 12 hymns a week for 36 weeks in the year. This gives a total of 432 "hymn-occasions"; but each hymn, if it is to remain well known to an ever-changing congregation, will on the average be sung twice a year. (A few seasonal hymns will occur only once; a few favourites three times. The singing in school chapels is usually good, and boys expect to know well the tunes they are asked to sing). The working repertoire, then, is not likely to be much over 200, and this estimate is confirmed by actual inquiry. In ten representative Public Schools, in the year 1959, the numbers of *different* hymns sung were respectively 132, 147, 150, 162, 170, 170, 171, 190, 192, and 208, the average being 169. Conditions will naturally have varied from school to school, and in a particular year a few familiar hymns may have been omitted; but we can safely say that a school's repertoire will only rarely exceed 220 hymns. Of these about 80—at a conservative estimate—choose themselves; everyone sings them and every book has them. A school hymn-book must therefore cater for an individual choice of about 140 hymns, and if there were 400 hymns in the book this choice of 140 would be made from among 320. If such a degree of freedom is thought adequate, we may conclude that 150 hymns could be spared from the present *P.S.H.B.*

There are other indications that a smaller collection is desirable. Rugby, which has had its own hymnal since 1824, has at present a book of 310 hymns. The new School Edition of *A. & M.R.* has 266. The Public School editors of *The Clarendon Hymn Book* found that their choice settled at 300. The original *P.S.H.B.* itself, planned when hymns were no less in demand than they are now, had 200 fewer than today's total.

The need for pruning is especially evident in certain types of hymn. The present book has poems by Clough and Whitman that are less than Christian, and hymns that suggest an obsolete attitude to other nations and to the idea of progress. It has hymns with unfortunate lines in them, and others that stress the institutional side of school life in what is now an unreal way. All these might be the first to go; and if it were insisted that for Chapel worship a hymn be strong in spiritual content, sound in theology, clear and acceptable in literary expression, and not too often introspective, the necessary winnowing could be achieved. For most boys, it is true, a "hymn" means a tune, and the effect of the words is at best subconscious. This is understandable, but must not cause us to lower our standards. The needs of the thoughtful minority are the surest guide, and in the long run it is better to lose a good tune than to include a poor hymn to carry it.

There are perhaps three ways in which a "public school hymn-book" should have a character of its own. First, as already suggested, it should be exceptionally strong in its words; the fact that the congregation is generally a "compulsory" one throws added responsibility on editors in their choice. Secondly, since congregational practices are now usual, it can contain a proportion of harder tunes and unison settings. And thirdly, it should deliberately try, by imaginative editing, to encourage an intelligent and informed interest in its hymns and tunes. We are not privileged to live in a great age of hymn-writing, and our selection must draw chiefly on the fine things of the past. We are, however, living in an age of knowledge and inquiry, and we have the opportunity as never before to "sing our praises with understanding".

One feature of the original *P.S.H.B.* enterprise, the invitation to add a local supplement, has found favour with several schools and should be preserved; it could be linked with the general editorial policy of the book. Nothing seems to survive, however, of the friendly and helpful liaisons between compliers and users initiated by the *Companion* of 1904. If the next edition of *P.S.H.B.* were planned as a smaller book of more concentrated excellence, it would have room for a series of notes on authors, composers, and hymns, on the lines of those contributed by Dr. Routley to the School Edition of *A. & M.R.*; there is evidence that such notes are of interest to many users. Also lacking from the new *P.S.H.B.* is any proper statement of what its editors' policy has been. A book of such importance, so drastically revised, should do more than say that "the needs of schools have governed the choice of words and music alike".

An important practical matter deserves consideration at the next revision. In today's schools about half the boys can be assumed to have some knowledge, however slight, of musical notation, and the other half should be encouraged to acquire it. *P.S.H.B.* has

always had its "words only" edition—a bleak aid at a congregational practice—and the time has surely come for the Headmasters' Conference to abolish this in favour of a "melody edition", for those schools that do not wish to supply a full music copy to every boy. That such a melody book can be cheap as well as attractive has been convincingly shown by the publishers both of *Songs of Praise* and of *Hymns Ancient and Modern Revised*.

