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EDITORIAL

Chiefly concerning the Conference held at Stratford-on-Avon.

We have just received the Secretary's report on the Society's Conference, held at Stratford-on-Avon, on the last two days of September this year. Upon that report we propose to base this editorial statement, but we have elected to write a paraphrase of the report rather than to reproduce the report for the excellent reason, as it seems to us, that our modest Secretary has omitted to mention his own share in the organization of an extremely successful conference.

We think it is not too much to say that this is the most heartening conference of our history. Some conferences have been more learned; perhaps that of Oxford (1948) drew the greatest attendance of any. But after two public conferences (Cambridge, 1950 and Oxford, 1951) which were thoroughly disappointing as missionary efforts, we are put in good heart by the opportunity, indeed the necessity, of saying that this conference was, by any standards, a very rewarding occasion. For this happy issue two people must especially be thanked. One is, of course, our Secretary, into whose hands we gladly put all the work of organising it and making such contacts in Stratford as would set forward the work. The other is our good friend (as we now think of him), the Vicar of Holy Trinity, Stratford. Canon Prentice entered with enthusiasm into our projects and our meetings, with what result we shall now recount.

As usual, our activities divided themselves into public and private business. But on this occasion an important and felicitous addition was made to our normal pattern. We began with Evensong at Holy Trinity, where we were kindly welcomed by Canon Prentice, and where our devotions were assisted by some beautiful choral singing. The canticles were sung to Hylton Stewart in C, and hymns 37 and 564 from the revised A. & M. were sung, the second, of course, in celebration of the feast of St. Michael and all Angels. After the service the organist, Mr. John Cook, F.R.C.O., gave us, for good measure, that noble and heraldic festival-voluntary, Herbert Howells's Sarabande for Easter Morning.

After dinner we proceeded to our first public meeting, which was held in the Avonside hotel, our headquarters for the Conference. At this meeting the Editor offered some observations on the question 'What remains for the hymn writer to do today?' Discussion followed, and the meeting was attended by a number of people from the town, whom we were very glad to see.

But our other public meeting was on an altogether grander scale. It was designed to be community hymn singing with commentary in Holy Trinity, and our expectations of this meeting were, to be frank, only moderately sanguine, for on this matter we have been known in the past to fall down rather heavily. We knew that our guest-speaker, the Reverend D. Ingram-Hill, Vicar of Holy Innocents, South Norwood, would prove to be a good friend to us, but whether anybody would come remained speculative. Holy Trinity is a large church. We knew we must have 150 people to make any sort of showing. In the event, we had at least three hundred. Mr. Ingram-Hill held our interest for an hour and a half, skilfully interspersing a carefully thought out lecture on hymnody and hymn singing with examples which we sang. Canon Prentice led prayers for us, and once again we had the distinguished services of Mr. Cooke, whose accompaniments were of the kind that add inspiration to the sacred pleasure of hymn singing. Mem-

bers of his choir were present to help us sing, and among the hymns which Mr. Ingram-Hill took us through were 'Light's abode, celestial Salem', 'O what their joy and their glory must be', 'Let us with a gladsome mind', and 'O God, thy soldiers great reward' to AGINCOURT SONG. It was in every way a capital meeting, and all of us who were present thought ourselves very fortunate in the acquisition of an enthusiastic new friend in Mr. Ingram-Hill.

So much for our public business. We must now record what took place in our Executive session on the Wednesday morning. At this meeting there were present Mr. Frost, Mr. Bunn, Mr. Holbrook, Mr. Maddox, the Secretary, the Editor, Canon Briggs, Canon Bartleet, Mr. Young, Mr. Farnsworth, and Mr. Ingram-Hill. The last three of these were warmly welcomed as new members of the Executive. It was also resolved that Dr. Alan Kay and Dr. Harry Escott be made members of the Executive, and that the Bishop of Coventry be invited to become a Vice-President of the Society.

We received good news from Mr. Bunn about the progress of his monumental labours on *Julian*, and congratulated ourselves once again on our good fortune in having his services in that great work; he is the only man alive who could do it, and he is doing it with great faithfulness.

Then Mr. Holbrook told us about the preparations which he has already made for our Conference next year at Sheffield. This is of the greatest importance. The conference will be held in July, the dates being either from the 6th to the 9th or from the 7th to the 10th. The chief accent of the conference will be a celebration of the centenary of the death of James Montgomery (30th April, 1854), and Mr. Holbrook has already made plans for our celebrating on a large scale, with united choirs and under the leadership, at some point, of the Bishop of Sheffield. Our readers will not fail to take note of such advice as will appear in later issues of the *Bulletin* concerning this conference.

Looking further ahead, it was proposed that we consider holding a conference in Scotland in 1955. The Committee will meet for business at Mansfield College, Oxford, towards the end of March.

It is very much to be hoped that our Society may continue in the work which was so well revived at Stratford. It is part of our duty to make what contact we can with the people of the localities which we visit for our conferences, in order that our convictions concerning hymns and hymn singing may have a wide hearing. Renewed thanks to those who contributed to the success of our conference in 1953.

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN HYMNODY¹

by Rev. LESLIE H. BUNN, B.A.

