

The History of Christian Hymns.

BY DR. MULVANEY.

The use of hymns for congregational worship is traceable in the New Testament to the earliest outburst of that great wave of religious revival which accompanied the birth of Christianity. The "hymns" of those days were very different to the compositions which is now known under that familiar name. The language used in the worship of the Christians of the first century was Greek, even in Rome itself, but the hymns were not arranged in distinctly metrical forms like the classical Greek poems. They were compositions framed on the model of the Hebrew Psalms, and consisted of a number of verses, each divided into two parts so as to be chanted to a simple and monotonous refrain much resembling a Grecian chant. Specimens of this are the songs of Simon of the Virgin Mary in the Gospels. But when the language or civilization of the Christian Church became Latin, the Latin classical metres were adopted. The earliest writers of Christian hymns wrote in the fifth century; the best known were St. Ambrose and Prudentius. They chose from a number of classical metres one which seldom met in classical poetry, the iambic pentameter, a line with the accent on every second syllable which is used so extensively in modern hymns. The metre of

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

derived through St. Ambrose, from that used by the heathen poet Noreau in denouncing the inconstancy of a Roman young man in days before the Christian era had begun, a metre derived from the Greek poet et up moribus at least four hundred years before Christ. Prudentius was a native of Spain who held high military command under the god and Roman Emperor of the day. Towards the end of his life he became seriously religious and betook himself to the composition of hymns suitable for public worship. In the course of some years devoted to the study of this subject, he wrote a volume of his works. Here and there we meet passages of much beauty, but the hymns of which the services of the church have found their way into the hymn-book, as for instance,

"That the morning fills the sky
We lift our thoughts to God on high."

is to the Christian Hymns of the middle ages that modern poetry owes one of its most brilliant ornaments—rhyme. Rhymed verse first appears in the hymns of Venantius Fortunatus, a writer of the sixth century who travelled from Italy to France just as the decline of the Roman civilization was being overtaken by the barbarian Lombard. His age is put in evidence by the little hymn

"The Royal Standard's onward go."

in which the faint traces of the old rhyme grew more and more into various forms until a most elaborate and intricate variety of Latin lyric poetry, quite different in every respect from, but in beauty superior to, the lyric poetry of Noreau, came into being. Of these medieval hymns we get a good idea by having the *Dixie* or *Sabat* notes sung in the services of the church. As we listen we seem to be more in the days of the crusaders, its glittering steel, ladies in cloth of gold, knights in armor, bishops with jewelled mitres, and monks with their long, pointed beards, and their robes of deep red and blue, and their golden crowns. The hymn passed directly from the mediæval church to the Protestant Churches of England and Germany. In England the hymn was not so noteworthy as that ending with the words "Gloria in excelsis deo," which is a number of new hymns. It was so in the revival of John and Charles Wesley, among a multitude of others, produc-

ed the then most lovely of the hymns written in the last century,

Jesus, lover of my soul,

and

Hark the herald angels sing.

by Charles Wesley, and

Lo, he comes through clouds descending.

by their fellow laborer Madan.

The quasi-revival of High Church Ritualism in the English Church has given birth to several hymns which are used far and wide beyond the frontier of Episcopalianism. Thus the beautiful

"Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,"

is by that great master of the English language, John Henry Newman, and was written by him aboard a small vessel in a storm in the Mediterranean while meditating secession to Rome. Most of the hymns which owe their origin to this movement, such as those of Keble, Neale, and Fabre, the enthusiastic convert to Catholicism, are pitched in a lower tone, and have an artificial, artificial style remote from the stern vigor of the hymns of Wesley or of the mediæval Church. In the latter we hear the organ sweeping through the aisles of a Cathedral, in the former the melody of a modern Puseyite Church with its gimcrack ornaments and candles blinking in the daylight of the modern world. Such are Fabre's "Pilgrims of the Night," and "Paradise."