The following additional points need attention when circumstances allow;

(a) *In the Hymns:*

97. *Christian, seek not yet repose.* The original has quotation-marks for the last line of every verse.
240. *With solemn faith we offer up.* This should be "Varied from Charles Wesley". (Cf. *M.H.B.* 723).
385. *Glorious things.* The version should be ascribed to Newton and Cowper jointly.
386. *God be in my head.* Can be ascribed to "Book of Hours, 1514". (See *Hymn Society Bulletin*, Sept. 1951, p. 262).
492. *Praise the Lord through every nation.* This is a translation from the Dutch (Julian. 1563ii).
504. *Sing Alleluia forth.* The version owes as much to Dearmer as to Ellerton. (Cf. *S.P.* 247).

(b) *In the Tunes:*

- Gibbons Tunes.* The same kind of adaptation is variously described (e.g. 7, 129, 439).
- Genevan Tunes.* A similar comment here, and No. 17 should mention the Genevan Psalter.
- English Psalm Tunes.* For OLD 25th (156) and OLD 120th (126, 481) the ascriptions in *A. & M.R.* are desirable, and for ST MICHAEL (95, 509) that in *C.P.*
- French Church Tunes.* The ascriptions should follow Mr. Pocknee's conclusions in *The French Diocesan Hymns*. (Faith Press, 1954).
- "*Purcell*". Neither WALSALL (393) nor BURFORD (441, 543) is known to be by Purcell. The chant at No. 5 is by "J. Turle's, partly adapted from H. Purcell". (See Turle's collection of chants).
- "*Luther*". For LUTHER'S HYMN (54, 305) and ERHALT' UNS, HERR (447) the proper ascriptions are in *S.P. EIN' FESTE BURG* (289, 290, 329) is surely a case of "Later form of melody by . . ."
- 182, 206. ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN. The shortest accurate ascription is "Version by J. S. Bach of chorale by J. Löhner (1691) and others (harmony slightly simplified)."
 188. ST AUSTIN. Add "Arr. R. Vaughan Williams". (*S.P. Discussed*, p. 216).

229. JESU DULCIS MEMORIA. See *Hymn Society Bulletin* No. 78, p. 84.
 181, 240, 474, 540. LEICESTER. See *Companion to C.P.*, p. 123.
 266, 490. PENDOGGET(T). Which spelling?
 343. MILITES. The Handelian origin is of interest. (The tune is not!)
 378. "SAVILLE." Dr. Ley confirms that this is to be called RUSHFORD.
 499. GOPSAL. The melody-notes for "lift up your voice" should be G, F, E, E.

THE PILGRIM HYMNAL (1958)

This is, we may say, the American *Congregational Praise*. When the new hymn book of English Congregationalism appeared, people were good enough to say that it represented a discernible advance in musical taste and theological insight on the book previously current in that communion; and those who were closest to it trembled for the reception that so radical a gesture might get among the people of the churches.

Well may the American Christians who were until recently Congregationalists (and are now united in a larger body) tremble: and for the same excellent reasons. For on the whole the new *Pilgrim Hymn Book* (obtainable from the Pilgrim Press, Boston, Mass.) may be judged an even more vigorous advance on its predecessor than *CP* was on the old *Congregational Hymnary* of 1916. The former *Pilgrim* was published in 1931, and it was not merely English hymnologists who thought it a poor thing. It was, not to put too fine a point on it, a model of that religious conservatism and complacency which both in that country and in ours is still protested against only by minorities. I think it would be too much to claim a very large theological advance in the new book; but the musical advance is astonishing, and the theological presuppositions it implies are surely well founded, and likely to make their way into the consciousness of singers better through the music than they would have done had the words been more radically revised.

