

THE HYMN SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL.

The reports of our 1961 conference suggest that those who (like the Editor) were obliged to miss it missed something very good. It was very suitable that our first conference in London should be devoted to a celebration and examination of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

There is no need to add anything here to what we have written in other issues of our Bulletin about this legendary hymn book. We would only remark on how strange we still feel it to be to live in a country where it has been hardly heard of, and where another hymnal enjoys a monopoly covering several denominations such as even the proprietors of *A & M* never dreamed of.

Careful readers of the report and of Mr. Pocknee's lecture will note that we are soon to see a new book from the English Hymnal Committee. This, we understand, is not to be a revision of the present book but rather a simplified edition for the use of churches with resources too limited to make good use of the parent book. Whether decisive changes in the policy of the English Hymnal Company will be deducible from the new book remains to be seen.

Signs are abroad that the time is ripe for a new advance in hymnody towards a truly contemporary style. We shall await with interest the new *EH* book and the new Baptist Hymnal to see whether that which we hope for is to be realized sooner or later.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY HELD AT LAMBETH PALACE ON SEPTEMBER 19TH-21ST, 1961.

The Annual Conference of the Society was held at Lambeth Palace on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 19th and 20th. After assembling for tea at Church House Restaurant, members attended Evensong in Westminster Abbey. This was well sung but the absence of the choirboys, on holiday, was noted. Their fresh, eager voices make a distinctive contribution to worship.

Lambeth Palace made an ideal place for the holding of the Conference, and high praise must be given to the staff for the way in which all our needs were met. Although it was not possible for our President, His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, to be present during any part of the Conference, he facilitated our arrangements, and a number had the privilege of meeting him on his return to the Palace after a series of engagements. By his kind and ready permission we were able to hold an Act of Praise in the Palace Chapel on the Tuesday evening. His Chaplain, Canon J. Andrew, led the devotions, the Rev. Eric Sharpe read the Lesson, and the Rev. David Goodall, our Treasurer, provided very efficient accompaniment to the singing of the hymns on the small but well-balanced Harrison organ. The ten hymns sung had been chosen by Dr. Erik Routley to represent some worthy contribution to hymnody from one or other of the different editions of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, from the first in 1861 to the most recent, the Revision of 1950. The Rev. D. Ingram Hill, of Canterbury, introduced the hymns and gave an admirably illuminating yet concise commentary on both words and tunes. He indicated their merit and made occasional reference to some outstanding quality of a hymn or its tune. He was thoroughly at home in his subject, and his conducting of the Act of Praise was appreciated by everyone. Five of the tunes were at first unknown to some of the singers but

this was hardly noticeable in the subsequent singing. The acoustics of the Chapel might be kinder in communicating song than speech, but this was a worthy Act of Praise.

As the Conference was intent on celebrating the Centenary of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, the two lectures given were on the Impact of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* on Hymnody (1) in terms of its Words, and (2) in terms of its Music. The Rev. L. H. Bunn, Editor for the Revision of Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, gave the first lecture, and the Rev. C. E. Pocknee, an authority on Medieval Hymns, and Plainsong, the second. The lecturers presided at each other's lecture, and this was as entertaining as it was informative. In speaking of 'The Impact of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*', Mr. Bunn said, speaking as a Presbyterian he was one on whom *A & M* had made its impact. In 1861, when the first edition of *A & M* appeared, the Baptists had their Psalms and Hymns of 1858, Congregationalists their book of 1859, as well as their Leeds hymn book of 1853, English Presbyterians their book of 1857, and Methodists their 1780 hymn book with its Supplement of 1830. It was in later editions of these books that the real impact of *A & M* was felt. *Hymns Ancient and Modern* came into being because there were many different hymn books in use in Anglican Churches, and some of them contained very doubtful hymns. It was an endeavour to create order out of that confusion that brought several Editors of hymn books together. They decided to pool their resources, discontinue the use of their own books, and make another, a worthier book. It was a product of the Oxford Movement, and expressed the thoughts of the High Church of England. It introduced many translations from the Latin (among Tractarians anything Latin was held to be old and therefore respectable), but, in the 1861 book there was surprisingly little that was not known. The success of the book called forth a supplement in 1868. This contained hymns from contemporary authors. The 1875 edition included hymns that were representative of all shades of Anglican thought, and gave a judicious welcome to non-Anglican hymns also. The book's success led the compilers to seek more hymns by authors already represented. The Supplement of 1889 and the edition of 1904 were not so successful. Yet the latter introduced hymns which have been taken up into a wider field, and it produced material for the 1916 Supplement. Many of the hymns which were sponsored by *A & M* have become common national property. It displayed a catholicity of spirit which has enabled Christians of divers denominations to draw from it. Methodism did not hesitate to take Newman's or Keble's hymns, or Caswall's Latin translations. Nonconformity generally saw no barrier to taking High Church hymns into their books. Mr. Bunn remarked that hymnody was perhaps one means whereby God was leading the Church towards greater unity. He