But it may be said of hymns that they do more than any other part of humanly originated forms of worship to bind into one the scattered branch of the Christian family; rituals may vary, sermons may enforce the hair-splitting of controversy, but all and every body of men calling themselves Christians use for worship and consolation hymns which date from every age of Christian history and every phase of Christian opinion. Rightly understood every church hymn-book is a lesson in toleration and Charity.

Tid-Bits.

\$20.00 IN GOLD

Given Each Week for the

BEST TID-BIT.

Commencing with our first issue in January will be given weekly till further notice, a prize of TWENTY DOLLARS IN GOLD for the best selected or original Tid-Bit, which, in the judgment of the editor, is thought suitable for this page. No conditions are attached to the competition except that each person competing must become a subscriber to TRUTH for at least three months and must therefore send along, with their Tid-Bit, half a dollar for the quarter's subscription. Present subscribers competing will have their term extended an additional quarter for the half dollar sent.

We want to make this one of the most interesting pages in TRUTH. The Competition is open now. The first twenty dollars will be given immediately after the publication of our first issue in January. Look up your older new scraps, or send us something original, and whenever it is published the prize will be promptly forwarded. Try now. Don't delay. The article, or Tid-Bit, may be only one line (if it contains the necessary point) and must not exceed a half column in length. Address—Prize Tid Bit Committee, "TRUTH" Office, Toronto, Canada.

A Mistake.

A tadpole sat on a cold, gray stone,
And sadly thought of his life.
"Alas, must I live alone," said he.
"Or shall I espouse me a wife."

A wise old frog, on the brink of a stream,
Leaned over, and said with a sigh,
"Oh, wait till you're older, my dear young friend,
You'll have better sense by and by."

"Girls change, you know, and the Pollywog slim,
That takes your fancy to-day
May not be the Pollywog at all you'd choose
When the summer has passed away."

But the tadpole rash thought he better knew,
And married a Pollywog fair.
And before the summer was over he sat
On the brink of that stream in despair.

For, would you believe it? his fair young bride
Proved to be but a stupid frog,
With never a trace of the beauty and grace
Of young Miss Pollywog.

And although the tadpole himself had grown
Stout and stupid too,
He only saw the faults of his wife,
(As others often do).

To all young tadpoles my moral is this:
Before you settle in life
Be sure you know without any doubt
What you want in the way of a wife.

G. T. LEA, St. Thomas.

Ah! Me I'm Teased by Lovers Three.

Ah! me, teased by lovers three,
There's Harry, James, and Joe;
From morn to eve they visit me;
No peace, I'm sure, I know.
They're handsome fellows I must say,
And all are well to do;
But two will have to go away,
And very quickly, too.

I really don't know which to take,
For all are fond of me;
But as I know I cannot make
Mrs. I the bride of three,
I think this queer affair to end
And peace henceforward know.
A billet doux at once I'll send,
To say I'll marry Joe.

Mrs. E. B. WALKERTON.

Advice to a Bridegroom.

To become a husband is a serious matter for a man as it is for a woman to become a wife. Marriage is no child's play; it brings added care, trial, perplexity, vexation, and it requires a great deal of the happiness which legitimately springs out of it to make the balance equal in its favour. Very few people live happily in marriage, and yet this is not because unhappiness is germane to the relation, but those who enter it do not know, first, how to get married, and second, how to live married happily. You have already made your choice—wisely, I am bound to believe. Those qualities of character which have attracted you to choose as you have should make your love grow daily while you live together.

As to the second point: if you wish to live in harmonious union with your wife start out with the avowed recognition of the fact that she is your companion and co-partner. Marriage usually makes the wife neither of these. In many instances she sees less of her husband than before she married him. He comes, he goes, he reads, thinks, works, and under the stimulus of business brings all his powers of faculties to the surface, and is developed thereby—not always harmoniously, but with increasing power. Married men do not usually shrivel up nor put on a look of premature age, but women frequently do, and it is plain to me why they do.

