

many hymns that are "trashy," and not likely to live beyond the generation which produced them. There are perhaps not more than three or four hundred really good hymns in existence. The Lutheran Hymnal of 1827 contains only 376, and it is admitted to be one of the very best collections in existence, especially since its revision in 1857. Then, too, a large collection confuses the people, and they never can become familiar with its contents. We are satisfied that in size our Church Hymnal is about as large as it should be, and that any change made in it should be made by substitution rather than by any considerable addition. The Sabbath School Hymnal would certainly be the better of careful revision, and the addition of about fifty hymns would make it suitable for prayer meetings as well as for the Sabbath school.

Perhaps, too, there are in the Church music of the present day, as well as in the words of many modern hymns, doubtful, if not unhealthy, elements. Light rhyming words seem to be preferred to earnest and devout ones; and chiming, rattling music often takes the place of that which is solemn and reverent. As choir singing is developed in some quarters it is to be feared that the service of praise becomes a mere concert performance rather than an act of divine worship. It can never be a sign of deep religious feeling or conviction that leads people to go to church to hear a celebrated solo singer, who has been duly advertised, rather than to unite in praising the one living and true God. Choir and congregational singing should always be the best possible, yet its essential nature as an act of divine worship should never be lost sight of. Moreover, it will greatly conduce to this end if those who take prominent part in leading the singing are Christian men and women.

We are deeply impressed with the fact that our Church should give special attention to the use of the psalms in the public worship of God's house. It augurs ill for the spiritual life of any person or any Church if the psalms cease to touch responsive chords in that life. For evangelistic meetings and for the early stages of spiritual in the newly-converted, lighter hymns may be most suitable, yet we are convinced that if growth in grace is being made, such "strong meat" as we find in many of the psalms is absolutely necessary.

As compared with the average Hymnology of the present day, the psalms have an objectivity and universality which give them depth and adaptation to every phase of religious experience, and suitability for all ages and nations. Our modern hymns, as a rule, are merely the expression of the subjective experience of individual Christian hearts, and hence necessarily narrower in their adaptation. Many of them are also largely sentimental, and some of them are decidedly sensuous in their form.