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HYMNS FOR YOUNG METHODISTS.

The School Hymn Book of the Methodist Church, Methodist Youth Department, Ludgate Circus, E.C.4, pp. xiv 846, music edition 15s. 6d.

Making Melody: Introducing the School Hymn Book of the Methodist Church, published as above, pp. 62, paper, 2s.

Companion to the School Hymn Book of the Methodist Church, by W. S. Kelynack, Epworth Press, pp. xii 436, 21s.

Our readers will recall that we were fortunate enough to publish, in April 1946, an article on Hymns for Children from the trenchant pen of the Rev. Eric Shave. The theme of that article was the change which has taken place recently in the attitude taken by hymn-book editors and Sunday-school leaders to the needs of children. It is not impossible that had Mr. Shave been reviewing the earlier edition of the *Methodist School Hymn Book* he would have judged that in many ways that book was deficient in meeting the needs of the nineteen-forties. The revised book, however, has now appeared, and it will be welcomed by those whose interest is in young people's hymnody both inside and outside the Methodist Connexion.

The problem of the hymn for young people has been variously answered by our hymnographers from Isaac Watts onwards. The answers have varied in the way in which they have emphasised one or other of the following propositions at the expense of the rest:

1. Children are sinners like the rest of us, and it will do them no service if we try to hide that fact from them. (Eighteenth century hymnody, with conspicuous exceptions in Watts and Wesley, tended to take this line. Its most picturesque developments will almost certainly be found in the various editions of *Gadsby's Hymn Book*).
2. Children are deficient in knowledge, and hymns for them ought to be didactic rather than credal or experimental. (William Cowper's two hymns for children, and some of Doddridge's, are good early examples of this attitude).
3. Children are capable of appreciating the dogmas of Christianity if they are presented to them in simple and unaffected language. (No better example of this can be cited than Mrs. Alexander).
4. Children are imaginative, love great words and bold pictures, chivalry and adventure.
5. Children are members of the Church, the Family of God, and should be taught the great classics of hymnody as soon as they are capable of worship. (The last two views are widely held in the present generation).

All these are respectable views; there is no point in mentioning the disreputable ones. But it will be clear at once that the attitude of editor and teacher has proceeded from the first of the propositions we have enumerated in the general direction of the last. Nobody regrets that movement, but it has one danger. The early children's hymns were dogmatic rather than imaginative; furthermore they were sectional rather than inclusive — suitable for children and for children *only*. The danger now is, of course, that

hymns for children and young people (say, up to the age of 15) may deal wholly in the language of legend and myth, substituting the knight on his charger for the Man of Sorrows and leaving the child with the notion that the greater part of the story has been told when he has sung "Thou perfect hero-knight", or "O Son of Man, our hero strong and tender".

Now it is perfectly true that the older child and the adolescent are usually greatly attracted by romantic imagery, by thought-forms which are partly primitive, partly from the pagan classics, and only partly baptised into Christendom. "When a knight won his spurs" (to give yet another "chivalrous" citation) makes a better appeal than "Rock of Ages" and draws a bolder picture than "Love divine, all loves excelling". Equally it is true that the very small child is happy to sing of "little" things; toddlers love nothing better than the small, helpless, cuddly baby brother. But the wider the imaginative scope, the bolder the picture, the more forceful the challenge which the hymns of classical and romantic chivalry present, the greater is the necessity that the child who sings them shall not be allowed to think that that is the whole story. On the older views, children were faced uncompromisingly with Biblical doctrines and left to make the best of them. They will not be better served if they are allowed to cultivate a faith which by-passes Christian truth and substitutes romance. To put the same thing in another way—we are right to revive the scholastic distinction between sin and imperfection, to say that the fact of immaturity and youth is not an evil condition from which the child must seek to be delivered; but we should be very wrong if in acquitting imperfection of sin we deny the necessity of perfection, and either make it difficult for the child to grow up, or (this is the present danger) make the Peter Pan condition too attractive. Psychologists and sociologists will tell us, we believe, that much of the evil to which the churches and nations are subject is the result of the refusal, or the inability, or the denial of opportunity, in men to grow up. In our present enthusiasm for "Youth" and for a multiplicity of organisations designated by rows of initials beginning with the letter "Y", we had better not act on the view that the optimum mental age for a Christian is fifteen.