packed an important lecture with detail and ended it by saying: "There has been an undoubted impact. Perhaps this is one of God's ways of leading us together. If I speak for the Free Churches, we are thankful."

Mr. Pocknee spoke on 'The Impact of The Music of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* on Hymnody', and illustrated his lecture by giving examples at the piano. He also remarked on the relationship which *A & M* had with the Oxford Movement. That explained the introduction of plainsong tunes in the 1861 edition. Unfortunately the editors did not understand plainsong and took their tunes from the Mechlin version, which was far from Ancient, being only 13 years old. This debased form was unfortunately carried into other books also. The title of the book, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, appeared as a phrase in the Preface of a book by John Chandler, a book which was one of the important contributions to the literature of the Oxford Movement. W. H. Monk, Music Editor of the 1861 *A & M*, suggested it as the title for the new book. The name caught the tide and played an important part in the success of the book. But among the music of the 1861 edition was a good deal of lumber. Monk, however, wrote a number of good, bright, workmanlike tunes for the book. But he is best remembered for his celebrated adaptations of older tunes, such as VICTORY (from Palestrina), DIX and RAVENSHAW (from German Chorales). The greatest impact is that Monk's tunes are the proper tunes to which they are set. The lecturer played the original form of the tunes DIX (As with gladness men of old), and RAVENSHAW (Lord, Thy Word abideth), and then Monk's adaptations. These, he said, represent both loss and gain. The 'ironing-out' of 18th century tunes was less happy, MOUNT EPHRAIM being an outstanding example. The best of Dykes' work was included in the 1861 and 1868 editions, tunes such as Nicæa, Dominus Regit Me, and St. Cross. In the 1875 and 1889 editions a new and debased form of tune appeared, tunes with a part-song texture which provided a rather 'lush' atmosphere, and for which Dykes, Barnby and Stainer were mainly responsible. These Victorian tunes lacked melodic strength or character and depended on their harmonizations for acceptability. They lacked the spirit of adventure and our own age has suffered from them in consequence. The wind of change blew with the appearance of the 1904 book. It brought in a number of more satisfying 18th century tunes, but it was not revolutionary, and it paved the way for the *English Hymnal*. Its one really outstanding tune, ENGELBERG, was new and, indeed, very advanced for 1904. The reason for the failure of the 1904 *A & M* and the success of the *English Hymnal* of 1906 was that *EH* had musicians of the calibre of Vaughan Williams and, later, Martin and Geoffrey Shaw, as editors. Why, asked Mr. Pocknee, do so few musicians other than church organists write hymn tunes? Has

too strict a canon been imposed? He ended by saying that he was not pleading for any given hymn book but that hymnody should go forward and not rest on past achievements. There is no golden age of inspired music. Inspiration does not cease with an age. The final canon on hymn tunes has not yet been written.

Various Executive Meetings, and the Annual General Meeting of the Society, were held during the two days, and it was good to have Mr. John Wilson, of Charterhouse, with us at the Annual Meeting. It was a great regret that owing to illness the Rev. Dr. Maurice Frost could not be present—his first absence since 1948—and therefore the Rev. Eric P. Sharpe, M.A., presided over all business meetings. The next Conference is to be held in Bristol, September 18th-20th, 1962, and will celebrate the new *Baptist Hymn Book* and the new edition of the *English Hymnal*, both of which are to appear next year. The Organizing Secretary for the 1962 Bristol Conference will be the Rev. Wilfred J. Little, 29 The Avenue, Basford, Newcastle (Staffs). He is a Bristolian and we anticipate a successful Conference.