(Hon. Editor for the Revision of Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology)

When the Presbyterian Church of England assumed its present constitution in 1876, the uniting Churches brought into the Union, with other differences of tradition, two distinct hymn-books. That either of them possessed a hymn-book at all at that date marked progress from the Metrical Psalter of 1650 which they both revered. But somewhat unexpectedly it was the United Presbyterian congregation, lately in organic connexion with Scotland, which were the more settled in the practice of hymn-singing. Of their constituents, the Scottish Relief Church had shown early discontent with the meagre "Five Hymns" appended to the Psalms and Paraphrases in 1781, by producing supplemental collections of hymns in 1786 ("Anderston"), 1794 and 1833. The other body, known as the United Secession, had not hitherto published a hymnal, though in 1844 it was putting forth a draft of no less than 946 hymns. The two bodies coalesced as the United Presbyterian Church in 1847, and had their first common hymn-book five years later. This book, following the pre-Union labours of the Seceders, contained fifty Paraphrases and three of the added Hymns, while metres of great variety were admitted, and the standard of inclusion was high. At the same time the book was severely criticised for its arbitrary alteration of texts—a common failing in the mid-19th century. It is important to realise that this collection was known in 1852 among U.P. congregations south of the Tweed (of which about 100 existed by 1876), and that it followed a continuous sixty years of hymn-singing at least within the Relief Church.

It is also necessary to observe that not only were the U.P. "missionary" Churches in England inevitably Scotch in character, but even among the old-established Presbyterian survivals in English Nonconformity (consolidated in 1836) the ministers and sessions (with some northern exceptions) were almost invariably Scotsmen. The Convener of the Synod's Psalmody Committee in 1857, asking what concessions had been made to English sentiment in congregations, declared that very often the Hymn-book was not used "just because Sessions look at it from a Scotch stand-point". His critic, Dr. A. P. Stewart, accepting the fact, added that the Synod after ten years of labour had "produced a bantling to which very few care to give friendly shelter" (*E.P. Messenger*, Oct. 1857). It appears, as might be expected, that English members of the Church were more eager to adopt hymns than the ruling Scots; yet when, a score of years later, it was

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desired to unite with the purely Scottish U.P. congregations in this country, they too were found to be far more at home in hymn-singing than most of their fellow-presbyters.

The "bantling" referred to was the first English Presbyterian hymn-book of 1857. An earlier essay towards a hymnal in 1841 had resulted in a small draft of specimens printed in 1844, which apparently never came into use (being perhaps overshadowed by the Scottish Disruption). But in 1847 a Synod committee was instructed to "purge the existing collections of . . . paraphrases and to make further additions of hymns", and report. In the course of this other "Ten Years' Conflict" (comparable also to the debate which preceded the Paraphrases of 1781) feeling ran incredibly high, and charges ranged from surrender of the Metrical Psalms to "misappropriating" the Synod Fund for printing specimen copies!

It is not surprising that after eight years of frustration the Convener (Wm. Chalmers) resigned, being succeeded by Dr. Weir. Ultimately the Committee's initial choice of some 250 hymns was reduced to 116, by omission of Paraphrases: the title *Paraphrases and Hymns* simply reflected the Scriptural basis of the contents. To our more dispassionate eyes the little book scarcely deserved its unpopularity, especially as its use was merely permissive. The names of Watts, Wesley, Montgomery and "Olney" account for more than half of the hymns, and there are bold additions. "When Israel, of the Lord beloved" was retained, a trophy of the discerning Relief editors of 1833. Authors still, or then recently, living comprised Bonar, McCheyne of Dundee, J. D. Burns, and even Denny of the Plymouth Brethren. But from the beginning hymns were drawn from Episcopacy, Methodism and Dissent, with very little from Presbytery in south or north. A few pieces were wrongly attributed, as "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah" to "Oliver", while Charlotte Elliott's "My God, my Father" is anonymous. It is the first Presbyterian collection to be arranged in order of the XVII subjects tabled on the contents-page.

In 1865 a proposal to revise the hymn-book was withdrawn for lack of support. Then, however, a rare thing happened. At the following Synod the indefatigable William Chalmers, supporting a London Overture, "laid on the table" a new collection of Psalms and Hymns, which the Court agreed should be examined during its meeting. Another committee was then charged with reviewing certain suggested emendations, and completing the volume for issue!

It seems that Dr. Hamilton, minister of Regent Square, had prepared the book with the help of "a large number" of other ministers and elders, and had sent a first draft "several months ago" to "all the ministers and many of the elders of the Church";

their suggestions were then embodied, and no serious objections had been made. The music was edited by Dr. E. F. Rimbault. The Synod expressed their "fullest confidence" in those who had produced the hymnal, and recommended its adoption. By this expeditious procedure the Church had avoided the previous delays, and found itself in almost immediate possession of a new and far better book. The peculiar method of compilation doubtless explains why, although *Psalms and Hymns for Public Worship* was not authorised until the Synod of 1867, a copy exists, without authorisation, dated 1866. The words remained unaltered but a good many of the tunes have been changed. The 150 Psalms are followed by 521 pieces, which themselves include many other versions of Psalms from Montgomery, Watts, Lyte and others. Curiously *Old* 124th is mated also to Horatius Bonar's Ps. 24 ("Earth is the Lord's"): "A few more years" is set, as he intended, to SELMA. The only principle of arrangement adopted is to group on a page hymns of the same metre. Thus Nos. 162-165 can all be sung to MOSCOW, but include hymns for Harvest, Children and Foreign Missions.

