

THE HYMN SOCIETY

OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

BULLETIN

74

VOLUME FOUR

NUMBER ONE

WINTER, 1955-6

Editor: REV. ERIK R. ROUTLEY, M.A., B.D., D.Phil.,
17 Norham Road, Oxford.

Hon. Secretary: THE REV. A. S. HOLBROOK,
The Manse, Hathersage, Sheffield, Yorks.

Hon. Treasurer: D. C. B. HARRIS, ESQ.,
Myrtle Cottage, Banbury Road, Kineton, Warwicks.

CONTENTS

Hymnody in Canada and the U.S.A.	...	...	...	1
Reviews :				
<i>The Hymnbook</i> (U.S.A. Presbyterian)	...	...	...	6
<i>The Malvern College Hymn Supplement</i>	...	...	...	9
A Delicate Question (Mrs. Alexander)				
from a contribution by Mr. R. F. Newton				11
Congratulations	...	...	...	13
The Source of the Tune PICARDY, by Maurice Frost				13
Correspondence	...	...	...	15
Conference, 1956	...	...	...	16
Subscriptions	...	...	...	16

HYMNODY IN CANADA AND THE U.S.A.

by ERIK ROUTLEY.

Not long ago a visitor from an English-speaking country overseas paid a brief visit to Wales, and went on record in one of our religious journals as being greatly moved to hear the Welsh speaking their native Gaelic. To attempt to offer any generalised comments after my first visit to Canada and the United States would be equally arrogant, and would bring with it a crop of errors comparable with that about the Gaelic. But it does at least provide occasion for a word or two about the leading hymn books in use in Canada; and the fact that I did cross the frontier into the States on two occasions leads naturally to some observations on a hymn book from the States that has just come in for review.

Not to beat about the bush, and in order to make perfectly

clear the strict limitations both of my encounter with things transatlantic and of this article, I will mention that I visited the universities of McGill (Montreal), Victoria (Toronto), MacMaster (Hamilton, Ontario), Harvard and Chicago; I attended public worship in all these except the last, and I was invited to preach at Toronto and at Crown Point, Indiana (about 45 miles from Chicago). I was fortunate enough to attend university services at Montreal and Toronto, to attend both the University chapel and the chapel of Andover Hall in Harvard University, University worship at MacMaster, and a Thanksgiving Day service in the Episcopal parish church of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Impressions gained from these few visits are bound to be almost useless as evidence of anything. Statements based on them will be liable to direct contradiction by those whose experience is wider. One impression, however, nobody will want to contradict; that there is no more generous, friendly, hospitable people on earth than the American, and that they are only rivalled in this by the Canadian.

I would write here, however, of hymn books, and a little of hymn singing; and it is not too much to say that both in Canada and in the States there is strong evidence, in the contents of the later hymn books, that hymnody is being taken more seriously and examined more critically than it was a generation ago.

Canada's Protestant churches are served principally by two hymn books, *The Hymnary* (1930) for the United Free Church of Canada, and *The Book of Common Praise* (Revised, 1938) for the Episcopal Churches. An important development from *The Hymnary* was the publication of a revised form of it in 1936 for the Baptist Churches of Canada, who do not form part of the United Free Church. This Baptist revision was simply formed by deleting about 70 hymns in *The Hymnary* and substituting others which would bring the book nearer to the needs of its special constituency. The revision was carried out under the direction of Dr. G. P. Gilmore, who is now Vice-Chancellor and President of MacMaster University, and is, after the venerable Dr. Alexander Macmillan, the leading hymnologist in Canada. In consequence, Canadian Baptists have a hymn book far ahead in taste and excellence of anything from which British Baptists are able to sing; for *The Hymnary* is an excellent book, and the revision was conducted with a discretion that did no violence to the general tone of the original. Moreover, the Baptists, though no part of the Union of Free Churches, are substantially united with the other Free Churches in their hymnody, and that is a matter for high praise.