A.S.H.

At the Act of Praise referred to in the above Report, the following hymns were sung.

1. 'Rejoice to-day with one accord' (1861)
Tune, EIN FESTE BURG S. 378
2. 'The King of love' (1868)
Tune, DOMINUS REGIT ME R. 197
3. 'Praise to the holiest' (1868)
Tune, GERONTIUS R. 185
4. 'O Love, how deep, how broad, how high' (1861)
Tune, EISENACH (*A & M* version) R. 186
5. 'Lo, God is here' (1889)
Tune, ST JEROME S. 526
6. 'Lord God, our praise we give' (1904)
Tune, COSMOS H. 329
7. 'Sometimes a light surprises' (1950)
Tune, OFFERTORIUM R. 176
8. 'Not a thought of earthly things' (1939)
Tune, FENITON R. 392
9. 'Come down, O love divine' (1950)
Tune, NORTH PETHERTON R. 235
10. 'O God, our help in ages past' (1861)
Tune, ST ANNE R. 165

Editions: 1861, 1st edn.; 1868, 1st edn. with supplement; 1889, 2nd edn. with supplement; 1904, 'Historical' edn.; 1939, 'Shortened' edn.; 1950, Revised edn.

H = 1904; S = Standard (1875 with Supplements of 1889 and 1916);
R = Revised, 1950.

As Others See Us.

O CLOUDS, UNFOLD!

(An Account of the Hymn Society's Conference, 1961)

By GEOFFREY MOORHOUSE.

Something on the scale of a revivalist meeting was clearly to be expected, with an ample congregation exercising the more muscular Christian hymns, Lime Street, Batty, Wrestling Jacob and the like. The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland was, after all, making its devotions particularly to the centenary of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* at its annual conference, and nothing less than a celebration of the same monumental order seemed to be required. In the event, no more than a score of people were present at any of the services and meetings in Lambeth Palace during the past two days.

It was not, said the Society's secretary, that they were losing anything of their enthusiasm; numbers had quietly grown to 260 since the body was founded in 1936. It was simply that the majority of members had found it impossible to get down to Lambeth this week. Small the gathering may have been, but it was not exclusive. Free Churchmen completely outnumbered their Anglican hosts (was it simply imagination, or did they really look a bit sheepish in the gilded stalls of the Abbey during the muted pomp of Evensong?) and hymnology is said to be one of the few ecumenical activities in which Roman Catholics participate.

Certainly the enthusiasm of the Society, far from being doubtful, is apt to take extreme forms. A stockbroker shows you a file marked Vital Statistics of British Authors and Composers in Twentieth Century Hymnals which includes, in many of its 1,000 entries, a record of the precise moment of birth and death and, as often as not, the cause of death as well. And then he produces a broadsheet which has taken him seven years to compile in laborious copperplate—Exact Vital Statistics of One Hundred British Hymn Writers. It is at this point that the layman feels he is learning rather more about British Hymn Writers than he wishes to know. It is a pastime which has been pursued steadily since boyhood, of course, and the subsequent admission that "I used to sing 'Onward Christian Soldiers' on my rocking horse" seems at once less preposterous than it might be.

Over the coffee cups and in the breaks between lectures (The Impact of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* on Hymnody) manuscripts are passed to and fro and men begin to hum appraisingly to each other, tenor and bass. You never know, it might be another "Rock of Ages" going through the birth pangs. Wives of delegates nod fondly between themselves at these acts of creation and make indiscreet disclosures. "Give him a pen and paper," says one, "and he'll sit up all night writing hymns." There is even scope for mild

anarchy here. Two rather gentle looking young men are bent persuasively over a third—"Have a look at this new setting to 'Dear Lord and Father' will you? Both Kenneth and I feel that Repton won't do any more." But there is neither the time nor the inclination, evidently, for ordinary gossip. At the next table someone murmurs, "Charles is very fluent, you know." It is Wesley, of course. Surrounded by this penetrating scholarship and prolific composition, the visitor found himself wondering how the hymnologists will, so to speak, perform in the field. Can they possibly be hymn singers, too, like the rest of us missing a beat here and losing pitch a little there? The fact is that on Tuesday night their singing in the chapel at Lambeth was as warm and lusty as anything you would wish to hear on a Saturday afternoon at Cardiff Arms Park. Indeed, there was only one let-down. In the midst of all these philharmonics, this hymnody and hwyl, there was but a solitary Welshman.