This collection served the Church acceptably until after the Union in 1876. In that year the United Presbyterians in Scotland produced their excellent *Presbyterian Hymnal* which, not unnaturally, came into service with some of their English congregations and, notwithstanding the Act of Union, continued to be used alongside of *Ps. and Hys/1867*. But the obvious next step in a unified Church was the preparation of a single hymn-book for all the congregations, whether English or Scottish in origin, and this was achieved with *Church Praise*. As though determined not to repeat the earlier scandal the Synod committee, appointed in 1881, finished its work and produced the new book in two years. Here a selection of 86 portions of Metrical Psalms precedes the hymnal proper, taking the place formerly held by the complete Psalter. Hymns etc. are then numbered 1-575, being followed by anthems. The arrangement, reverting to 1857, is according to subjects, tabulated at the outset. Several American revival-hymns are included, and there is a children's section.

The engagement of a distinguished professional organist, Dr. E. J. Hopkins, as musical editor may be taken as a sign that the controversy about instrumental music in churches had died down. It raged in the 'fifties when St. George's, Liverpool introduced an organ, and the question was debated in presbyteries and Synod, and argued warmly in the *Messenger*.

In 1903 a need was felt for further revision, and four years later appeared the second *Church Praise*, a good collection still used by some of our smaller Churches. It follows similar lines, except that the selection of Metrical Psalms comes after the hymns which now number 624.

But with *Church Praise/1907* the series of distinctively English books comes to an end. In Scotland a notable fusion of worship was attained by the provision in 1898 of a single *Church Hymnary*, serving the Established Kirk and also the Free Church, United Presbyterians, and certain Churches "furth of Scotland". When that collection became due for revision the English Presbyterians, two years before the great Scottish reunion of 1929, were also brought in to share the *Hymnary*, though retaining their characteristic Supplement of selected Psalms in place of the complete Metrical Psalter. England thus became an equal partner with the other countries of Britain and the Dominions in the common Presbyterian praise.

It is instructive to compare the material available to the compilers of 1927 with the resources of 1857. No doubt the main purpose of the revolt against the Psalms and Paraphrases was to provide respectable "Evangelical" verses for Christian men to sing; nor were Presbyteries likely, in the prevailing temper of those times, to avail themselves of the new translations by Neale from the Latin or Catherine Winkworth from the German, with many others at work in both of these fields. But before the close of the period the revisers of the *Church Hymnary* were admitting hymns of all ages and continents, and of many shades of belief.

If we go in search of English Presbyterian hymn-writers, the qualification must usually be residence rather than birth, and even so the number is very small. The one outstanding name is that of James Drummond Burns, minister for a time at Hampstead, whose hymns have been widely accepted. "Hushed was the evening hymn" remains, of course, a general favourite. One of his poems furnished a fragment (unknown in Presbyterian books) beginning "A voice is heard on earth" which Bp. Bickersteth placed in his *Hymnal Companion* in 1876, '90 among the burial hymns:

The mourners throng the way, and from the steeple
The funeral bell tolls slow;
But on the golden streets the holy people
Are passing to and fro;
And saying, as they meet, Rejoice! another,
Long waited for, is come:
The Saviour's heart is glad; a younger brother
Hath reached the Father's home.

These lines were also approved for the first edition of the *Public School Hymn-book/1903*, though not since.

The hymns "Jesus, and shall it ever be" and "Behold a Stranger at the door" were written by Joseph Grigg, who for a time assisted the Presbyterian minister of Silver Street, London. In 1747 he married a widow of means, and retired in early life to St. Albans. The latter hymn (written at the age of ten) was used by English

Presbyterians in 1867, 1883, 1907, and stands in Congregationalist books from 1859-1951.

The learned Dr. Alexander Grosart (1835-99), sometime minister of Prince's Park U.P. Church, Liverpool, and later of St. George's E.P. Church, Blackburn, published no less than "three centuries of hymns", but his name is unknown in any hymn-book. Julian considered them worthy of attention by compilers.

More recently we can also claim Patrick Miller Kirkland (1857-1943), for forty years minister of West Kirby. His admirable hymn for Easter evening, "Jesus, Lord, Redeemer", appears in *Church Praise/1907* and the present *Hymnary*. It deserves wider recognition, and we are glad to find it in the new *Congregational Praise/1951*.

One other writer who must not be omitted is the Rev. Nichol Grieve, formerly Clerk of Liverpool Presbytery. His revision of the Scottish Psalter appeared in evil hour in 1940 (T. & T. Clark: 2/-) and was little noticed by the Church. Yet it was so well worth doing and so well done that its day may yet come. This small book contains all the pieces proved and loved; but he has also created in refreshing metrical variety a great many new versions with suggested tunes, and the whole collection merits careful study whenever Metrical Psalms next come up for reconsideration. His work is represented in the new editions of *H. A. & M./1950* and *Congregational Praise/1951*.

There will probably never be another independent hymnal produced by the English Presbyterians, and in that direction our story is ended; but the canon of Christian praise is never closed, and the Presbyterian Church of England may yet be moved to compose hymns of its own worthy to stand with the best of modern contributions to the service of song in the House of the Lord.

(For help in collecting material the author's warm thanks are accorded, among others, to the authorities of the Historical Society and the College, to Mr. R. S. Robson of Newcastle, and to the Rev. John Young, B.D. of Glasgow.)