Judged by that kind of standard, what does the new *Methodist School Hymn Book* give us? It is a generous book—647 numbers, of which nine are psalms, 41 are carols, and 90 hymns for very small children. That the new broom has been applied with a will, especially in the section for "tinies," will be seen where we say that of 119 hymns in the older book for very small children, only 34 are here retained, and that of the first 240 numbers in the old book, 143 have been dropped in the new.

In general we can say that on the views (4) and (5) above, the new book serves its constituency well. There is a great deal of "big" material in the chivalrous vein, and there are all the great hymns of the Church. Used with discretion the book will be a means of grace. On the other hand, its very amplitude may tell against it, for there are so many hymns of the "imaginative", non-doctrinal sort, that a leader deficient in doctrinal sense could rather easily unbalance his charges' diet. This, we feel, will need watching. But it is not made virtually impossible, as it was in many older Sunday School books, to give the children a thoroughly wholesome diet.

There is a great deal of new material, much of it by authors whose acquaintance we make for the first time. We are especially satisfied by several of the hymns of Dr. W. H. Hamilton (modestly signed with the initial "H."), of which we mention with great respect a hymn on the Holy Spirit, "When Jesus on the earth His twelve apostles left", most felicitously set by Herbert Wiseman, and "O the dark waves were raging", set to STOWEY, a modern equivalent, well written, of "Fierce raged the tempest". These hymns seem to combine simplicity and dignity, dogma and grace, in a way which is an example to all who would write hymns for the young. We note with pleasure a hymn by Thomas Tiplady, and one by G. W. Briggs, "Light of the world", which we have not met before. (If its author has disowned it we heartily disagree with his decision!)

There are likewise many new tunes, mostly written *ad hoc*, and mostly without special distinction. We find something to say, however, for F. B. Westbrook's ASCENT (313), written skilfully and pleasingly to a very complicated metre. T. C. Gregory, famous for an extremely eccentric setting of "Nearer my God to Thee" in the *Methodist Hymn Book*, has a severely, but not unattractively, diatonic setting for "The Spacious Firmament" (39); we cannot find it better, however, than the glorious LONDON with which the words are usually associated. An ambitious hymn by the Editorial Chairman, R. Wilfrid Callin, designed for singing to "Men of Harlech", has been given a demure alternative by G. A. Morgan, unexceptionable in its way, but we feel that this will not compete with the old song tune, to which a cross reference is given. Folk-songs, by the way, have been extensively and skilfully used in this book. Hymns of this kind are, of course, the proper companions for folk-music.

We find in this book a not inconsiderable number of tunes of the kind which in an adult book we should judge had been placed there in deference to the Old Guard. We do not see the justification

in a book for young people, for example, of the "minimised" version of OLD HUNDREDTH, of OMBERSLEY, PENTECOST, YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION, VESPER HYMN, STRENGTH AND STAY (with original harmonies), TOURS, ST. AGNES (Dykes), and REDHEAD NO. 4. What caused these editors, often felicitous in their settings, to associate "Glorious things of Thee are spoken" with LUX EOI, "Lord of all being" with MARYTON, to perpetuate the arrangement of Spohr's "As pants the hart", and to continue in defiance of the author's expressed wish, the elongated version of "Tell me the old, old story"? We ask this because on another page we find "I've found a friend" austere set to NACHTIGALL (SP 313), and "Love divine" to Purcell's "Fairest Isle", not to mention "O Saviour bless us" to the "Beggar's Opera" carol familiar from SP 627.