From the GUARDIAN, 19th September, 1961, by kind permission of the Editor.

THE IMPACT OF HYMNS ANCIENT AND MODERN IN RESPECT OF TUNES.

Being an Address given by the Revd. C. E. Pocknee to the Hymn Society's Conference on September 20th, 1961.

It is with some diffidence and hesitation that I address you on this subject, particularly in view of my connexions with another Anglican hymnal; for the Church of England is unique in Christendom in having no official collection of hymns. I have already warned our esteemed Secretary that anything I may say is, therefore, likely to be prejudiced, provocative and paradoxical.

I should like to begin with a reference to the title, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. It was stated by the late Dr. W. H. Frere in the historical edition that the title was suggested by W. H. Monk, the first musical editor of the book. But I think there can be little doubt that it was originally inspired by a paragraph in the preface of J. Chandler's *Hymns of the Primitive Church*, 1837; and which the editors of *A & M* drew upon for a number of translations of Latin hymns.

Chandler's book, and indeed *A & M* as first produced, forms part of the literature of the Oxford Movement and the Catholic Revival in the Church of England in the 19th century. We cannot understand the success, as indeed it was, of *Hymns A & M* and its title, unless we view it against the background of the Oxford Movement. The editors of *A & M* were all high churchmen, imbued with the ideals of the Catholic Revival in the Church of England, which sought to get back behind the Reformation to

THE HYMN

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31

Funds and Liabilities

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
General Fund as at 1st Jan., 1960 ...	650	0	4			
Add Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year ...	28	4	4			
				678	4	8
Life Membership Fund as at 1st Jan., 1960 ...	120	15	0			
Membership fee received ...	7	7	0			
				128	2	0
Julian Fund as at 1st Jan., 1960 ...	104	13	2			
Donations received— A & M £50, Eccl. Music Trust £50	100	0	0			
Deduct Editor's Expenses ...	50	0	0			
				154	13	2
Sundry Creditors ...				57	19	6
				£1,018	19	4

31st December, 1960.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
(1959)						
107 Printing Bulletins 88, 89 and 90 Annual Conference— Printing ...	16	18	6			
Sundries ...	3	1	9			
				20	0	3
30 Officers' Expenses— Secretary ...	2	0	0			
Editor ...	9	18	6			
Treasurer ...	17	9	3			
				29	7	9
16 American Society ...				6	16	6
— Subscriptions Cancelled ...				8	4	
— Donations ...				2	2	0
Excess of Income over Expenditure, carried to General Fund ...				28	4	4
				£171	19	2

MN SOCIETY

AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1960.

Assets

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
INVESTMENTS— Defence Bonds 4½% ...	500	0	0			
Defence Bonds 5% ...	300	0	0			
				800	0	0
CASH at Midland Bank Ltd., Oxford— Deposit Account ...	167	14	5			
Current Account ...	10	11	7			
Cash in hand ...	3	11	10			
				181	17	10
Sundry Debtors ...				37	1	6
				£1,018	19	4

ACCOUNT TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1960.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
(1959)						
Membership Subscriptions— 231 at 10s.6d. ...	121	5	6			
Library Subscriptions and Sales of Bulletins ...	18	11	6			
Members' Donations ...	1	8	6			
Interest on Defence Bonds ...	27	19	3			
Interest on Deposit Account ...	2	14	5			
				£171	19	2

DAVID S. GOODALL,

Hon. Treasurer.

the Church of the Middle Ages, and to a lesser degree to the Primitive Church. The Middle Ages came to acquire a highly glamorized and romanticized picture in the 19th century for a large section of the Church of England. But the editors of *A & M*, like Chandler before them, were insufficiently equipped to discriminate between what was truly ancient and what was merely modern and baroque. Thus Latin hymns, less than a century old in 1861, were accorded the same high antiquity and aurora as the hymns of Ambrose and Prudentius. And what may be said in regard to words applies in some degree to a number of tunes.