For while I am disposed myself to resist attempts to level down the worship of all English free Churches to a single uniform book — because that would most certainly have the consequence of our losing those elusive but valuable accents which the different Free Churches contribute to the worship of the whole Church — there seems to be much to be said for a common pattern (Praise here, Advent there, Communion yonder and so forth) within which each denomination could make its variations. If we published a united Free Church hymn book we might well lose from the *Methodist Hymn Book*, from *Congregational Praise*, from the *Church Hymnary*, and the *Baptist Church Hymnary*, just those things which lend them distinction, and be reduced in our corporate hymnody to the FRANCONIAS and 'Lord, thy word abideths' of this world. But we might well agree upon a Table of Contents, and we might be found to agree on three hundred hymns which we all wanted. 'Economy', in its modern and debased meaning of 'cheapness' is always the chief point in the charter of mediocrity; but along these lines perhaps its worst effects might be avoided.

In the matter of taste and discretion, there is little to choose between the *Hymnary* and the *Book of Common Praise*. The *Hymnary* is older, and perhaps shows slightly less prophetic perceptiveness. Any book which, as this does, omits 'Come down, O love divine', is missing a clear winner. The chief influence in the *Hymnary* is probably the *Church Hymnary* (1927) of Scotland; but the Canadian book contains a much higher proportion of hymns of the highest evangelical tradition, like 'Jesus, thy blood and righteousness', and 'Eternal beam of light divine' (the last scandalously removed by the Baptists!) Its children's section is old-fashioned, and, when a revision comes, will no doubt fall heavily under the axe. It contains very little original music indeed. Healey Willan, the doyen of Canadian church musicians (who celebrated his 75th birthday recently) has only two of his own tunes in the book. GUERNSEY (526) by F. D. Prescott (1880-) provides a serviceable setting in eight sixes for a hymn by Hosmer beginning 'Thy kingdom come, O God' (which is neither of the hymns beginning with those three words that we know). No. 303 is a very interesting arrangement of a Russian tune set to a translation of Russian words.

Hymns *simpliciter* run to no. 623; then doxologies, then metrical psalms, then prose psalms, and finally liturgical material. For what they are worth, the figures tell us that 62 per cent. of its contents are in the *Book of Common*

Praise, and 38 per cent. in the *English Hymnal*. It is, taking the rough with the smooth, a very serviceable book.

Of the *Book of Common Praise* we wrote a note or two recently in another connection.¹ This is a more ample book, running to 812 hymns, with liturgical material following numbered 1 to 189. It has a very full section of 'Evangelistic' or 'Gospel' hymns, 54 in number, but in not a few cases a tune, new or old, of standard type is set alongside the familiar tune, in the manner of the *Church Hymnary*. On the whole the musical standard here is a good deal higher than in the *Hymnary*; we may suppose that there was less leeway to be made up among the Episcopalians than in the newly united Free Church. The Preface indicates that advances on the 1908 *Book of Common Praise* were made to the extent of 190 hymns and 323 tunes. You can see the tensions at work where, for example, 'O valiant hearts' is set to the well known and very dreary tune by C. Harris, and also to FARLEY CASTLE; Two pages later, you see facing each other Sullivan's tune to 'Angel voices' and Vaughan Williams's arrangement of the folksong, CAPEL. I observe from the authors' and composers' indexes, which note the nationality of each name entered, that 25 authors and 20 composers in this book, responsible for about 65 hymns or tunes between them, are Canadians; in this respect the book has much more indigenous material than has *The Hymnary*.

During three days at Harvard I encountered three hymn books. One, of course, was the *Hymnal* (1940) of the Episcopal Church, which it was a delight to meet on its own ground²; from it I learnt for the first time that rousing national song, 'We gather together' (No. 315), with its fine Dutch tune, that is always part of the Thanksgiving Day scenery in the U.S.A. In Harvard University Chapel they use a hymn book private to the university that seems almost exactly to correspond to the *Oxford Hymnal* in this country; it is an exceedingly interesting book, full of fine classical music of the best kind, which pleases nobody. This seems to be because although one would have thought that a centre of high culture should have a very lively sense of adventure in hymns (to which the Harvard Hymn Book would minister very effectively) the fact is that, just as in England, there is nobody more hymnologically conservative than your university don, and among dons, nobody more conservative than your eminent theologian. The day I was there we sang 'O Master, let me walk with thee' to the tune we call HURSLEY (A. & M. 24). In Andover Chapel, the chapel of Harvard

¹ *Bulletin* 68, p. 180.