But the credit side has some handsome entries — WURZBURG, RODMELL, DANIEL, ABENDLIED, MEINE HOFFNUNG, KING'S NORTON, LOVE UNKNOWN, HEREFORD, CRUCIFER, THORNBURY, CAPEL, SLANE, ST. PATRICK'S BREASTPLATE — all this is good. And in the words, though we deplore "God is good" with its final rhyme of "law" with "more", we welcome with delight a group of hymns from India, China, and the American negroes, Watts's "God of the morning" and "I'm not ashamed" and Havergal's "Master, speak" beautifully set to ST. LEONARD. The carols are especially generous, including sections for Christmas, Lent and Passion, Easter, and some "General" carols. They are all admirable.

The device, employed several times, of singing a long hymn to two tunes alternatively, is worth attention; we must wait to see how it works out in practice. At the moment we can recall only one example of this practice in existing books — S.P. 262.

In small details the book is commendably free from faults. We execrate the publisher for failing to date the book. We ask what reason there is for not attributing PEARSALL (324) to Pearsall, and we fancy that in the tune of No. 427 the penultimate bass note is mis-printed B for D making consecutive octaves by contrary motion at the cadence. On page 815 we are astonished to find Sir John Murray deposed from the rank of knighthood!

In sum, then, this is a good working book which in the right hands will do much good to the Sunday Schools of Methodism. It is a great advance on the earlier edition, and if we cannot say that we should regard much of its new material as a very good "life", we none the less respect the editors for the careful and industrious work they have done.

THE HANDBOOK.

For *Making Melody*, the little introductory pamphlet, we have nothing but praise. We are sure that every new or revised hymn-book ought if possible to have not only its historical companion, but also a simple, short, easily-priced introductory book of this kind. One of the great services such a book performs is to tell the users of the book (not to mention its reviewers) of the hymn-book's purpose. Not all hymn-books have the same purpose, and not all are designed for the same kind of use. To understand the purpose makes for good judgment both in reviewing and in using the book.

This pamphlet has ten brief chapters under the following titles :

The Book in General (Wilfrid Catlin).

Hymn-singing (Arthur Rutter).

Children Singing (T. W. Cowap).

The Words of the Hymns (Rupert E. Davies).

A Glance at the Tunes (Herbert G. Smith).

Responsive Services (Rupert E. Davies).

First Steps in Psalm-singing (A. S. Gregory).

Hymns for Younger Children (Ida Prins-Buttle).

The Hymn Book as an Instrument of Christian Teaching
(H. Vincent Capsey).

Methodist Fellowship in the Book (W. H. Jones).

Every chapter has something good in it, and they all make plenty of use of references to hymns in the hymn-book. One of the more impressive contributions, we think, is Mr. Cowap's on "Children Singing", which has an excellent paragraph on major and minor modes. Mr. Rutter in the second chapter has a defence of "Jerusalem the golden" which pleases us as much as Dr. Smith's half-brick well aimed at certain kinds of "Anniversary music" (page 34). Mr. Capsey's penultimate chapter is an excellent piece of work, packed full of material for the teacher.

We observed in passing a couple of textual slips. On page 25, fourth line from the bottom, the word "be" must be inserted after "may", and on page 36 the Polish carol should be referred to as "Infant *holy*".

This book admirably expresses the intentions of the compilers and gives a clear lead to the teachers concerning their duty in leading the children's praise. Both the book itself and its purpose are equally to be commended.

THE COMPANION.

Now we turn to the great labour of Mr. Kelynack. His *Companion* is an interesting addition to the steadily growing literature of systematic hymnology. Judgment of it, however, must be preceded by a clear idea of its purpose. It is intended primarily not for the further enlightenment of experts or the advancement of hymnology, but for the enrichment of Methodist Sunday-School Worship. It is a handy book of reference for the School Leader which aims at including that material which the Leader will find most valuable for his purpose. It is, therefore, not to be judged by the standards we should apply, for instance, to the *Handbook to the Church Hymnary*. Mr. Kelynack has been guided by the needs of hard-worked teachers who want relevant facts clearly set out and readily accessible, not by those of the scholar or the historian.