It was one of the weaknesses of the Catholic Revival in the 19th century that it imported into the Church of England a great deal of medieval lumber overlaid with baroque accretions, which the Anglican Communion of the 20th century is now trying to throw off. I should like to make it clear that I am a Catholic churchman, holding a high sacramental doctrine, and that I accept the aims of the Oxford Movement, but not its methods or critique. *Hymns A & M* is part of the legacy of the Oxford Movement, and is not a phenomenon of its own. The editors of the book were sincere, saintly men, but they were limited, as indeed much of Western Christianity has been limited, by a false perspective regarding the Middle Ages. Only in our own day is a liturgical renewal sweeping aside the accretions of medievalism in worship. I offer this by way of a provocative introduction; and I now proceed to the tunes of *A & M*.

First, the plainsong tunes. I speak of the original edition of 1861 with the appendix of 1868. The editors of the book did not understand plainsong or how it should be sung, but neither did anyone else at that time. Music in the Roman Catholic Church was at its lowest ebb. The fact that plainsong music appeared in the Service books of the Roman Church in the 19th century does not mean that it was ancient and authentic, since much of it had been debased to accord with later ideas of music. Typical of such debasement is the Mechlin version of the melody to the Latin hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, which the editors of *A & M* took over and fitted to Cosin's paraphrase of the hymn to the Holy Ghost. Compare *A & M* (1904) 181 with 180. This last tune is about the only piece of plainsong familiar to Anglican congregations; and this debasement has now been copied by certain Free Church hymnals. It is not the alteration to the rhythm in the Mechlin version which is the chief objection, but that the pre-classical tonality (which is the essence of plainsong) has been destroyed by the modernization of the melody. The impact of this kind of thing has been to convey the idea that plainsong is a lugubrious, heavy affair, fit only for monasteries, where they cannot sing anything better! Whereas true plainchant is a thing of bewitching delight out of this world.

I now pass to consider the tunes of the musical editor, W. H. Monk. His tunes are bright, workmanlike, if unexceptional. Typical of these is ST ETHELWALD, set to Wesley's 'Soldiers of Christ arise'. But it is as an adaptor of older tunes that Monk is likely to be best remembered. Probably the best of these is his adaptation of a Gloria to the Magnificat, by the celebrated polyphonist, Palestrina, for the Easter hymn, 'The Strife is o'er', which has passed into many hymnals. Woe to the person who presumes to have any other tune to these words! Anglican congregations have had firmly impressed upon them that the tunes set in *A & M* are the 'correct' tunes. This I would suggest is the greatest impact of the book.

I now propose to compare three of Monk's adaptations with the original tunes. The first has become quite famous because of its association with Dix's words, 'As with gladness men of old'. The original tune may be seen in *Songs of Syon*, 57. There is loss and gain in Monk's adaptation, the loss is accentuated when his version is sung too quickly. Another example is the Chorale by Michael Weisse (*Songs of Syon*, 312a), which Monk adapted to fit Sir Henry Baker's 'Lord thy word abideth'. Finally we have the 18th century English tune MOUNT EPHRAIM (*AMR* 531 i). Compare this with Monk's adaptation (*AMR* 531 ii), for Mant's 'For all thy Saints, O Lord'. Here we have a sad ruin: the tree has been shorn of both leaves and foliage, and we are left with a mere trunk.

With the revised edition of 1875, a new type of hymn tune is introduced in considerable numbers. It is this type of tune which has become associated with *Hymns A & M*, though it is by no means limited to that book. This kind of tune is associated chiefly with the names of Dykes, Stainer and Barnby. The best of Dykes's tunes, including NICÆA to Heber's 'Holy, Holy, Holy' and DOMINUS REGIT ME to Baker's 'The King of Love' had already appeared in the original edition of 1861. But in the revision of 1875 this type of tune comes to predominate, and it typifies the Victorian idea of a hymn tune. It is often lacking in melodic strength and depends too much upon its harmonic progressions to sustain interest. The melodic outline is weak in a number of instances to the point of monotony and banality. The test of a good hymn tune is whether it can be sung in unison as well as in four-part harmony. The great German chorales are noble tunes in their own strength and melodic outline. The harmonies of J. S. Bach enhance and highlight these tunes, but the tunes stand on their own merit.