² For a review, see *Bulletin* I xxxiv pp. 2 ff.

Divinity School, the hymn book in use is a unitarian compilation, musically very cultured, but naturally limited to a certain *ethos* in the choice of its words.

In the Middle West I encountered the Presbyterian *Hymnal* of the U.S.A., of which I will say no more than that it is much to be hoped that a better hymn book will speedily displace it. But the students of Chicago University are being brought up on a publication of the Student Christian Movement which deserves serious notice. This is *Hymns for Worship*, published by the Association Press (World Student Christian Federation), 347 Madison Avenue, New York, in 1943. This is a short book, of 222 hymns, showing considerable ingenuity and enterprise on the part of its editors. As was appropriate to the situation, they drew fairly freely on that interesting international book, *Cantate Domino*, and there is a healthy proportion of hymns from widely differing Christian cultures. It is very proper, however, that such a book should include such classics as 'Jesu, priceless treasure', 'Father, we praise thee, now the night is over' to COELITES PLAUDANT, and 'Now cheer our hearts this eventide' to ACH BLEIB BEI UNS, and 'The duteous day now closeth'; but it is even more interesting to see the OLD HUNDREDTH in its genuine Genevan version (three long notes at the beginning of the last line), Studdert Kennedy's 'When through the whirl of wheels', Bonar's 'O love of God, how strong and true' to a tune ascribed to Eccard, and 'Hail, gladdening light', slightly rewritten, to SONG 1. Altogether this seemed to be an enterprising book. It is much to be wished that student bodies in this country would show a similar spirit of adventure.

In conversation with American friends I gathered that my impression of American and Canadian congregational singing and organ-playing was not unfair to the total picture: that impression is that congregational singing is rather livelier in America than in the United Free Church of Canada: and that in both countries the presence of large congregations induced in organists a tendency, when accompanying, towards the wooden and metronomic rather than the genuinely rhythmical. This is compensated to some extent by a fairly liberal use of the 'chimes' without which no respectable transatlantic church would think itself properly furnished, and of the tremulant and the *vox humana* when playing voluntaries and accompanying the choir. But there is zest, and there is enthusiasm, and there is generosity. My general impression leaves no room for doubt that developments in American church music during the next generation will surprise us all.

REVIEW

The Hymnbook, published by the Presbyterian Church in the United States, The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Reformed Church in America, and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Address of Publishing Agent: 929 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa., U.S.A. Full music edition, \$1.75.

This hymn book had its beginnings as a draft for a new hymn book on behalf of the Reformed Church in America and the United Presbyterian Church of North America; but soon after the beginning of the committee-work the other denominations of the Presbyterian-Reformed group joined the compiling committee, and the result is a book common to all five groups. The usual initial comment on a new American hymn book — that there was up to now plenty of room for improvement — applies here; but the combined committees — numbering 21 members in all — have clearly taken their task seriously. There is a good deal here that would be considered reactionary in an English hymn book — like the perpetuation of Sullivan's tune to 'Angel voices', and a good deal of hacking of the great secular classics into hymn tunes: but it is always better to look for what is good in a new book than to pass adverse comments on what is less good; and it is perfectly clear that much ground has here been gained. The price of that is invariably the concession of a certain amount to the 'old school', but the question always is, were the concessions amply compensated by the advances they made possible? In this case we judge that they were.