Concerning the words of the hymns I can find relatively little to say except that along with a good deal that does not speak the language we should want spoken in this country, there are many hymns whose presence distinguishes, and whose absence impoverishes, any hymn book. In this book for the successors of the Pilgrim Fathers, we find, to take a by no means exhaustive list of excellences, 'Ye watchers and ye holy ones' (30), 'O love, how deep, how broad, how high' (150), 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence' (107), 'Comfort, comfort ye, my people' by Catherine Winkworth to Genevan Psalm 42 (104), 'Lift up your heads, eternal gates', by Catherine Winkworth (114), 'Adeste Fideles' in Latin (133) as

well as in English (132), 'Sunset to sunrise', from the Episcopal Hymnal (1940) (165), 'O God, thou art the Father', as at *Church Hymnary* 454, with its Irish tune (248), the beautiful Communion hymn from the *Didache*, 'Father, we thank thee' (289), 'Lord Christ when first thou cam'st to men' (325), 'One who is all unfit to count' (340), 'O light that knew no dawn' (407), 'O God of earth and altar' (436), and 'Father eternal, ruler of creation' (445).

The words-editors clearly have a fastidious taste in style: and so they should have. They are not ashamed of Dearmer at his best, and there are one or two typical '*Songs of Praise*' touches, as the inclusion of Kingsley's 'The day of the Lord' (417) and Grubb's 'Our God, to whom we turn' (86). There is a somewhat distant attitude towards the Calvinists: Watts has 13, Doddridge four, Newton three; Charles Wesley has thirteen.

But the total scope of the hymn book is only 496: and a good eye for modern material is in an editor at least as valuable a quality as a passion for the classics. Of modern American material the editors have made a judicious choice. English readers may find the excessive optimism and activism of contemporary American hymnody a shade exhausting: the state of the world and of the nation, not to mention the state of British Christianity, makes it unusually difficult for Englishmen to take kindly, or even to do justice to, what Americans are at present disposed to write; and if we say that Bowie's 'Lord Christ, when first thou cam'st to men' is one of the few modern American hymns we can feel happy about, and that Fosdick's 'God of grace' is another, it is enough to say that at any rate these are in the book. So are that unusual and delightful 'They cast their nets in Galilee', and F. Bland Tucker's translation of Abélard, 'Alone thou goest forth' (340, 160). Here the editors have done very well.

Due attention has been paid to the Church's Year. Advent and Ascension are properly distinguished and well served with good hymns: Christmas has a very large section containing plenty of carols (116 to 140).

There is plenty of excellent music. Where a hymn is given two tunes it is given two numbers: psychologically there is something to be said for this. It is often clear that the editors' hope is that one tune, number and all, shall disappear in favour of another; and indeed a hymn sung to a fine tune is a different activity from the same hymn sung to a horror. Anyhow, the editors know a good tune when they see one. They have not missed LINDEMAN (270, cf CP 172) or ISTE CONFESSOR (378, cf EH 435). They do not disdain plainsong (40), and they rightly prefer 'O gladsome light' to 'Hail gladdening light' (49). They have found an excellent hymn by the Indian Tilak, and put it in with a traditional Indian tune (394). They have examined the ineffable Lowell Mason, and found one hymn tune amongst his blameless platitudes which is

really worth singing, but which has hitherto had little if any publicity (449). They have discovered one or two good contemporary composers, and the modest contributions in this field are never negligible: see SHEPHERD'S PIPES (328), FINLAY (27) written to displace a bad one and RAMWOLD (303) which is obviously the composition of a man who respects the true Lutheran chorale. (The words to which it is set are a good example of the hortatory hymnody which makes this reviewer uncomfortable and which has to some extent embarrassed these editors.)

Many collocations of hymn and tune suggest vigorous imagination. I am especially glad to see Canon Briggs's 'Christ is the world's true light' set to the tune O GOTT DU FROMMER GOTT (SP 621). This is a setting which in his later years he particularly favoured, despite the tradition built up by S.P. and followed in other books. 'Spirit divine' (241) is well set to NUN DANKET ALL', and Canon Briggs's Communion hymn, 'Come, risen Lord' (286) to SURSUM CORDA by A. M. Smith, which was put into the *BBC Hymn Book*. 'O Love, how deep' (150-1) is set both to DEUS TUORUM MILITUM and to the AGINCOURT SONG.