This work he has done remarkably well. The influence of his special purpose on the presentation of the material can be seen in the following special qualities. The author employs a style which is conversational and informal, about which we shall have something to say in a moment; his notes make free use of tabular arrangement; the notes deal hardly at all with details of variant readings or original versions, concerning themselves with the history of the hymns and authors and with valuable extracts from the writings of other authorities by way of tribute to the hymns; these admirably bring out their good qualities and enable the young singer of today to enter into the experience not only of the hymn-writers but also of those whom they have helped. We commend heartily the selections of "tributes" which Mr. Kelynack has appended to most of the great classical hymns.

The book deals with hymns only, not with tunes, and is divided into two parts. The first half deals with the authors alphabetically, and the second with the hymns in the order of their appearance in the hymn-book; the necessary index of first lines (in horribly small type) will be found at the end. Mr. Kelynack purposely omits what can be found in existing books of reference, and keeps his space for material which will not be found elsewhere. His comments are historical, not critical; he does not express his own reactions, but leaves all criticism to the authorities he cites under "tributes".

These general remarks will give some idea of the purpose and shape of this book. What are we able to say of its achievement?

The preparation of any *Companion* of this kind is a laborious business, and anybody who undertakes it has at least a thousand hours of research ahead of him. But quite apart from the size of the task involved, it is worth recalling some of the special difficulties of technique with which the compiler has to come to terms.

For example — how far is he to be critical and how far only factual? Mr. Kelynack's answer to this question has been given already. He puts in the facts which he knows will help his Sunday-School Leader, and is content with that. Almost all the time we are content to accept his judgment in this matter, but now and again we wonder why he chose to include some comment. Was it really a good idea to include, at the end of the note on Baring-Gould (p. 16) that rather testy admonition to non-co-operating Anglicans? Is a reference book on hymnology the right place in which to speak of people (like Caswall, p. 58) "seceding" to the Roman Church? If we have to write a few lines on Mrs. G. K. Chesterton (p. 61), are *those* the facts (or legends) which we should choose to record? Is the epigram "bewildered and bewildering" applied to J. H. Newman (p. 194) a very helpful one? These things gave us doubt. It is not that we disagree with the opinions expressed, but that we question the propriety of expressing them in a work which is designed as a factual record for the benefit of eager but uncritical readers.

And then there is the very tiresome question, "Shall I or shall I not write this book in the King's English"? If the compiler decides that he will observe the gracious pedantries of English grammar, he will find that his style inevitably presents a somewhat severe rhythm to the reader. He will have to decide on the best formula for the statements which have to be repeated in each successive note and stick to it, not being worried by the wearisome repetitiveness which will result. He will say, "This has to be read not continuously but in small doses. Therefore we will write each note in English and not attempt to introduce stylistic subtleties which will make the book a nice piece of continuous prose from cover to cover". This is, on the whole, not what Mr. Kelynack does, and he therefore lays himself open to certain other dangers. His style is informal, and his formulas are variable. The informal style leads him too frequently into lapses of English grammar and irritating colloquialisms. Here, for example, is the additional biographical note on Arnold Brooks (author of "Trumpet of God"):

"His output of hymns has been extremely small; indeed, one wonders whether he belongs to the select company of the One-Hymn-only Hymnists."

If he belongs to that "select company" it is absurd to speak of an "extremely small" output. A considerable nexus of solecisms would have been avoided here by the use of the simple formula, "We know of no other hymns by this author".

Mr. Kelynack's thirst for variety causes him to use "confounded" often for "confused", to slide here and there into a rather ugly rhetoric (as in the note on Cowper, bottom of p. 68), to write

linguistic monstrosities like "poly-volumed", "multi-talented" and "multi-personality" (pp. 81 and 83), and to indulge in the rather owlsh periphrasis "Passed On" (capital letters and all, p. 39). His informality does not sufficiently guard itself against the split infinitive p. 177, the shifting subject (top of p. 229) and this kind of thing — "When President of Yale . . . the college entered on a period of increasing success" (p. 87).