The Hymnbook, like most transatlantic publications, contains a good deal of material besides hymns. Its full plan is on the following pattern:

Aids to worship (public prayers, the Commandments, the Creeds)

Hymns, numbered 1 to 527

Service music (choral prayers, liturgical responses, the Communion Service, the Canticles)

Scripture readings (67 chapters)

It is only the hymns with which we are here concerned; but we cannot forbear to comment on the beautiful type-setting in which the Scripture readings are displayed. These are printed in two colours: black for the part to be read by the Minister and a very pleasing reddish-brown for the congregational response. Some readings are arranged for responsive

use, others (in coloured type throughout) for congregational or choral reading. In those where the coloured type is set solid, the effect of the colour is never so violent as to be irritating. The type-face itself is delightful. When one remembers the remarkably low price of the book, a refinement of this kind carried out with such grace is the more admirable.

English eyes will remain obstinately prejudiced against the American manner of setting out the hymns — with the words inside the staves. The argument in favour of this procedure is the greater ease with which the words can be fitted to the tune, and with which therefore new music can be learnt by a choir or a congregation. And if this practice has been responsible for the eclipse of that ridiculous anomaly, the 'words only' edition, in America, it is indeed to be commended. (I never saw a 'words only' book there: no doubt there are some). But what is lost is not negligible. Typographically, you lose the opportunity for that refinement of indentation and spacing which subtly endears the words of a hymn to the eye; and the fact that it is remarkably difficult to get a good idea of the 'shape' of the ideas in a hymn when the words have to be extricated from the staves discourages that most necessary religious exercise, the reading of hymns. Furthermore, although all editors of hymn books printed in this way here and there indicate a possible change of tune, the disentangling of words set within the staves of one tune in order to sing them to another presents such formidable difficulties that such advice can rarely be taken with much ease. We still think that it is better — even if it means a little more initial work in the process of learning new material — to print the tune as a piece of music, and the words as a piece of poetry; but that is still a matter of controversy, and neither of us can claim to have the last word in it.

The hymns are arranged in the manner familiar to non-conformists in the English speaking world — credally rather than according to the church's year. We believe it is high time somebody produced a hymn book with a really original 'table of contents'; not that this is anybody's specific duty, nor that we need be fussy or querulous about it: but rumour has it that a new hymn book may soon be published in this country whose table of contents may provide material for much thought. Some of us, in respect of the book here under review, might raise our eyebrows at the placing of the section 'Life in Christ' before the section 'The Church': but let us not be pedantic.

What chiefly catches our attention in a new book is the new, or near-new, material in it. The editors here have done

their duty not inadequately. As is usual, new tunes provide more interest than new words. Glancing through the book we observe at no. 25, for example, a beautiful modal melody from 1529, here called WALLIN and set to words beginning 'We worship Thee, almighty Lord'. G. G. Stock's tune SUNSET (*Rev. C.H.*, 271 i) appears here at no. 57, 'Before the day draws near its ending' — a felicitous experiment in seven-in-a-bar rhythm. Several Chinese tunes appear in the book. One, P'U T'O (75) has become quite well known through *Cantate Domino* in association with 'Let us with a gladsome mind'. Others appear at 223 and 450 (the latter to be found also at BBC 538). David Hugh Jones, the editor in chief of the book, gives us a new tune, MILLER CHAPEL (107) in a somewhat Chinese idiom for a translation of Chinese words — and it is a very fine one. 'My Spirit longs for Thee' (321) is set to FINGAL, as at *Rev. C.H.* 456 ii. The great Norwegian tune, which is called LINDEMAN at *C.P.* 172, appears here at no. 432. One of the best things in the book is Austin Lovelace's tune, HINMAN, to 'Shepherd of tender youth' (471): a tune which copes with the 'God save the Queen' metre in bars of two, three and four beautifully contrived: this is very warmly commended to the notice of editors. The words, a translation by H. M. Dexter from an original ascribed to Clement of Alexandria, are well worth reviving. 'In Christ there is no East nor West' (479) goes well to a negro melody called MCKEE. Percy Collier's ST. JOAN for Canon Brigg's 'Christ is the world's true light' was well taken from the *Hymnal* (1940), as were the words and tune of 'They cast their nets in Galilee' (421). All these merit attention, and evince a sensitive and informed mind in the editorial board. It is good also to see W. K. Stanton once represented by his tune in the BBC book to 'Fight the good fight' (no. 359).