There are a few Negro spirituals, well arranged, and of course there is a certain amount of material from which it is better hastily to avert the eye. The setting of 'How firm a foundation' to ADESTE FIDELES is a custom, universal in American Protestantism, which Englishmen will always find it hard to value highly: but of course it must be remembered that English Protestants first sang that tune to hymns like 'Begone, unbelief', and it is by no means impossible that in the late 18th century they sang 'How firm a foundation' to it. The singing of 'O come all ye faithful' at all dates only from the second quarter of the 19th century so far as English Protestant congregations are concerned. 'Day is dying in the West' (45) and 'Still, still with thee' are obstinately present—but then so are 'Christ whose glory' and 'The duteous day'. The setting of Albert Bayly's 'Rejoice, O people' to the tune of 'Christians awake' (304) seems a dubious expedient: those words have found several tunes, but not yet, we think, their proper mate. VENI IMMANUEL (110) is very badly set—at this time of day we do not need those pauses at the ends of lines 1 and 5. We do not care for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (8) as a hymn tune, and the traditional American setting of 'Immortal love' (230) is very difficult to admire.

But the editors, we fancy, know this. Their work is astonishingly tasteful and judicious.

In common with most American hymnals of the kind, the book has a good deal in it besides hymns. After the hymns are 98 short pieces under the general title 'Service Music'. Most of these are brief, and suitable for use as Introits, Offertories or Vespers, or at the Communion. Disregarding the question whether Introits or Vespers in this form are edifying, we must applaud the zest with which the editors have taken their chances here. Not waiting on

antiquated taste, they begin with 'Praise to the Holiest'—one verse (the hymn in full is not elsewhere included) to ST MARY (497), and the next is a magnificent Lutheran chorale ALL MORGEN IST, known to Englishmen only at no. 107 in *Cantate Domino*, to two verses of its original hymn by Johannes Zwick (d. 1542). A few pages further on—'Sweet Saviour', one verse, to GOTTLÖB (cf SP 637: first two lines repeated). The whole of 'Come Holy Ghost' (575) is here, to the Mechlin tune, and opposite it (576) a version of Psalm 139 to an indigenous American tune from Kentucky. Vincent Persichetti, upon whose remarkable modern hymn tunes we must comment some other time, is represented here by CONTRITION (580). Nos. 581-4 are descant versions of hymns printed in the body of the book. One gets the impression that the editors are saying 'These are the hymns which will be given in full in our next edition'—thus very happily using for a good purpose an opportunity which is normally grossly misused.

There follow orders of service, and readings from the Psalter and other parts of Scripture. The indexes are as copious and competent as only American editors seem able to make them.

How good to be able to receive with enthusiasm a piece of honest and courageous editing!

E.R.

A SMALL HYMN BOOK

Many are the occasions nowadays when a small leaflet or book of hymns is required rather than a large volume. Congregations are not now what they were on the ordinary occasions of the church: and yet occasions when a large company is gathered together are perhaps somewhat more frequent. There are ecumenical gatherings, where members of many churches join in worship, there are civic gatherings, church assemblies, and conferences, often held elsewhere than in a church, to which the cartage of large numbers of sizeable hymn books is a cumbersome process, damaging to the fabric of the books, and hardly worth the trouble for a few days or hours.

Many, therefore, are the small collections that are designed, often at a local level, to meet such needs, and various are their merits. It is worth our while, however, to draw attention to a recent private publication as an example of how the thing should be done. This is *Hymns for United Services*, published by the Christian Council of Shaftesbury, Dorset, earlier this year. It is printed by the Abbey Press, Shaftesbury. No price is indicated. Thirty-three hymns (the words only) are printed on 32 pages. The editor's name is not given, but the work was done, with loving care, by the Rev. E. R. Micklem.¹

¹ Mr. Micklem, a member for many years of our Society, died on June 2, 1960.

The need the book was designed to meet is that of occasional ecumenical gatherings in which Anglicans and Dissenters join, and of which the chief are held at Whitsuntide. Those who use it will in their own churches use all manner of hymn books. Consider then the imaginative sweep of the following selection, which we simply append as a list.