PAUL GERHARDT

by T. F. KINLOCH.

If it be true, as many would have us believe, that the average worshipper is more deeply influenced by the hymns he sings than by the sermons he hears, Gerhardt has made a deeper impression on the Lutheran Church than any save Luther himself. Goethe once confessed that he envied Burns, whose songs were loved and sung by all classes in his native land, whereas his own lyrics seemed to appeal to a very limited number. However widely they differed from one another in every other respect, Burns and Gerhardt were at one in this — each had an amazing power of popular appeal. Gervinus expressed the view of all German critics when he said that Gerhardt was an out and out *Volksmann und Volksdichter*.

Yet in saying this Gervinus did not imply that Gerhardt was a simple peasant denied the privilege of a prolonged and elaborate education. From his boyhood he had been drilled in Latin, for in those days ability to write good Latin in prose and verse and to speak it fluently, was regarded as the hall-mark of the cultured classes. Almost from infancy he had been carefully instructed in Lutheran dogma, and that at a time when more attention was given to correct opinion on religious matters than to moral behaviour.

Calvinistic refugees from Catholic persecution had made their way into Germany. They brought their religion with them and founded churches in various parts of the country. About the same time, when Germany lagged far behind England and France in general culture, many young gentlemen crossed the Rhine to study jurisprudence in France. There they fell in love with French customs. Many came to prefer Calvin's theology to that of Luther's followers. At one German Court, for instance, divine service was conducted entirely in French. The Genevan psalter replaced the German hymnal; the Genevan prayer book, the Lutheran Mass; the Heidelberg catechism, that of Luther. All this was bitterly resented by the great mass of the population. By none was it so bitterly resented as by the Lutheran clergy whose pulpits rang Sunday after Sunday with violent denunciation of Calvinistic heresy.

The divines of Wittenberg assumed the mantle of infallibility, claimed that they alone were competent to expound and defend the mysteries of the Christian faith. At the height of his influence when he defied the will of the greatest and most enlightened ruler in Germany, Gerhardt gave abundant proof that he had learned his lessons in Lutheran dogmatism only too well, that his theology was as rigid and narrow as that of the most intolerant divine in Wittenberg. The difference in spirit between Gerhardt's lyrics and Gerhardt's prose is so great that it has astounded many of his most ardent admirers. Yet the explanation is perhaps not very far to

seek. Ever since St. Paul withstood St. Peter to his face theologians have differed from one another, whilst those who, like Gerhardt—when he wrote his spiritual lays—are content to give a simple description of religious experience, find that many, nay most men of good will accept their statements and profit by them. No hymn writer has ever used the word 'I' more frequently than Gerhardt: none has excelled him in simplicity of speech. In his case the style is the man; nay more, as one English critic has pointed out, the hymns *are* the man. In them a devout and humble believer expresses his unfaltering faith, his unspeakable gratitude to the Saviour who redeemed him, and his conviction that chastisement however grievous is a proof of sonship. In immortal words Luther had said that come what may 'the City of God remaineth'; Gerhardt says little of the Church; he speaks to the individual, assuring him that having Christ he has all things, that like his glorified Saviour, he will eventually triumph over death and hell and enter into eternal bliss.

Paul Gerhardt was born in 1607 in a little Saxon town. It lay, surrounded by walls some seven miles distant from Wittenberg, the Mecca of Lutheranism, and almost equidistant from Halle, later to be famous as the citadel of Pietism and the birthplace of Handel. Paul's family were well-to-do. His father owned land and the local hotel. He was mayor of the little town with its population of a thousand. But he and his wife died young; and when at the age of fifteen Paul followed his brother to the famous school of Grimma, he was an orphan. This school, like one or two others in the neighbourhood, had been a monastery; and the 96 boys who were educated within its walls, lived in cells as the monks had done before them. They rose at 5, cleaned their cells, sang their morning hymn, said their prayers in their own assembly hall before going to the parish church for divine service. Then back to light refreshments and their lessons. Before entering the school they had to pass an examination in Latin. They had to be able to explain in Latin, Luther's catechism and to write a good 'epistle'. Whilst at school they had to learn to speak Latin fluently and to write Latin verse. No one was allowed to speak German. They had to master the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord. Later on, (when Melancthon was suspected of being a 'crypto-Calvinist') they had to learn by heart a bulky volume which contained the essence of Luther's teaching. This was the form which the Renaissance assumed in Germany. The man who invented it, who trained and inspected the teachers, who used it in Saxony, was Melancthon. For him the whole end of education was *Pietas*. He was convinced that a thorough knowledge of the Classics and careful instruction in theology was bound to end in *Pietas*: or, as one might put it in another way, *this* was the perfect form of education for a Christian gentleman.

In those days there were only two classes in Germany; those who knew Latin and those who didn't. In all schools which would correspond to our Grammar Schools and Public Schools there was a man called a Cantor. He was well educated and his business was to teach the boys to sing. Luther had left some fragments of the Roman Mass in his own liturgy. The boys of Grimma and the boys of the local Grammar School took it in turn to form the choir in the Parish Church on Sundays and the great festivals. At least a third of the congregation could not read. So between the reading of the epistle and the reading of the gospel in the Lutheran Mass, a hymn was sung by the choir. As we have said the choir consisted of schoolboys; but they were assisted by men who had been trained as Cantors. They were called *Adjuvantes*. They were there partly because they knew Latin and could sing the Latin portions of the Lutheran Mass, partly to teach the congregation to sing hymns. Luther desired in this way to enlarge the number of hymns which the congregation knew. Otherwise they would have been restricted in their worship to 32 hymns most of them written by Luther himself.