Among more familiar hymns, we are glad to see 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence', to PICARDY (148), 'O God of earth and altar' to LLANGLOFFAN (511), and 'Far off I see the goal', to MOAB (337). Diligent search will reveal the setting of the first half of Genevan OLD 107TH to 'The Lord will come' (230) and the first half of Genevan 86th to 'To my humble supplication' (536). A worm cut in half may provide two excellent new worms. OLD 132ND cut in half provided at least one excellent tune, ST. FLAVIAN. But we doubt whether either of these Genevan tunes is sufficiently vermicular to stand it.

It is better, we say, to attend to this kind of material than to shake our heads with easy and perhaps patronising sorrow over this or that infelicity. There is a due proportion (to put

it at its lowest) of 'Gospel songs' in the book, and Englishmen might well find it difficult to get used to W. H. Jude's tune to 'Jesus calls us' (269: *Worship Song* 489) or Hastings's tune to 'Rock of Ages' (127), which seem both to be universal in American books. 'Faith of our fathers' seems to have virtually disappeared from standard English hymn books of Protestant churches, but America still sings it lustily — suitably adapted, of course — and here it is (348), set to Hemy's ST. CATHERINE. Barnby's appalling tune to 'Now the day is over' (51) is another favourite in America, though we may be thankful to find that it was exported from England a long time ago, and we may hope it will never return. But on the other hand, Americans are all used to singing Watts's 'Joy to the world', which Englishmen forgot as soon as Barrett's *Congregational Church Hymnal* disappeared from circulation; and Americans almost always choose to print the alternative, and better, version of CWM RHONDDA (339), with the penultimate line of melody descending (compare *M.H.B.* 615).

Taking it all round, if we had to live with this book, we should find it a good deal easier (provided the congregation were reasonably alert) than to live with the *Presbyterian Hymnal* of 1933, which is the normal book in Presbyterian churches affiliated to the American General Assembly. Within its context, this is as good a piece of editing as could have been achieved, and our readers may well find it worth while to add a copy of it to their collection of worthwhile American books.

The Malvern College Hymn Supplement, edited by Leonard Blake, 1955.

Here is a small book which indicates the course which one large public school has recently taken in providing for the assembled praise of its congregation. From 1939 to 1950 the school used a book of its own, the *Malvern College Hymn Book*, which was substantially the *Clarendon Hymn Book* of 1936. In 1950 the school adopted *Hymns Ancient and Modern Revised*. Now this was an important and suggestive development. It implies the judgment that a school is likely to be better provided for by the use of a standard hymn book than by a hymn book private to itself, or one specially designed for school use. This judgment may perhaps cause surprise in those quarters where private books, or the *Clarendon Hymn Book*, or the *Public School Hymn*

Book, are in use : but there is much to be said for it. If the school chapel is part of the greater Church, it may well be the duty of the school authorities to make their pupils familiar with one of the great standard hymn books which they are likely to encounter in their later church-going days. In practice, this means voting either for *Hymns A. & M.* or for the *English Hymnal*, if the school be of the anglican tradition; and of course, many schools have used *E.H.* as the school book for a long time now. The publication of an up-to-date *A. & M.* was an excellent opportunity for a school to vindicate this view by boldly changing from a private book to a standard one. Further — *Hymns A. & M.* is, of course, a far larger and more comprehensive book than was the former College book; and although, being a standard book, it is bound to contain a certain amount of material that the school will not need to use very much (among the hymns for baptisms and weddings, and those for other special occasions), when all this is allowed for, you have in a standard book a large selection which can be put to better and more intensive use in a school than it could be put to in many parish churches. Scholars (and students) ought to sing a large number of hymns; they ought, we might add, to sing a few in languages other than their own. If it is economically possible, a school or college is the place, not for a small hymn book, but for a large one, and the material selected for services should be selected with a full view towards the richest and best in the book. Musically at least, the Revised *A. & M.* provides excellent material, new and old, and it is possible to guess that in the hands of the Director of Malvern it will be very faithfully employed. When we add to this the consideration that the liturgy of the church's year both in general and in special contexts is so much more fully provided for in *A. & M.* than in the shorter school books, we may well applaud the judgment that led to its adoption at Malvern.