The Victorian tune depends too much upon its harmonic undergirding. It is of a partsong texture, intended to be sung by a chancel choir, something to be listened to rather than sung by the congregation. Erik Routley, with his usual perspicacity, has described this type of music as 'tool music'. Just as many modern tools are designed to eliminate any labour or drudgery, so this kind

of music was designed to take any effort out of prayer and worship by creating the right religious atmosphere, an atmosphere of comfort, where anything strident or adventurous was not to be thought about. It is this lack of adventurousness in such tunes, with their lush soothing harmonies which has done much to create the idea that Christianity is a religion of comfort and soporifics, which makes our congregations so fearful of the unknown, because the unknown is the unsafe, it is unconventional, and therefore bad form. The lack of adventurousness so typical of church life in the last century now finds itself in a most discomfiting position in the mid-twentieth century since it is now the age of the unconventional, the age of the beatnik, which is in fashion; and to be unconventional is in fashion. We live in a much more realistic age, and it is useless to sigh for the safety of a less venturesome age.

Signs of this were evident even at the opening of this century. The renaissance in English music under Stanford and Parry indicated that the wind of change, albeit a mere zephyr, was beginning to blow. The 1904 edition of *Hymns A & M* was an attempt to meet the change. A large number of 18th century tunes appear in that edition. This type of tune is much more melodically adventurous and satisfying. Compare Boyce's *KINGSLAND* (*EH* 554) with *ST CECILIA* (*AMR* 262) set to Haynes's 'Thy kingdom come, O God'. One does feel that the tyrannies of sin might be broken with *KINGSLAND*, but not with *ST CECILIA*.

It has been stated that the 1904 edition of *A & M* was before its time. This statement I would challenge, else how are we to account for the widespread influence of the *English Hymnal*, which appeared only two years later in 1906? The fact is there is very little that is revolutionary about the 1904 edition. Its best feature is its translations of Latin hymns, which are generally superior to those in *EH*. The only tune of distinction and originality in 1904 *A & M* is Stanford's *ENGELBERG* to 'For all the Saints'. But the book is still seriously overweighted with the harmonic "Sweet and low" type of tune.

Why did 1904 *A & M* fail and *EH* (1906) succeed? I venture to put forward the following theory. *English Hymnal* was edited by a musician as distinct from a Church composer. Vaughan Williams was an unknown musician in 1906, but he was a musician of discernment, and not simply a church composer with the limited experience of the choir stalls and the organ loft. Hence the breadth and depth of the music of *EH*. We have the same thing in regard to words; few hymn writers of the 19th century were poets, and it accounts for much of the insipid and vapid versification in many of our hymnals. It was only at the turn of the century that a poet hymn-writer in the form of Robert Bridges appeared, who was also a musician.

The tunes of Vaughan Williams and the brothers Martin and Geoffrey Shaw have been criticized because they do not sound like hymn tunes, and are therefore secular. But what is irreligious and religious? holy and profane? Why is it that so few musicians can be found to write hymn tunes? Is it not because we have sought to impose too narrow a canon on hymnody and its melodies? It is the problem of the Oxford Movement in a specialized form. Until recently it was quite widely assumed that there was something peculiarly sacred and holy about 'Gothic' type. Consequently religious captions and headings, and other religious publications had to be set in this sacred illegibility, while presumably the type faces of Caslon, Baskerville and Plantin were profane because they were more readily legible. The same in regard to religious buildings, only those with pointed windows were sacred, all other architecture was profane. In the same manner too many people still think of hymn tunes as a jog-trot affair in rigid four-part harmony. But who invented this canon of hymnody? This kind of thing is neither ancient, nor modern; but simply a 19th century convention.