Gerhardt went to Wittenberg in 1628 and remained there until 1647. Despite its unhealthy situation, Wittenberg was better attended than any other university in Germany. Even during the War its numbers ranged from two to five hundred; whereas in 1626, Heidelberg had only two students and several others had none at all. The divinity course in Wittenberg varied from five to twelve years. Some stayed on even longer as schoolmasters. This is what Gerhardt did. He became a domestic tutor and did not leave Wittenberg till he was 40. Then, still describing himself as *Studiosus*, he became domestic tutor to the family of a well-known lawyer in Berlin. This post he held until 1651 when he was ordained, signed the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord and received his first clerical appointment. He was appointed pastor of a little village about three miles distant from Berlin. Before the war the inhabitants had numbered a thousand; at the close the number had fallen to 250. The place was almost in ruins; yet here amidst poverty and suffering, Gerhardt wrote some of his finest lyrics. At last he obtained the reward of his devoted labours. He received a unanimous call to Berlin. The great Church of St. Nicolai had a staff of four clergy; the *Probst* or senior minister had three assistants who were called *Deacons*: Gerhardt was one of these. He had married a splendid wife, who bore him several children. Unfortunately all save one died in infancy. By this time his hymns were widely known and greatly admired. He was the most popular preacher in Berlin, and was highly respected by the great majority of his fellow-citizens.

He was in the flower of his age. His trials seemed to be over, a happy and prosperous life seemed to stretch out before him.

But that was not to be. Brandenburg, of which Berlin was the capital, was at this time ruled by a great man. His youth had been spent in Holland where he had seen a country — the only country in Europe — where men were at liberty to embrace and practice whatever form of religion conscience decreed. He, a youth of 20 when he ascended the throne, resolved to do two things (a) to re-people his territories depopulated by the war; (b) to put an end to the bitter strife between Lutheran and Calvinist. The first he accomplished by inviting settlers chiefly from Holland and Switzerland. These were mainly Calvinists. The second he attempted to do by trying to unite Calvinist and Lutheran in one church. Even if this proved impossible he was determined to put an end once and for ever to the disgraceful way in which the pulpit was used as a means of denouncing the religion of those whose views differed from those of the preacher. He arranged for a conference to be held between representatives of the two Confessions. After numerous and prolonged discussions no agreement was reached.

Gerhardt was not a member of the Lutheran party which appeared at the Conference: yet he was the man who provided the ammunition which the unbending Lutherans used in their assaults on the enemy's position. Then the Elector drew up a document which he insisted that every clergyman should sign. In it he promised, under pain of dismissal, that he would not use his pulpit as a platform for abusing the opposite party. Those Lutherans who refused to sign soon found livings in Saxony. Gerhardt refused to sign, because at his ordination he had signed the Formula of Concord in the 7th chapter of which the Calvinists are described as *astute and crafty and thereby the most harmful of all the Sacramentarians*. Great pressure was brought to bear on Gerhardt and Elector alike. But Gerhardt resigned his living. For a period he remained as a private citizen in Berlin. After this he received a call to another part of the country, once Bavarian now Saxon. He met with a reception that was far from cordial. Gradually he won his way into the hearts of his parishioners. There he died at the age of 69, and was buried in the Church in which he had ministered.

Throughout his life Gerhardt wrote Latin verse. It was the custom in those days for educated men to send a Latin poem to any intimate friend when there was a wedding or a funeral in the family. Critics assure us that Gerhardt's Latin verse has no claim to distinction. He also wrote verses of a similar character in German. Eleven of these poems survive. They are usually printed as an appendix. Apart from this he left behind him 120 lyrics. Of these it is said that 60 are well known in Germany and that 40 are usually to be found in a German hymn book. For many years German writers had been accustomed to write paraphrases,

sometimes of passages from Holy Scripture, sometimes of excerpts from books of devotion, sometimes of old Latin hymns.

Gerhardt followed this custom. He differed from predecessors and contemporaries alike in that his verses were so much better than theirs. Nearly 30 are based on the psalter; 10 on longer or shorter passages from the Old Testament; 8 from the New Testament; 3 from the Apocrypha; 6 from the favourite prayer book of the century, a book which it is said was rarely out of Gerhardt's hands — the *Paradies-Gärtlein* of John Arndt, a Lutheran mystic who had been expelled from his cure by Calvinistic influence. In addition to all this there are the seven *Salves* addressed to the feet, knees, hands, side, breast, heart and head of the Crucified. All these were taken from a Belgian monk of the 13th century. One of these has special importance. The *Salve caput cruentatum* becomes *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*, which turned into English was set to the tune which Crüger wrote for it, and Bach turned it into the glorious chorale 'O sacred head sore wounded'. In addition there are the songs of affliction and consolation, probably the best, songs of praise, songs for the festivals of the Christian year — none for a Saint's day, — songs about nature such as Bridges paraphrased in 'The duteous day now closeth'. Finally there are hymns of penitence, and those which deal with death and judgement. A number of these lyrics have been turned into English; all of them by one man.