We do not wish to labour this point or to give it more than due importance; we mention it because as a matter of fact it is a great deal more difficult to avoid this kind of pitfall in writing works of informal reference than in writing continuous books. "The vocabulary of Bradshaw" said Sherlock Holmes, "is nervous and terse, but limited". True, and its grammar and history are impeccable. Enlargement of the vocabulary in the interests of non-conformity with the English style of *Bradshaw*, though commendable, demands more circumspection than this author has brought to bear.

The greatest challenge, however, to such a compiler is the necessity of having all the facts accurate and present. None of us come up to this standard fully, of course, but if we have had to be critical of Mr. Kelynack's style, we must here acknowledge with respect and gratitude the great work he has done and the completeness, freshness, and usefulness of the information he lays before us. It will have been gathered already that the *Methodist School Hymn Book* contains a great quantity of new material by authors whose biographical details have been difficult to ascertain. Mr. Kelynack freely, though not always in the fewest possible words, tells us when he has been unable to gather the required information; (it looks as if too many of his letters of enquiry have gone unanswered). But what he does give us adds a good deal to what we get from the existing reference-books. We have detected only a very few places where we think correction or addition would be useful:

- Page 5. Dendy Agate was, we believe, the father of the late James Agate.
- " 15. In the bibliographical note on Hymns *A. & M.* it would have been better to add references to the 1916, 1939, and 1950 editions.
- " 40. Arnold Brooks died in 1933.
- " 45. "Parabolic" is the wrong word to use in describing *The Pilgrim's Progress*; the required word is "allegorical".
- " 61. Mrs. Chesterton was born in 1869.
- " 78. Can it be true that 30 hymns of W. Chatterton Dix are in common use? (Julian says so, but that was years ago).
- " 84-5. Was Draper Rector or Vicar?
- " 86. Dunkerley retired from West Hill in 1945, and is now Congregational Minister at Hockley, Birmingham.

- „ 94. Could the date of “Jerusalem, my happy home” be placed nearer than between 1500 and 1699, which is the import of the dates given here?
- „ 118. In the quotation of Hatch’s less celebrated hymn, the first line should read, “I dared not hope that thou would’st come to me.”
- „ 157. Misprint, 842 for 1842.
- „ 161. Is “Rev. Martin Luther” the correct address for a German Lutheran pastor?
- „ 169. Would there not be something in C. S. Lewis by way of tribute to George Macdonald?
- „ 213. Misprint, Tring for Thring.
- „ 279. Are there really twelve hymns of Wreford in *constant* use?

Mr. Kelynack’s notes on the hymns, taken *seriatim*, are very useful. In many places he is excellent, and the note on “Rock of Ages” (hymn 152) is as good as anything in the book. The real story is shown to be so much more dramatic than the fairy-tale. The note on “Still the Night” (112) is likewise excellent and contains an anecdote which we think really moving and entirely free from the vulgarity which some hymnic anecdotes have in time past gathered to themselves. We are disposed to make only a few comments:

- Hymn 14. George Herbert’s intentions with regard to “Let all the world” are preserved in a setting by Alexander Brent Smith published by Novello about thirty years ago.
95. We direct Mr. Kelynack to the pamphlet, “Adeste Fideles”, by Dom John Stephan, published in 1947 from Buckfast Abbey. It has the latest views on the authorship of hymn and tune.
398. It is surely necessary to mention, in this otherwise admirable summary of the story of the negro-spirituals, the Kentucky Revivals of 1797-1805.
568. “Praise Him, praise Him” is attributed to Percy Dearmer; Dearmer was only responsible for the version in *S.P.* reading “all His children praise Him”. The original, reading “all ye little children”, was devised for *Child Songs*, Book I, by E. Rawdon Bailey.

