

Lord Nelson goes to the root of the matter by asking, "Is it a right and proper thing to have a Hymn Book as a companion to the Prayer Book, and, if so, of what sort of hymns should it consist?" After the Reformation and before the Restoration the use of hymns does not seem to have been general, until the middle of the eighteenth century metrical translations of the psalms were commonly used. The use of hymns as we have them seems practically to have begun in the dissenting chapels and Watts' hymns must have operated largely to popularize them. Lord Nelson states that it was the desire of Cranmer to insert into the Prayer Book the hymns sung from time immemorial in the Church, but the circumstances of the day, and the haste with which the English Prayer Book was compiled, made it impossible to provide suitable English versions of the hymns. The notion, then, of an authorized Hymn-book is as old as the vernacular Prayer Book and its predecessors also. Authorized hymns are, in fact, as much the ideal of the Church as are authorized forms of prayer. The *Veni Creator* of the Ordinal is an illustration.

#### THE GENERAL SYNOD.

We do not apologize for once more referring to the session of the General Synod, which has so happily concluded its labours in the interests of the Church at Montreal. The Synod met amid many misgivings on the part of not a few friends of the Church, as to whether it would meet expectations or whether it should prove to be the last, and by inaction demonstrate that it was not worth the time and expense involved in its meeting. It was felt that the Church had reached a crisis in its history, and that if this representative body failed to realize the situation, and grapple with it, that the prospects of the Church in this country, which needed the united effort of all, would indeed be cheerless, if not hopeless. Happily in the Providence of God, and no doubt guarded by His Spirit, the Synod has risen fully to the occasion, all its members seemed imbued with a deep sense of the importance and responsibility of their meeting, and with an ability and unity in all respects remarkable, they united in discussing and deciding on the many subjects which pressed upon them for a solution. It was in 1886 that the first motion was made in the Provincial Synod of Canada, looking towards a union of all the dioceses in British North America, and now after sixteen years of perseverance in the face of many difficulties it is an accomplished fact, and the Church in Canada possesses a legislative body which can speak for the whole Church on all social, moral and religious questions, and enact such laws for its government as the times and circumstances may demand. The Synod's action was as prompt and energetic as was the spirit of unity and brotherly kindness which marked all its deliberations and proceedings. Though gathered from all sections of our vast country there was no sectionalism, and though representative of all parties there was no partyism. A robust Canadianism and churchmanship were evident, which is most encouraging, whether regarded from a national or ecclesiastical standpoint. The amount and variety of the legislation was great, and yet all was conservative in

its nature, and in keeping with churchly tradition, whilst at the same time it was progressive and suited to the conditions which surround the Church in this land. Two principles seemed to underlie all the legislation, namely, extension and adaptation. That the Church must be a missionary Church both at home and abroad was fully recognized, and also that whilst conveying old truths and methods, nevertheless, she must be locally adapted. These principles found emphatic expression in the organization of the missionary society, in the appointment of an organizing secretary, and in the wider places which were foreshadows of the Church's operations here for the future. We trust that the spirit so evident in the Synod will spread throughout the Church, pervade all its members and excite a missionary enthusiasm in every diocese and parish. For better organization and much greater liberality on the part of church people there is a pressing need, and we hope to see both these as the result of the steps taken by the General Synod. The field is wide, the opportunity great, the responsibility even greater, and we hope to see men, able and fitted for the work, and money sufficient for all needs, placed at the disposal of our missionary society for its operations both at home and abroad. In the way of adaptation a beginning has been made by an addition of some special prayers and services for local use, before very long probably, in the way of an appendix to the Book of Common Prayer. Last but not least, as a result of the Synod, is the able and eloquent pastoral letter addressed by our Father in God, in the name of the Holy Trinity to the clergy and laity of the Church. It is a timely utterance on questions of great moment to the Church and to Christians generally, and will, we trust, be read and pondered by all faithful members of the Church, and every sincere Christian. It is congratulatory on the work and the unity of the Synod, and expressive of gratitude to Almighty God for the abundant blessing vouchsafed to its deliberations. "At last," it exclaims, "the Church in Canada is nearly one." One in faith and doctrine; one in unity of spirit and organization from all the wide limits of this great Dominion. "At last," after many doubts and difficulties, after many prayers and labours, this great end has been accomplished. Our Father in God dwelt on the need of the Church, and especially on the need for liberality in giving. Our gifts for missionary objects have been indeed beggarly, and the interest of the wealthier members of our Church has not been, if we judge by their offerings, to any extent excited. But this, we trust, is all of the past, and that with the supply of information and the right use of organization much more adequate results will be attained. On such vital subjects as the one observance of the Lord's Day by all classes of society, as to the need for more regard for the authority and veracity of God's written word, and for instruction in the same of our children in the home, day school, Sunday school and university, it speaks with no uncertain sound, and coming from the source it does, will, we trust, receive the attention which the speakers and the subjects they speak of demand at the hands of all serious minded people. The Synod of Montreal will pass into history, we believe, marking an epoch in the history of the Church in this country, and from it, we

trust, the Church will receive an impulse which will send it forward on an era of greater prosperity and usefulness than any it has hitherto reached or even dared to hope for.

#### THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

Various opinions have been expressed as to the results attained by the recent Colonial Conference. Some express disappointment, because more immediate results have not been attained. Others do not hesitate to regard it as unsuccessful, and some to whom the wish is father to the thought publicly proclaim it a failure and a fizzle. The anti-imperialist, who does not sympathize with that remarkable movement in which the things that tend towards unity have overcome that which make for separation, finds comfort in the slow march of events, and many Americans whose commercial selfishness is gratified by the free access comparatively they have to the British markets, while they jealously guard their own, would like to think also, that in this regard at least there may be no change. Those who have studied the matter more closely, and listened to the utterances of the leading participators in the Conference have no such pessimistic feelings in regard to it. In the first place it was a great gain and advantage that the Colonial representatives, who live so far apart, and whose interests are so diverse, should come together, and face to face with each other and the ministers of the home-government, under the presidency of Mr. Chamberlain discuss those questions of mutual interest, which concern all parts of a widely extended Empire. The importance of such a meeting in removing misunderstandings, in guiding future legislation and furthering mutual co-operation cannot be exaggerated. The wisdom of moving slowly, as expressed by Lord Salisbury, was recognized, and the friends of Imperial Federation feel that it will be a growth, rather than something forged and manufactured. That there was such a Conference and that similar conferences are to be held at stated intervals is a step forward in the right direction. And then judging by the published report, which does not convey the full significance of this remarkable gathering, it was not so barren of results, as some imagine and perhaps secretly desire. The most important subject doubtless was that of inter-Imperial trade. In the way of this, with free trade England on the one side, and with Colonial tariffs on the other, no doubt there are difficulties which it will take both time and statesmanship to overcome. But a resolution in favor of preferential treatment of the products of the Empire within the Empire was passed, and in time no doubt will bear fruit. The Conference, it must be borne in mind, cannot regulate the people of Great Britain, and the Colonies are not governed by a conference, and till the Premiers meet their governments and parliaments we cannot expect any change in existing trade relations within the Empire. Changes of this nature come slowly, especially under the trade conditions which have grown up in the British Empire, but we are confident that the time for change has come, though perhaps slowly, and that the members of the Empire will gradually have trade advantages over foreign nations. The next important matter before the Conference