Two things strike even the most casual reader of the lyrics: (a) the great variety of verse-forms; there are stanzas of the familiar 4 and 8 lines, and others of 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 lines, and (b) some of the poems are extremely long. The hymn for Good Friday has 348 lines; that for the Easter story 252. If Petrich is right in saying that each of these lyrics was 'born in a hymn book', how did they find admission? The answer is that Gerhardt had a brilliant friend, Johann Crüger, who having travelled widely and studied in Wittenberg, became the music-master in Greyfriars school at Berlin and Cantor in St. Nicolai Cathedral. His choir was famous and in 1644 he published a celebrated collection of hymns which, as it increased in size, rapidly passed through over 50 editions. Its title was *Praxis pietatis Melica*. He persuaded Gerhardt to allow him to include his lyrics in this book, and himself set many of them to music. In an early edition we find 18 of Gerhardt's hymns; later there are 96, some inserted by Crüger, others by his successor at St. Nicolai. This famous collection was not intended for congregational use. It was intended for choirs and the 'House Church' (Luther laid great stress on the importance of family worship). At a time when little spiritual help was afforded by the typical sermon, and the very Confessional was used as a school of dogmatic theology rather than as a place of spiritual guidance, Gerhardt's

hymns supplied as nothing else, comfort and guidance to those who suffered so severely in the Thirty Years' War.

One last word on Gerhardt's treatment of the Psalter. Living as he did when his fellow countrymen were passing through the bitter experience which many a Hebrew saint had undergone before them, at a time when all moral barriers seemed to have broken down, when the only men who seemed to prosper were the 'ungodly', whilst devout Christians were sorely afflicted and were tempted to believe that God had forsaken them, he drew whatever consolation the psalmists had to afford, united that with his own religious experience and bade bewildered saints to place themselves unreservedly in the hands of God, assuring them that however mysterious the ways of Providence might be, God still loved them and would prove this at long last.

There is one exception to the general rule. Taking one verse of a Psalm (Ps. 37, 5) which runs as follows in the Lutheran Bible—*Befiehl dem Herrn deine Wege und hoffe auf ihn er wirds wohl machen*—he wrote 12 stanzas each of which begins with a word of the text taken in order. This beautiful hymn was well translated by John Wesley.

Commit thou all thy griefs
And ways into his hands.

THE SOURCES OF METHODIST HYMNODY

by the Rev. R. E. KER

(concluded)

In 1875, then, Methodism was becoming increasingly aware of other hymns in addition to her own. She was alive to both the Nonconformist and the Anglican contribution. More particularly, she was being introduced to Latin hymnody, and was continuing the quest (on which John Wesley had started her) of German hymnody. It will summarize much, perhaps, if we say that *Hymns Ancient and Modern* first appeared in 1861. But Methodism in 1875 knew also that she had not exhausted her own inheritance. Better than ever before, she was able to judge both its quality and its extent, thanks to the thirteen volumes of the Poetical Works.

How has the story continued in the first half of the twentieth century? The answer will go easily into one sentence. Methodist hymnody has become less distinctively Methodist, and at a fairly steady rate. In 1904 the total number of hymns in the book was reduced by only thirty five. But the Wesley contribution was cut by almost three hundred—that is, from about seventy five per cent to about forty six per cent. In the words of A. S. Gregory (from

whom I have taken these percentages), it was no longer a question of the Wesleys plus a supplement partly non-Methodist, but rather of a new compilation in which the Wesleys were no more than chief contributors. It was inevitable that *Wesley's Hymns* should cease to be the title, since it covered less than half the contents. The Large Hymn Book was no longer kept together, but was broken up, and its hymns were distributed throughout the entire volume. At the same time John Wesley's 'proper heads' suffered a sea change. In all this the 1904 Committee were influenced evidently by popular opinion throughout the Methodist community. In the Preface there is a reference to hymns that 'after the lapse of more than a century, have for various hymns from Wesley's original book'. Actually the Committee were more or less impartial in their shearing of the Wesley sources. It will do rough and ready justice to the evidence, if we say that each source had about a third of its 1875 contribution clipped away. The Short Scripture Hymns and the Trinity Hymns, suffering more severely, were reduced by slightly more than a half; and the little *Graces* were eliminated altogether. On the other hand the *Hymns and Sacred Poems* of 1739 and 1740 lost only five items each, the Redemption Hymns lost only four items, and the Festival pamphlets only two items. But the total of Wesley hymns in the book came down to less than five hundred.

How were the gaps filled that were thus created? Among those who were present for the first time, Miss Havergal contributed ten hymns; How contributed nine; Faber, Thring and Mrs. Alexander contributed seven each. As for those who already had made a first appearance in 1875, Montgomery's total was raised to fifteen, Miss Winkworth's to thirteen, Ellerton's to twelve, Neale's to eleven, Bonar's and Heber's to ten each, and Lyte's to nine. Of course there were numerous authors contributing one or two hymns each, and belonging to various denominations. But a glance through the Biographical Index leaves a distinct impression that the new material was mainly Anglican in its origin and inspiration. This was even more true of the music, which was prepared under the editorship of Sir Frederick Bridge. The book concluded with a few Ancient Hymns, ranging from the *Venite* to the *Deus Misereatur*, and accompanied by suitable chants. The influence of *Sacred Songs and Solos* (and indeed, apart from Whittier, of anything American) was almost completely absent.