But ideally you do need a small supplement for a school. In practice this is usually demanded by those who miss their favourites from the former book. In the evolutionary development of standard hymn books, anglican and dissenting, this supplement is beginning to take the form simply of an 'appendix of embarrassments'; but there was much in the Clarendon book that met school needs specifically and happily, and the opportunity was well taken in that book for using fresh musical talents that have enriched hymnody as a whole. But of course, while you are editing a supplement, you do take the opportunity of gathering in a handful of the best things that your new standard book has missed. This

little book of 25 pages shows just how Mr. Blake has done this, and to what excellent purpose.

For example, he deals a well-aimed rap at the *A. & M.* knuckles for the omission from that book of 'Awake, our souls, away, our fears' — an inexcusable omission: perhaps even an oversight! There it is in the Supplement, no. 2. No. 1 is 'All my hope on God is founded', to Herbert Howells's admirable tune, MICHAEL, from the Clarendon book. Here is 'In the cross of Christ I glory', to the *E.H.* tune, WYCHBOLD — an excellent hymn for young people. And, of course, 'Judge eternal', to F. H. Sweeting's WOLFESEY — one of the best of the old school of 'Public school' tunes, and 'O God of earth and altar' to KING'S LYNN. Admirable additions, which are all, I suspect, new to Malvernians, will be Henry Carter's 'Give me, O Christ, the strength' (*C.P.* 532), here set to George Dyson's WINTON, 'Lord Christ, who on thy heart didst bear' (*C.P.* 556 altered) to a charming and modest tune by Mr. Blake, 'The heaven of heavens cannot contain', to ABBEY in the genuine syncopated psalter rhythm, and 'Jesu, my strength, my hope', marked to be sung to ICH HALTE TREULICH STILL.

Altogether there are 35 hymns and one supplemental tune (almost certainly a local favourite); some of the hymns have tunes supplied in full, with some the melody only is given, and others again are simply marked with a reference to a tune in *A.M.R.* We review it here with some pleasure, not so much as a book for use anywhere but at Malvern, as with an eye to the example of school-technique which it sets. In these straitened times the standard hymn book with a small supplement is likely to be the best proposition for many communities in school and church; and if it is done with such discernment as we find here, it is well done.

A DELICATE QUESTION

I suppose that in these days we are bound to be less reticent than we used to be about our ages; hymnologists and editors have developed a tough skin where such delicacies are concerned, and we have little sense of shame in placing the rather questionable and subjunctive hieroglyphic '(1900-)' after an author's name where we are assured that he has not yet given us occasion to make an entry more typographically and historically tidy. I am not sure but what I personally lean towards the decent reticence of *Hymns A. & M.*, which confines these data to its authors' and composers'

indexes, and leaves it to the curious or the writers of theses to discover whether or not Jones has joined the old-age pensioners.

But it was not so in earlier days, and, especially when a lady-author has been the subject of research, we can hardly doubt that any such details had to be extracted either from the statements of third parties not too closely connected with the subject, or from official records. We need, therefore, not ascribe the curious error in many hymn-books concerning the date of MRS. ALEXANDERS's birth to any unseemly suppression of the truth by that distinguished lady. The fact is, as the Dictionary of National Biography sufficiently attests, that Mrs. Alexander was born five years before the date that most of us have given her in our hymn books. The true date is not 1823, but 1818.

Good heavens! What does it matter? The answer is that on the long view it matters nothing at all that when she published 'Once in royal David's city' she was thirty and not twenty-five. Yet those who strive for accuracy in historical records must pay the price of the praise that scholarship accords them. Those who burrow in the libraries and the record-offices must now and again ask questions to which some angry ghost must reply, 'Go away, young man: it's no business of yours'. And what some of the shades of eminent authors and composers in the field of hymnody must have said to our indefatigable and learned friend, MR. R. F. NEWTON, is well beyond the bounds of imagination. For from Mr. Newton no secrets are hid; and Mr. Newton, who is becoming known now as a specialist whom editors of hymn books must consult before they publish dates for composers and authors, has kindly supplied us with the evidence in this matter of Mrs. Alexander.