I am not here to plead for a particular hymnal, ancient, modern or English; and I would seek to lift the discussion out of any rivalry between *A & M*, *Songs of Praise* and *EH*. I am here to plead that our Society shall go forward. If Wesley was not always inspired and wrote too many hymns, the same must be said of our Victorians in respect of some of their tunes. So while we give thanks for the piety and devotion which inspired the best seller amongst Anglican hymnals, let us go forward rather than rest upon the achievements of our grandparents and their parents. There is no golden age of Church music, after which we can say all inspiration ceased, although we may feel that some ages are more fruitful than others. The Canon of the Holy Scriptures may close with the Revelation of St John the Divine; but we must not assume that the final canon and revelation of Christian praise and song belongs to any publication, however ancient or modern it may claim to be.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE RICH MAN IN HIS CASTLE.

From the Rev. Arthur W. Vallance.

18th September, 1961.

Dear Editor,

Dr. Maurice Frost is to be thanked for his note on Mrs. Alexander's verse—not that the verse is at all likely to be restored, seeing how prone it is to misconstruction. It once prompted the twentieth-century emendation:

The rich man in his motor,
The poor man on his bike,
God did not make them different,
He made them both alike.

If this never found its way into print, other twentieth-century additions did find inclusion in the American *Beacon Song and Service Book* (1935), in the Junior School section:

He made the deer and rabbits,
The squirrels brown and grey,
The fishes in the river,
The butterflies so gay;

And all the dogs and horses,
The friendly cows and sheep;
God giveth us his flowers
And animals to keep.

The authorship of this addition is not stated.

Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR W. VALLANCE.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

Even without the 'rich man poor man' verse, I myself don't choose this hymn to be sung by a city congregation. It's a nice tune, and they are nice words: but the sociology seems to me just wrong for our time. The implication in this kind of hymn is that the countryside is where you see the work of God, and that this is not to be seen in the town. 'God made the country: man made the towns', and so forth.

If more than half your people live, not merely in city streets but in tenements which have no gardens worth mentioning, and if they are all engaged in urban rather than rustic work, this kind of hymn will cause them to feel that their lives are being sadly wasted: that it's not fair that some people should live in the

country while they live in the town: that God loves the farmer more than he loves the clerk or the bus driver: that the 'good life' is of the country, and therefore not available to them.

I think this is all wrong, and that hymns that talk like this should be discouraged. And it doesn't matter if you do live in the country: you've no business to look down on the townee, or think of him as a poor chump who is cut off from God in his concrete prison.

Our English romantic view of the country mustn't lead us into a manichean condemnation of the town. But hymn writers don't write about towns. Asses! They ought to learn that towns are where people meet each other and fall over each other, and have somehow got to be redeemed, not pitied.

WHICH TUNE?

The Rev. F. C. B. Maldrum writes from Bromyard, Herefordshire, adding to the lists of alternative tunes given in our last issue.

With his help we can make the following additions:

Lead, kindly Light.

(18) BEACON, Anonymous, in PSHB (1919) No. 334 (i).

(19) LUMEN DE LUMINE, Anonymous, in PSHB (1919) No. 334 (ii).

FOR A WEDDING.

The following hymn, written by the Rev. Robert Hugh Benson, the well-known Roman Catholic novelist and man of letters (1871-1914), was communicated to us by Dr. Arthur Driver. Benson was a member of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, and in Anglican Orders, before he was received into the Roman Catholic Church and reordained. He was the author of a series of very powerful novels of Catholic apologetic, including *Lord of the World*, *A Queen's Tragedy* and *Come Rack, Come Rope*.

WEDDING HYMN.

Father, within Thy House to-day
We wait Thy kindly love to see;
Since Thou hast said in truth that they
Who dwell in love are one with Thee,
Bless those who for Thy blessing wait,
Their love accept and consecrate.

Dear Lord of love, whose Heart of Fire,
So full of pity for our sin,
Was moved with a divine desire
To seek Thy Bride, and, wooing, win:
Look down and bless them from above
And keep their hearts alight with love.

Blest Spirit, who with life and light
Didst quicken chaos to Thy praise,
Whose energy, in sin's despite,
Still lifts our nature up to grace;
Bless those who here in troth consent,
Creator, crown Thy Sacrament.

Great One in Three, of Whom are named
All families in earth and heaven,
Hear us, who have Thy promise claimed,
And let a wealth of grace be given;
Grant them in life and death to be
Each knit to each, and both to Thee.