The present *Methodist Hymn Book*, which was published in 1933, is among the first-fruits of Methodist Union. Each of the three uniting Conferences had its representatives on the Committee, whose task was to replace three different books by one that would unite all Methodist hymnody in Great Britain and Ireland, and in not a few countries overseas. We have just examined briefly one of the three books to be superseded, namely the *Methodist Hymn*

Book of 1904. The other two were the *Primitive Methodist Hymnal with Supplement* (1889 and 1912) and the *United Methodist Church Hymnal* (1889). If space had permitted, these also would have been described in detail, together with their Primitive Methodist and United Methodist predecessors. Among other significant discoveries that would have been made, let me mention merely the proportion of the Wesley hymns. In the Primitive Methodist book it was about three hundred out of thirteen hundred and forty-seven, say twenty-two per cent. In the United Methodist book it was about three hundred and forty out of a thousand and forty-two, say thirty-three per cent. These two books were bound to influence the Committee's policy; and the result was that in the 1933 book the proportion of Wesley hymns was about twenty-seven per cent. — two hundred and sixty-five hymns out of nine hundred and eighty-four. This does not imply, however, that the Wesleyan Methodist group on the Committee wished to retain more of Charles Wesley, but were out-voted by the others. Personally I have never heard a rumour to that effect. It is to a different conclusion that the evidence is pointing us. Modern Methodism as a whole has been deeply influenced by the general hymnody of our time. I wish I could believe that she has used her own hymns as a standard by which to judge what she has borrowed. True, she still surpasses all other churches in the amount of Charles Wesley she retains; and she still retains much more of him than of anyone else. But she compels her own hymnodist, who is the prince of all Christian hymnodists, to keep strange company these days. Granted that other hymnodists also are able to enrich Methodist worship, surely there must be canons of good hymnody somewhere, if only they can be found and applied. I have the presumption to say that these, when known and used, will exalt Charles Wesley more highly and much more largely than Methodism has had the insight to do as yet. Our grandfathers knew him and loved him as we do not. But even they gave him less than his proper place. For some future generation is reserved the privilege of allowing him to come into his own.

REVIEWS

A Companion to the Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised).

Publishers: The Psalms and Hymns Trust, 10/6.

A book calculated to make hymnody in general a subject worthy of interest and attention, and among Baptists, in particular, a hymnal, with its wealth of good hymns, more highly valued both for private and public use.

There is an article on 'Hymnody in the Christian Church', by the Rev. Frank Buffard; and on 'Hymns among the Baptists', by the Rev. J. D. Barrett. The Notes on the Hymns and their Authors, contributed by several ministers, will be of special value to many for their informative interest, culled from reliable sources, and being in numerical order, easy of reference.

The Index of Authors and Translators, the General Index, and the Index of Hymns, complete this excellent Companion to the Hymnal.

In this brief Review, time has not been given for any notice of errors or of incomplete statement, except to observe in passing, that in the Notes on Hymns and their Authors, the Author of the hymn, No. 251, Handley Carr Glyn Moule, was Bishop of Durham in the early years of this century.

F.B.M.

The Youth Sing Book, Compiled by Sid G. Hedges, with Foreword by Dr. Thomas Armstrong. (The Pilgrim Press; Music Edition 15/-; Words only 3/6d.).

It is difficult to account for the fact that songs, sacred and secular, most frequently used for Youth Rallies and Evangelistic Services can seldom claim either literary, or musical merit. Many well-meaning people still seem to think that genuine hymns set to good tunes have little, or no, converting power. They seek to influence young folk with 19th century Mission Hymns, or modern jingles, apparently oblivious of the fact that the presentation of the Christian message to such accompaniments is far more likely to repel than convert the more intelligent. It ignores the fact that the rising generation is better educated in such things than were their elders. The sour grapes of the fathers may set the children's teeth on edge!

Anyone who takes the trouble to listen to the services and music talks now being broadcast to the schools must agree that their standard is far higher than that of many churches and mission halls. The Preface of the *B.B.C. Hymn Book* justifies the omission of a separate section 'For the Young' on the ground that 'For children over ten the Compilers advocate full, though discriminating, use of the hymns sung by adults', and they add, 'This treats the older

children as they would wish to be treated, and it makes them familiar with the hymns they will find in use when they become regular members of the adult congregation'. The principle deserves more recognition than it gets at present.

If this premise is accepted, it can be said that those responsible for producing '*The Youth Sing Book*' have performed a service of inestimable value to all youth organisations and the churches; for the present collection adequately covers the requirements for religious services and secular occasions. The book is divided into three parts under the headings, Hymns, Songs, and 'Fun Songs'. In the first section there is an excellent selection of our best hymns, with those of a robust type predominating. Such hymns as '*Ein Feste Burg*', 'From glory to glory' (set to Holst's noble tune); Chesterton's 'O God of earth and altar'; and The Hymn of St. Francis are typical examples. Nor are the quieter, devotional sorts omitted. One is pleased to find Percy Dearmer's most lovely 'Jesu, good above all other' (set to the lilting *QUEM PASTORES*) and his 'Book of Books, our people's strength' (to a 16th century Bach adaptation). The major Festivals of the Church are well represented, for there are no fewer than 24 Christmas Hymns and Carols, while for Easter we have Alington's fine 'Good Christian men' (set to Vulpinus' 16th century tune). One would like to have had one or two Easter Carols and perhaps a few descants.