Briefly, it amounts to this: First, in the official record of her death, written at the City of Derry in 1895, her age is clearly given as 77. Secondly, Eleanor Alexander, in her life of her father, Archbishop Alexander (Mrs. Alexander's husband), says that his wife was 'a few years his senior'. These two documents sufficiently establish 1818 as the date, the one by direct evidence, the other by implication. All we now need is some explanation of the '1823' to which we have set our hands so assiduously these many years, in defiance of the D.N.B. True, some modern books have made the correction: but the evidence for it is perhaps not without interest to the pedantic.

A CONGRATULATION

But while we are on the subject of times, seasons, and anniversaries, we would display the more agreeable side of the whole matter by offering our respectful congratulations to our distinguished friend and Vice-President, Canon G. W. Briggs, on achieving his eightieth birthday on 14 December, 1955. No reader of this journal needs reminding to what extent Canon Briggs has been a guiding genius of the Society since its inception eighteen years ago; nor indeed need we labour the obvious point that Canon Briggs holds an unquestioned pre-eminence among hymn writers in English today. We hope with confidence that it will be a long time before any definitive assessment of his place among English hymn writers becomes possible; he is still writing with undiminished zest and, if it may be said with all possible respect, his finest hymn was written (historically we know this, and personally we venture to judge it) hardly a couple of years ago. Canon Briggs has not finished with us yet, by a long way, nor is the extent of our gratitude to him yet to be told. But at this stage we wish good health and many more fruitful years to the Prime Minister emeritus of our Society.

THE SOURCE OF THE TUNE PICARDY

by MAURICE FROST

Being anxious to see the original form of the tune called PICARDY in most modern hymn books, for which *Songs of Praise Discussed* referred to 'Tiersot's *Melodies* (Paris, 1887)' I asked a friend in the Bodleian to look up *Melodies Populaires* (8 series, Paris, 1887-1921) and see whether he could find the tune in the 1887 volume. Unfortunately it was not in the library. Nor could it be found in the British Museum.

The Rev. C. E. Pocknee, however, discovered it in *Le Romancero Populaire de La France / Textes Critiques / Par George Doncieux / avec un avantpropos et un index musical par Julien Tiersot / Paris, MDCCCIV*.

M. Doncieux referred to *Chansons Populaires des provinces de France, notices par Champfleury acc. de piano par J. -B. Wekerlin, Paris, 1860*. Mr. Pocknee could not find it in the B. M. Catalogue.

I sent what particulars Mr. Pocknee had unearthed to Dr. I. Ellinwood at the Congress Library, Washington, and he found the book there. It is volume iv of a series called *Chants*

et chansons populaires de la France. Dr. Ellinwood writes as follows.

'Our cataloging of the set says that the first edition was 1843, the "new" edition which we have 1848-60. I suspect however that the 1843 was vol. one only, and that the 1860 for vol. 4 is the date of the first printing of that vol.; that the first vol. or two may have been issued again as the work progressed and the demand grew. At any rate PICARDY is in the 1860 edition of vol. 4, as "recuilley et transcribe avec piano par J.-B. Wekerlin". The introduction to the Picardy group of 3 songs states: (p2) "*Jésus -Christ s'habille en pauvre, et la La belle est au jardin d'amour, furent chantées souvent en petit comité par Madam Pierre Dupont, Picarde d'origine, qui avait retrouvé dans son souvenir ces poèmes de son enfance.*"

Perhaps the last statement should be taken with a grain of salt, for Pierre Dupont was a popular poet and song writer of the mid-19th century. The editor goes on to point out that such is the attitude towards popular or folk-song that had Mdme Dupont remained a bourgeoise of Amiens she would not have remembered the songs, but in Paris, "au milieu des discussions esthétiques" her memory comes back and "elle se dit que dans sa jeunesse" elle a entendu des chansons qui avaient de secrètes analogies avec les tentatives de son mari..."