Married women are shut up in houses, and their chief care is for things that have no inspiring influence. Their time is taken up in meeting the physical wants of their families—cooking, washing dishes, keeping the house in order, sewing, receiving company—not one of which has in it a tendency even to culture and elevation. Married women are devoted to the house, and this means a life of vexation and pettiness. It gives no sort of stimulus to the spirit. So the husband, who is out of doors, active, interested in measures which affect the public good, coming into contact with men greater than himself, who inspire him to better purposes and nobler ends of labour, develops into manly beauty and grows in character, while his wife at home, who has as faithfully performed her share of the work, withers and decays prematurely.

Treat your wife exactly as yourself would like to be treated if you had to live under her circumstances, and you will not go far wrong.

Do not entertain the silly notion that because she is of a different gender from your own, that she is therefore different in her wants, feelings, qualities and powers. Do not be the victim of any social policy. Stand up bravely for the right, give your wife a chance to live, grow, and be somebody and become something.

Try to be thoughtful, considerate, and forbearing. You will have new duties, and they will bring new trials. Take good care of your health and hers. Be simple both in your habits; be careful in your expenditures; be industrious. If you keep good health and are frugal, blessings will come from your united love, and you will grow happier and better day by day as the years pass.

DR. JAMES C. JACKSON.

THE SPHINX.

"Riddle me this and guess him if you can."
Dryden.

Address all communications for this department to E. R. Chadborn, Lewiston, Maine, U. S.

NO. 1.—A FAR-OFF PLACE.

To hear my name, if spoken quick,
Might bring to mind some gambling trick;
Or you might take the same to mean
Two cubes—a kind you may have seen.
That would be wrong; I signify
A place not found beneath the sky!

Mrs. J. McKINSTRY.

NO. 2.—LETTER WORDS.

A man, walking in his garden one day
Saw a busy-body among his flowers.
After watching it carefully for a while, he made
A declaration in relation thereto, in seven
words, using in rotation an exclamation, a
pronoun, a verb, a pronoun, a verb,
an article and a noun. He used
only seven letters of the alphabet and each
letter but once. What did he say and what
letters did he use?

J. G.

NO. 3.—AN ENIGMA.

You see in my resplendent name
An actor, ranking high in fame,
Or else, perchance, a prima donna,
Whom all delight to praise and honor.
Reverse me now, and you'll find
Some actors of a different kind,
Who get no praise in poets' verse,
And oft are doomed to blows and tears.

NELSONIAN.

NO. 4.—A FRUIT'S CONTENTS.

Find me a delicious fruit and I will show
its contents; take a small portion of it and
you will behold something which is viewed
with undisguised horror by even the devil—
of the printing office: if this be increased by
half as much again, the result will be a
small pointed instrument of wood or metal;
another small portion added would bring
before you a common conifer, in whose double
heart you will find none other than myself, and
then you will readily perceive that the
whole heart of this tree could, by no possi-
bility, be found outside of it. Another turn
of this kaleidoscopic fruit will reveal to you
the wash of the waves at low tide; under
the rays of a quarter-moon. And yet there
is room within for still another fruit, which
completes the list.

SYLVIA.

NO. 5. TRANSPOSITIONS.

An imp of the pit
And a drink meet for it—
Two words not seldom combined.

Now turn them about—
Both in and out—
A "reward of merit" you'll find.

Give them one more shake
And a beverage make,
Most truly the best of its kind.

BEE.

A PRIZE FOR ANSWERS.

The sender of the best lot of answers to
"The Sphinx" published before February
1st will receive a copy of Chambers Etymo-
logical Dictionary, a very valuable work.

Each week's solution should be mailed
within seven days after the date of TRUTH
containing the puzzles answered.

PRIZES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

[On account of the necessary omission of
"The Sphinx" during most of 1883, the
time of the contributors' contest has been
extended to Jan. 1, 1886. The favors al-
ready received will be considered when the
prizes are awarded.]

1. For the best original contribution to
this department before the close of 1883, a
cash prize of \$5.00 will be presented.

2. For the best variety of contributions
furnished during the same time a prize of
\$2.00 will be awarded. The winner of prize
No. 1, will not be given this prize.

Competitors should write on one side of
their paper, and send answers with their
favorites.