What makes this collection specially valuable — and I think unique — is that many of the hymns and songs have French, German and even Latin versions. In as much that the more familiar English words may themselves be translations it is well worth while to have them in their original languages, while the advantage of giving young Britons attending international gatherings abroad songs in the language of the country visited will be apparent.

The Song Section contains a great many old favourites from The Scottish Students' Song Book, as well as others equally good. Such songs as 'Waltzing Matilda', 'The Drunken Sailor', 'I will give thee the keys of heaven' and that gem 'The Lass with the delicate air' indicate the rich variety. There's a delightful 16th century song, 'Alas my love you do me wrong', set to *GREEN-SLEEVES*, and by contrast a good selection of Negro Spirituals. Herrick and Purcell are represented by 'Passing by'. One would have liked more Purcell — 'Fairest Isle', or 'The Spinning Song', but with a limit of 150 much must be omitted. Barnby's 'Sweet and Low', and 'O who will o'er the downs with me' have been included but seem hardly to qualify for their company. There are also some thirty rounds and catches — all lively and singable.

The final 'Fun Song' Section is genuinely light-hearted and will doubtless add to the merriment of many a camp-fire sing-song.

J. BLAIR-FISH.

The Hymns of Charles Wesley — A Study of Their Structure, by the Rev. Dr. Newton Flew, M.A. (Epworth Press, 6/-).

For a Closer Walk — The Methodist Hymn-book used in Responsive Services and for Private Devotions, by the Rev. J. H. Bodgener, M.A. (Epworth Press, 6/-).

These books have one thing common. Dr. Flew makes the claim of many Methodists that their Hymn-book is their "liturgy both in public worship and in private prayer". Mr. Bodgener goes further and puts "the little body of practical divinity" to the proof. He gives over two hundred hymns from the 1933 Methodist Hymn-book as suitable for public and private prayer.

Has Dr. Bett's mantle fallen on Dr. Flew, or did he put it on when asked to give the Wesley Historical Lecture for 1953? We must wait and see. In the meantime we are indebted to him for a book which was prompted by Prebendary Carlile's "You cannot expect a converted old boozier to get much out of Choral Mattins." Dr. Flew says: "if the boozier was really converted" he would have understood even Charles Wesley's Doctrinal Hymns giving Systematic Theology because their structure is so orderly and their thought patterns so sharp and clear. The hymns can be analysed. He boldly claims that Charles Wesley has an orderly mind beyond all others of the great hymn writers. As a good teacher, or lucid preacher, he uses 'divisions'. A normal Wesley hymn with seven verses of four lines sets forth the subject in verse one and then expounds it in three sections of two verses each. Whether this sermonic structure is always obvious may be doubted but, in the examples used, it is good to follow the interpreter's reverent and scholarly steps and observe his affectionate approach to Wesley's hymns. His source-book is the 1780 Collection yet, even here, to know the real Charles and perceive his pattern, one must turn to the fountain itself — the Poetical Works (13 vols.). There the hymns are never shortened. Dr. Flew's experience is that the following classification is helpful to the study of the Wesley Hymns: The Hymns of John Wesley, Occasional Hymns, The Hymns on the Lord's Supper, Hymns on Various Doctrines, Various Paraphrases of Select Psalms, and Short Hymns on Selected Passages of the Holy Scriptures. The book follows this scheme. Twelve hymns are discussed fully, their Scriptural foundations revealed and some 18th century theological matters touched on. The book is excellently produced but an infelicity — "be come in" — appears on p. 51, and the last quotation is marred, thus:

"And love . . . with a zeal like Thine;

And lead them to Thy open side,

The sheep for . . . their Shepherd died."

"Them" and "whom" are missing.

Taking his title from Cowper's yearning "O for a closer walk with God," Mr. Bodgener has given us a choice anthology of devotional verse that will prove valuable in the secret chamber. The book is divided into two parts — Hymns as Acts of Prayer in Public Worship, and Hymns for Use in Private Devotions. The selection is catholic, almost every section of the Christian Church being represented for authorship, and along with the oldest writers are moderns like J. R. Batey, Percy Dearmer and Elvet Lewis, men of our generation.

Excellent suggestions are made for using hymns as prayers in Services and Devotional Meetings as Invocations, Preparation Prayers for the Choir, Before Baptisms, and Responsive Services for Christmas, Good Friday and Easter are given. Attention is drawn to the value of the Ancient Hymns and Canticles as responsive acts of prayer. Two acts of Affirmation are given, one on Faith in the Trinity using St. Patrick's Breastplate. What a mighty hymn this is, so stimulating to the imagination and the will, and what kindling of the emotion is here! Apart from hymns quoted whole, or in part, thirty-five others are cited additionally as Hymns that Prepare for Prayer, Hymns for Beginning and Ending, Hymns that are Personal Prayers, Hymns that are Prayers in Themselves. It is surely a new use of "Sankey" hymns to offer them as responsive prayers from a "prayer book," but three are suggested.

The book has a good format, is well-printed, and has few errors. Phillip Nicolaiz should lose his "z" and G. W. Donne should read Doane. The Affirmation "I have a belief believed in," on p. 19, is bad, and two sub-titles read strangely — Prayer To The Holy Spirit, and Self-Offering to the Divine Love. But whoever handles this book and uses it sincerely will be led into the secret place of the most High, and that is praise enough.

ARTHUR S. HOLBROOK.