In conclusion we will say that nobody who takes seriously any of the subjects with which this *Companion* deals can afford to be without it. It is a contribution to hymnology and an advancement of its study.

Its price is quite outrageous.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL HYMN BOOK (1949).

Full Music Edition (Novello), 9s.¹

We hope to include in our next issue an article from Mr. Leonard Blake, editor of *English Church Music* and a public-school musician of considerable experience, on the development of the “public-school hymn-tune”, with special reference to the new *Public School Hymn Book*. Dr. Stanton, another eminent authority in this field, has reviewed the book in *English Church Music* (January 1950), and we commend his review to our readers for its sound and just opinions.

For ourselves, while we find much to praise in this new book, we decline to give it an extended review until we have seen an edition of it in which the 150-odd errors of typography and fact which we have up to now been able to observe have been corrected. Here is a book of 554 hymns and over 800 pages, which confronts us on every fourth or fifth page with some elementary error which decent proof-reading would have eliminated immediately. Only occasionally are the errors of the kind which application to this Society would have given opportunity for correcting. This is the kind of thing that happens: Charles Wesley is given John Wesley’s dates; Robert and Richard Wainwright are confused and given dates 1747-84 and 1748-84; Jeremiah Clarke, Martin Shaw, and W. H. Ferguson are given varying dates of birth at the different places where they appear; in the text are such barbarisms as “Quiet, Lord, my *forward* heart”, “In Christ all *race* meet”, “H. F. *Lute*”, “*Chrubim*”, GOSPAL, “peirce”; we are confused by such mysteries as SONG 13 (FREUEN WIR UNS), the directing of alternative tunes in metres that do not fit the hymns for which they are recommended, “*La Scala Santa*, 1621-81”, the tune JESU DULCIS labelled “Modern Tune”; schoolboy misprints like “Pry’s Psalter”; mis-ascriptions such as the attribution of “Christ hath a garden” to Isaac Watts *simpliciter*. And so on.

It is quite clear that various important things have just not been taken seriously by the editors of this book. There is an inexcusable casualness about the indentation of English verse, which is as often wrongly as rightly carried out; the editors are clearly uninterested in plainsong, and include wooden and tedious harmonies for all the plainsong tunes that take us back well behind the 1904 *A. & M.*; no attempt has been made to match up names, ascriptions, dates, and typography when duplication occurs. The psalms at the end are, believe it or not, pointed from the *old* Cathedral Psalter. The number of plain misprints (like 1796 for 1769 in Kelly’s date) is unusually high. In one place (this is the kind of inattention to detail, which is discourtesy to the reader

¹ The copy from which we are working is the second printing, 1950.

and singer, or which we most violently complain) a hymn (458) is printed to a continuous setting and then at the end an ordinary tune is recommended as an alternative; its use, however, would be extremely difficult if not impossible unless the words of the hymn were printed again in the ordinary way. This, of course, is not done.

We are therefore not disposed to take seriously a book which treats its reader so cavalierly. When we see a decently turned out edition of this book we shall be happy to go into it in some detail, for there is much of interest in it. But for the moment we will conclude by remarking that the wildest and most nightmarish of all the mysteries concerning this strange production is that in the Preface, among the names of the distinguished musicians who have had a hand in the book's compilation, there appears the name of Dr. Vaughan Williams.

HYMNS ANCIENT AND MODERN (1950).

SECOND THOUGHTS.

Two or three correspondents have written to us expressing views on the Revised *A. & M.* One opinion expressed is that the inverted slurs or phrase-marks at the ends of lines in the words (a device introduced in the 1939 edition) have not always been applied with consistency. Why, for example, does it appear at line 3 and not at line 23 of No. 177? In the application of such marks as these however, there are certain to be many cases that have to be decided on opinion rather than on principle; our correspondent suggests that the large number of such cases is a reason for dispensing with the sign.

