

publication, but equally entitled to favour. A few were taken from the ancient Church, breathing the pure apostolic simplicity and fervour of early times. One or two were drawn from the Middle Ages—the production of men who rose above the errors and corruptions of the system to which they belonged, and have left behind them a voice which will be heard to the last in the worship of God. For a number more we were indebted to Germany which has so far surpassed the other Protestant countries of Europe, thanks to the wise and enlightened guidance of Luther at the Reformation, in this department of the Church's work. The entire number of hymns in the volume amounted, as you are aware, to nearly two hundred.

It was never expected by your Committee that all of these hymns would pass into general use and favour among our people, some of them being unsuitable, not from any inherent fault, nor because the stamp of success and usefulness was not already upon them; but from the fact, to which Presbyterian Congregations are at length beginning to awake, that they have been a little behind others in the knowledge and use of Sacred Song—and are unfamiliar with modes of expression and measures of rhythm, which are common elsewhere, and filling a large place in the worship of God. There are still many persons among us who are inclined to look upon any measures other than the ordinary ones as a disqualification, although the best and most universally esteemed hymns, and those written on the loftiest subjects, and in the most sublime strains, prefer a different measure. We must try by every means and get rid of this practical difficulty in our way; but there is no denying that it exists, and while it exists will require some deference. There is no use in filling our hymn books with hymns which will not be sung. They may be fine, but for us they will be practically useless. We must meet the difficulty half way from motives of expediency, but we must not surrender entirely to it, or things will never improve.

Opinions will no doubt differ as to the propriety of limiting a Collection so greatly, in point of number, as the Synod has recommended, but your Committee, taking into consideration the existing state of feeling, and the undoubted preference which the best minds of the Scottish Church have shewn for spare and select additions to their psalmody, are quite disposed to concur in that recommendation, and gladly carry it out.

The extensive reduction thus required in the number of the published edition, has been effected by leaving out, with one or two illustrious exceptions, all versions of the Psalms, seeing our people are so well satisfied with their own version—and those hymns which from the difficulty of their measure, or other reason of a similar kind, are the least likely to pass into general use. Some beautiful hymns will thus disappear from the Collection, but their loss will be compensated for by the greater facility and general acceptableness of those which remain. A few excellent and well known hymns have been added.

Your Committee have great confidence in recommending the Collection as reduced and amended. While favourite hymns will be missed by individuals, owing to the limited extent of the Collection, and many subjects treated of in larger collections are not touched upon, as in strict propriety they ought not to be in the praise of God, it will be found that there is nothing in the Collection chargeable with the faults which have been so justly laid at the door of the hymnology of our country, and which have operated so powerfully with us hitherto against the introduction of a hymn book. The sacred dignity and elevation which belong to the worship of God, and the deep reverence and humility, in alliance with earnest and tender feeling, which are inseparable from the devout worshipper, have been the governing principles of the Collec-

tion; while the number of such great samples of the early singing and celebrating and condition. Your modern hymn writers themselves when they have admitted among that the personal religious service, and for them which was personal interest and

On one or two hymns. It is well misapprehension of limited to the one diversity must be say—complaining that they could not but much may be cannot well—that become didactic the of teaching or preaching at the beginning of which were not hymns as the subject is known to be praised found that nearly subjects, such as subjection, ascension, deliver, the earnest love and for the glories

Your Committee interest in a hymn book the other churches call for hymns, which bodies which have collection, there is, select and chaste com different sections of work, and that the ized Presbyterian went a joint committee interest of the difference with one another respecting the opinion of your by the various Churches could be found to un

Meanwhile we have ally familiarized, where a congregation have such Assembly's Paraphrase may continue to draw fort and advantage that the gospel dispensation may be done towards Worship, which God are satisfied that we