1. Before Jehovah's awful throne
2. Blessed city, heavenly Salem (3 verses)
3. Christ from whom all blessings flow
4. Christ is the world's true light
5. Come down, O love divine
6. Come, thou holy Paraclete (4 verses)
7. Command thy blessing from above
8. Father of peace and God of love (Paraphrase 60)
9. Father, we thank thee, who hast planted (BBC 201)
10. Happy are they
11. Head of the Church (CP 247)
12. Judge eternal
13. King of glory, King of peace
14. Let all the world in every corner sing
15. Lord of our life and God of our salvation
16. Love of the Father (EH 438)
17. O love, how deep, how broad, how high
18. O spirit of the living God (6 verses as CP 323)
19. Praise, my soul
20. Praise the Lord, his glories show
21. Praise to the Holiest
22. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
23. Saviour, sprinkle many nations
24. Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle (as CP 125)
25. Son of God, eternal Saviour (as CP 558)
26. Spirit of flame (CP 348)
27. The head that once was crowned with thorns
28. The Lord will come and not be slow
29. To thee our God we fly (5 verses)
30. We give immortal praise
31. What equal honours shall we bring (CP 178)
32. When I survey the wondrous Cross (5 verses)
33. Ye servants of God

It is difficult indeed to think of an occasion of united worship that would not be well served by such a collection as that. Note the breadth of its outlook—from Watts to Neale, Milton, to Newman, Venantius Fortunatus to Bridges. The puritan directness, Catholic devotion, Anglican grace are all there at their best, and so far as we can see there is not a wasted line.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

(1) 'Only-Begotten, Word of God Eternal'

This sapphic hymn has appeared in several hymnals during the last half-century, including *EH* 636, *BBC* 446 and (American) *The Hymnal* 228. It is based on the Latin hymn, *Christe cunctorum dominator alme*. It is now possible to give something of the history of this hymn. It seems to have originated in the Ambrosian Breviary during the ninth century, and its author is unknown. From there it quickly passed into the Benedictine Hymnary. By the 11th century it had appeared in the Mozarabic rite in Spain. It also passed into one or two English MSS of the 11th century, including the Leofric Collectar. But it did not pass into the mainstream of later Latin hymnody since it is not found in the Breviaries of Sarum, Hereford and York; nor has it appeared in the reformed Roman Breviary since the Council of Trent (1570). By the end of the middle ages it had also disappeared from the Benedictine use.

Today this hymn continues in use on the Feast of the Dedication at Matins and Vespers in the *Breviarium Ambrosianum* used throughout the Province of Milan in North Italy and in the Swiss Canton of Ticino.

M. J. Blacker's translation, made for use at St. Barnabas, Pimlico in 1884, is only a partial one; and verses 6, 8, 10 and 11 were later englished by the Reverend E. Geldert for the Gregorian Association. The complete version was sung in St. Paul's Cathedral during the 1958 Festival of that Association.

C. E. POCKNEE

(2) AWEFUL

One sometimes hears it suggested that the above spelling (*e.g.* A.M.R. No. 227) is a finniky modernism. It is of interest to note that Bishop Heber, when he included Wesley's adaptation of Watts's Psalm c, altered 'Before Jehovah's awful throne' to 'aweful throne'. So at any rate it dates from 1827 in hymnology.

MAURICE FROST

CAMBRIDGE CONFERENCE

A Conference of the Society will be held in Cambridge from Tuesday July 12th to Thursday 14th. At the time of going to press the full details are not fixed. But it is known that there will be a Hymn Singing Festival in Emmanuel Church, and that the Editor will lecture on 'Whither Hymnody'.

Full details can be had on application to the Secretary — The Rev. A. S. Holbrook, 31 St. John's Road, Knutsford, Cheshire. See page 20.

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STOP PRESS

Cambridge Conference—Outline

Tuesday-Thursday 12-14 July

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 12th : 4.00 p.m. | Tea |
| 5.30 | Evensong at King's College |
| 7.00 | Dinner |
| 8.00 | Lecture : 'Whither Hymnody?' by the Editor. |
| 13th: 11.15 | A.G.M. |
| 5.00 | "Accompaniment of Parish Church Singing in the early 19th century," by Canon Noel Boston: Illustrated with barrel-organ and other instruments. |
| 8.00 | Hymn-singing, in Emmanuel Church. |

Hospitality charge—about £4.

Applications to the Secretary.