Again it has been pointed out that expression-marks are used (discreetly enough) in some hymns and not in others; it may be asked, for instance, why expression-marks are used in "Rejoice, the Lord is King", 216 (*mf* and *f* only), and not in "We sing the praise of Him who died" (215). We leave the answer to this one to the compilers.

The setting of Martin Shaw's MARCHING to "Father, hear the prayer we offer" has shocked another correspondent, who takes the view that even preservation of Parry's RUSTINGTON is not sufficient reason for breaking an association which has become so universal as that between Martin Shaw's tune and "Through the night of doubt and sorrow". Possibly the answer here is that it is so many years since *Hymns A. & M.* was a book to be taken seriously by musicians that any challenge offered by it to the Oxford books is regarded at first as bold and even impudent. It is possible, however, (and in our review we gave it as our opinion that it is likely) that the 1950 edition will live this down.

Finally we ought to have noted in our review a few misprints. The most serious is in hymn 431 "*ever*" for "*every*" at line 17. Others are: Hymn 357, "*Troytr*" for "*Troyte*", and page xxxvii "*Lobet*" for "*Lobe den Herren*".

It may interest our readers to be told that the composers of BARNET and MERNLE (223, 445, see our review) are organ-scholars respectively of Christ Church and Hertford College, Oxford.

"A NEW METRICAL VERSION OF THE PSALTER."

The present year, in focussing attention upon the historic Scottish Psalter of 1650 still in use, has, perhaps inevitably, stimulated at least one attempt to remedy some of its more obvious defects. A small volume of 217 pages entitled as above is obtainable from the author, Mr. Albert M. P. Dawson, "Galleons Lap", Goodwood Close, Upper Willingdon, Sussex, price Four Shillings (postage 3d.). He includes all the Psalms, with the express omission of a few verses offensive to Christian standards, and he also tabulates at the end portions considered suitable for singing, with tunes suggested.

But an examination of his work emphasizes all the familiar difficulty of the task he has undertaken. An example would be *lxv* where it cannot be claimed that the well-known text is surpassed by this:

Blest is the man whom Thou dost choose
To nestle by Thy side.

The same may be said of his faulty accent in *xxiv*, impossible to miss in ST. GEORGE'S, EDINBURGH:

Be ye lift up so that the King
Of Glory may pass through.

Now since in both of these instances he retains the customary melody, it is clear that where the 1650 version is at all tolerable there is little scope for variation or improvement upon the monosyllabic literalism of the common ballad metre.

It is noticeable, however, that Mr. Dawson's singing-list of ninety extracts includes 50 in Common Metre and 29 in Long Metre (for the entire Psalter his proportions are CM 77, LM 60, and 13 in eight other measures). He has thus effectually broken the old CM tyranny, and indeed some of his best pieces are framed in LM, as *cxxvii* or *xix*. He makes also a pleasant metrical diversion in fitting the simplicity of *xxiii* to Langran's two-line tune CARTMEL (*Fellowship H.B.* 361). Then probably he shows wisdom in not challenging the powerful tradition of "Now Israel may say", even if his 7.6.7.6. rendering seems weak in comparison. The OLD 124TH is transferred not unsuitably to "Glad was my heart" (*cxxii*).

But in his choice of metres Mr. Dawson is far less adventurous than the Rev. Nichol Grieve whose revision was favourably reviewed in this *Bulletin*, Vol. I, No. 16. That little book (T. & T. Clark, 1940), which unfortunately was engulfed in the anxieties of the War, actually employed forty-two, especially aiming at the restoration of some of the fine proper tunes of the 16th century.

Occasionally, too, Mr. Dawson slips into the very pitfalls he would avoid. In *vi* "frailty" is scanned in three syllables, while "dominion" (*viii*) and "companions" (*xiv*) count as four! An "awkward break" in *xlvi* (st.3) undesirably yields "The holy city, passing by", and *ix* is disfigured by a lapse of grammar — "Thou, O Lord, Who lifts me up". Rhyming appears to be generally above reproach, but his practice is to match only the second and fourth lines.