R. H. BENSON.

(v. 2 slightly altered.—A.H.D.).

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MAURICE FROST (1888-1961)

Maurice Frost, Joint-Chairman of the Hymn Society, Vicar of Deddington, Oxfordshire, died on Christmas Day, 1961. With his passing we grieve for the loss of the most learned hymnologist in the Society, in Britain certainly, and not improbably in the world.

Dr. Frost's special study was the music of Christian hymnody. Its first fruits are embodied in the massive book, *English and Scottish Psalm and Hymn Tunes, c. 1543-1677* (1953); but, monumental though this volume is, it represents hardly more than a fraction of the work he had planned, and the knowledge he possessed. However long he had lived, he would have left his work on hymnody unfinished, for it was an absorbing interest to which he devoted all the resources of an eager and scholarly mind. He leaves a great mass of material on the eighteenth century tune-books, and he did manage to finish the draft of a new and up-to-date Companion to Hymns Ancient and Modern which will supersede the great work of W. H. Frere.

But if we call him the most learned of hymnologists, we imply not that he would have claimed to be master in every corner of this intractable field, but rather that in that large part of it in which his claims are undisputed his knowledge was exact, reliable, and at the disposal of all his friends. Every statement he made, every answer he gave to a question, was the result, not of a shrewd guess or a wild surmise, but of hours of hard work consulting primary sources. You knew that if Frost could not be sure, certainty was not elsewhere to be hoped for, and that if he said it was so, you could trust him.

But he was a true scholar also in the generosity with which he shared everything he had with any who were interested. You had only to hint that you were seriously interested in the subject, for Frost to make you free of a quite unique library, a delightful Vicarage, and a fund of wisdom.

All this won our respect and admiration. But not all who are masters of a specialist subject manage to excite the love and affection that Frost aroused in us all. He was wonderful company, full of lively conversation, and the kind of excellent listener who makes a capital chairman as well as a friend you were glad as well as proud to know. He was among those who can draw on a store of rich anecdotes, and among that smaller number whose sense of their appropriateness is unerring. It was always a pleasure and a blessing to be in his presence.

It is beyond our competence to offer judgments on other sides of his work. But nobody who knew Deddington could be unaware that he was a much loved minister of the Gospel. His knowledge of and interest in the affairs of the people among whom he lived for nearly forty years was inexhaustible. And we may well remember that although Deddington is, as parishes go, a small community, the life of a country Vicar nowadays, who must care (as he did) for more than one parish in the depths of the country, is by no means the easy affair that those believe it to be who rely for their evidences on the novelists of the nineteenth century.

We all feel, I think, that with the passing of Dr. Frost we have seen the end of an age—and a great age. Our own days are inhospitable to close and laborious scholarship in disciplines such as that which we follow in our Society. Frost stood in the great line of Julian and Mearns and Millar Patrick. It was fitting, and it was a matter of great pride to our Society, that he should be granted a senior doctorate by the University of Cambridge in recognition of his work published in his one great book. Very few senior doctorates have come to hymnologists—indeed I suspect that this is the only one ever conferred by an English university for work on the music of hymnody.

His editorial connection was with *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, on whose board of Assessors he held a place for many years. In the 1950 edition of that book there are many touches which those who knew him recognize as his personal contribution. These are chiefly, of course, in new and accurate ascriptions of tunes: as for example the withdrawal of the tune called song 67 from the Gibbons canon, and the correct dating of Bishop's tunes; and we still await the results of his great labours on the new Companion to that book. There is a certain sombre appropriateness in the fact that he died at the end of the year which marked the centenary of the country's most celebrated hymn book, to whose latter-day vitality he personally contributed so much. His illness, to the sorrow of all of

us, prevented his being present at the conference at which the Society paid its tribute to *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

His last illness was a painful and protracted business, including a serious operation and a long stay in hospital. He fought a good fight, but his hour came on Christmas Day. And now he is singing the songs of Sion: and who will sing the songs of the redeemed with a better heart than this gentle and learned soldier of Christ?

May his friends and relations be comforted! The Church Militant needs this wisdom, this patience, and this courtesy.

E.R.

