

songs of praise to the Persons of the Godhead; and they should always be of such a length, that the whole of them may be conveniently sung at one time.

A considerable number of the hymns in our collection are exceedingly beautiful, and admirably adapted for public worship; but a majority of them are in various respects objectionable, and should be superseded by something better fitted for the purpose. These remarks are thrown out simply with a view to ventilate this subject, which we believe to be one of pre-eminent importance; and if the Synod would authorize such a revision of our Paraphrases, as has been recommended, not with a view to impose it upon the congregations, but to permit such as thought good to employ it, we believe that it would, under God, tend much to promote the spirituality of our church, and its welfare in every respect.

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### THE IMPORT OF BAPTISM.

The literature connected with the subject of Christian Baptism, already very extensive, continues to receive frequent additions. We cannot however say that we have yet seen an entirely satisfactory treatise on this great theme—though we willingly admit, that Mr. Goode has ably rebutted the Puseyite errors on this subject, and that the arguments of the Baptists have been well met by Professor Wilson of Belfast, Dr. Wardlaw of Glasgow, and Drs. Miller, E. Beecher, and Armstrong among the American Divines, and are not unthankful for the Libelli of Dr. McCrie, Dr. Tweedie, and Professor Lumsden. It has appeared to us, that too much prominence in discussion has been given to the mode and time of the administration of the baptismal rite, and too little to its meaning and value when duly administered. Surely the latter is the more important department of the subject; and it is one on which dim, uncertain, and inadequate views prevail among otherwise intelligent Christians. Our object, in the present article, is not so much controversial as practical, to offer a few observations, not on the “*quomodo*” but on the “*quantum valet*,” the real import of the Baptismal Sacrament.

I. *The Christian Baptism is one.* “There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” This is a pleasing thought to every mind that loves a large conception of the Church as one body of Christ, one family of God. We have no words to characterise the unreason and presumption, that would arrogate to any one denomination or section of the Christian community the exclusive enjoyment of a genuine and efficacious Baptism. When the high Anglican claims to have the only Apostolic and holy Baptism, and when the Baptist at the other extreme rises to make the very same claim, alleging that the only Apostolic and holy Baptism is his—we hear them both with a mixture of wonder and pity, and pray to be ever kept from such narrow ideas of the “one Baptism” of the one Catholic Church of Christ. Lamentable diversities there doubtless are in the administration of the rite, even as there are diversities in the confession of the faith. But the rite is one, as the faith is one. It is an ordinance of Christian recognition and union;—and is not the pet property of a few, but the privilege of all the people of Christ.

In this “one Baptism” we are not willing however to include such baptism as is administered in the Church of Rome, since it lacks all the essential characteristics of the rite as originally instituted by Christ, and practised by his Apostles, save only the repetition of the name of the Holy Trinity. No regard is had to the teachings of Scripture in regard to this sacrament, and it is so overlaid by superstitious devices, that, in our judgment, it is invalidated altogether.