The melody, set as a song with piano acc., 2 bar introduction, is identical with what you sent me, save that Wekerlin has his in the key of f minor. The text:

Jésus-Christ s'habille en pauvre:

"Faites-moi la charité." ://

Des miettes de votre table

Je ferai bien mon diner.

—Les miettes de notre table,

Les chiens les mangeront bien. ://

Il nous rapportent des lièvres,

Et toi ne rapportes rien."

There are another four stanzas, which I need not repeat here. The main thing is that the tune has been traced in print to 1860, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Pocknee and Dr. Ellinwood.

I might add that Dr. Ellinwood says there is a full set of the 1887-1928 *Melodies Populaires* in the Congress Library, and that he has been through it very carefully and cannot find the tune therein.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the *Bulletin*:

Sir,

In the Autumn issue of the *Bulletin* your correspondent the Rev. F. W. Street in a casual reference to the hymn tune IBSTONE makes the following statement: 'One of the interesting things about IBSTONE is that it was composed by a woman. Apart from the possibility of CRIMOND, I know of no other hymn tune composed by a member of the female sex.'

From a dozen well known hymn books in present day use, I picked up at random the *Church Hymnal* and gave a cursory glance through the list of composers. I find 14 tunes by 11 lady writers.

Mrs. Sarah G. Stock, MOEL LLYS.

Mrs. Raymond Varker, ST. JOHN DAMASCENE.

Mary Lady Carbery, FRANKFIELD, CASTLE FREKE.

Victoria Lady Carbery, SUBMISSION, VOX HUMANA,
OSBORNE.

Frances R. Havergal, TRUE-HEARTED.

The Lady Garioch, GARIOCH.

Miss Marchel Davis, FIDES.

Mrs. Evans, GLASTON.

Miss F. E. Webb, ECCLESIA.

Charlotte A. Barbard, BROCKLESBY.

Maria Tiddeman, IBSTONE.

Wedded to a tune composed by a lady, a hymn which has been popular in evangelistic activities on both sides of the Atlantic since its birth almost eighty years ago, had the unique distinction during the last two summers of being broadcast nightly, by a choir of 1,000 voices, to millions of listeners in connection with Dr. Billy Graham's Crusade. The hymn was 'Blessed Assurance', and the composer of the tune, Mrs. J. F. Knapp.

Sincerely yours,

David J. Beattie.

Kenilworth,
Talbot Road,
Carlisle.

(EDITORIAL COMMENT : This impressive list from the Church Hymnal causes us to wonder whether the fact that its chief editor was Victoria Lady Carbery has anything to do with the presence in it of a notable number of tunes by women. We may add to Mr. Beattie's list the observation that there are several women-composers among the American Gospel Writers, that Frances Havergal wrote several hymn tunes apart from the one mentioned, for one of which see C.P. 555, and that the name of Miss Peggy Spencer Palmer, whose work may be seen at C.P. 62, 308, 546, should not only be added to the list, but ought to be given the honour due to the leader, in style and strength of musical content, among women-composers).

CONFERENCE, 1956

We remind our readers that the Croydon Conference is planned for June 12 - 15, and that bookings should be made through our Secretary.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please remit your subscriptions (7s 6d for the year, 15s for the year if you wish to receive the literature of the American Hymn Society, £5 5s for life-membership) to the Treasurer in the enclosed envelope without delay. It will be observed that Mr. D. C. B. Harris has taken over the Treasurership from Mr. Maddox. In the next issue we shall say more about this; here we simply record our gratitude to Mr. Maddox for what he has done, and to Mr. Harris for presenting himself so opportunely.

New Members:

289 D. C. B. Harris, Myrtle Cottage, Banbury Road, Kington-Warwicks.

290 Herbert White, 149 Murdock Road, Birmingham 21.

291 G. J. Dryden, 163 Broomhill Drive, Glasgow W 1.