If, finally, it should be questioned whether at this date there was necessity for producing yet another metrical version, one may cite the preface to Keble's beautiful *Psalter in English Verse*, for he found in the Church of England in 1839 a situation not unlike that of Presbyterians today. Then and for forty years afterwards "Tate and Brady" (or even "Sternhold and Hopkins") continued widely in use. "The custom", observed Keble, "of singing the Psalms rather than chanting them has prevailed among us so long and so universally, that there is small hope at present of changing it: and as long as it lasts, and is sanctioned by authority, such efforts as the present are admissable."

The present state of the Scottish Metrical Psalter is far from satisfactory, but there is still no immediate sign that this method of Reformed praise will go wholly out of favour. The perfect version has not yet been achieved, but Mr. Dawson's contribution contains some work of merit which should be taken into account whenever the labour of official revision is authorized.

L. H. BUNN.

"SUNDAY HALF-HOUR": SOME OBSERVATIONS.

This is not a review, but a report based on the data given in the *Radio Times* concerning this popular religious feature. For what they are worth as an index of the hymn-singing habits of the English people, here are a few figures summarised from the programmes issued through the six months from 1st January to 1st July this year.

Hymns. On the 26 Sundays, 215 hymns were sung; usually eight, but occasionally nine, each Sunday. In this selection were no fewer than 171 different hymns.

Books. In most cases each session took hymns from a single book. The list is headed by the Methodist book and the Revised

Church Hymnary (with Scottish Psalter) with seven each; *Hymns A. & M.* appeared three times, *Songs of Praise*, the *Westminster Hymnal*, and the *Congregational Hymnary* twice each, *English Hymnal*, the *T.M.C.A. Hymnal*, and *Sankey*, once each. The selections taken from the last two, however, were in each case almost entirely confined to "overlaps" with the Methodist book, so that we may practically say that the Methodist book led the way with 9 appearance in 26 Sundays.

Popularity. The lack of repetitiveness is impressive. Nor are the repetitions themselves surprising. One hymn was sung five times—"When I survey the wondrous cross". None was sung four times, but before reading on, the reader may care to make his own guess concerning the seven hymns that appeared three times. They were:

All people that on earth do dwell.
Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah.
Love divine, all loves excelling.
O for a thousand tongues to sing.
Praise, my soul
Rejoice, the Lord is King
The Lord's my Shepherd.

Thirty-six hymns appeared twice. The beaten track was well worn, but it is a good deal broader than some of us might have expected.

"Local colour" was provided here and there, chiefly, of course, from the Methodist book. "Private" hymns from the Y.M.C.A. book (one) and from Downside School (one) appeared, and the Presbyterians did not neglect to sing St. Columba's "Christ is the world's redeemer" (RvCH 179), nor the Congregationalists "We bless Thee for Thy peace, O God" (CoH 413). The one *E.H.* broadcast (from Southwark Cathedral) gave us Phineas Fletcher's "Drop, drop, slow tears", and one of the *A. & M.* sessions included "Thy hand, O God, has guided." Not one hymn peculiar to *Songs of Praise* was heard, and only three which that book introduced to currency—"Turn back, O man", "O Son of man, our hero", and "In Christ there is no East or West" (once each).

The most remarkable of these broadcasts was perhaps that from Downside Abbey, sung by the scholars of Downside School, which included "O Salutaris" sung to the OLD 100TH (Genevan form throughout, with three long notes at the beginning of the last line), "Tantum ergo" to PRAISE, MY SOUL, and "Jesu, the very thought of Thee" to ST. ANNE.

In conclusion, we offer to any reader who would care to undertake it, the task of reviewing a series of these broadcasts. Such a review, mentioning performance, choice, and subject matter, could have real value. Will some non-clerical member oblige us?

