

PREFACE TO THE HYMN AND TUNE BOOK.

TO meet a long-felt want of the Church for an edition of the HYMN BOOK WITH TUNES, the General Conference of 1890 authorized the Book Committee "to proceed with the publication of such a book."—*Journal*, page 146, sec. 12.

Committees were formed in Toronto, Montreal and Halifax respectively. That in Montreal was represented by Mr. C. W. Coates, whose valuable suggestions were of great service, and that in Halifax by Mr. A. E. Huestis, who, being in Toronto, was appointed its representative on the Toronto Committee, upon the members of which devolved the chief responsibility of bringing out the book.

Hundreds of tunes most in use in the churches were received from choir leaders and others prominent in musical circles throughout Canada, and from these fifty of different metres, and having the highest number of recommendations, were accepted. In addition, selections were made from a variety of sources, English and American as well as Canadian, and care was exercised in adjusting them so as to furnish the best expression for the thought contained in the hymn. Where the Committee could not reach a decision by consent, the matter was fully discussed and then settled by vote, and thus a common judgment prevailed over the individual opinion. The book is, therefore, not the product of one mind merely, but of several, familiar with the subject of music and hymn singing in the congregation.

The Committee believes it has avoided the serious errors of running into a rut, adopting only one standard of excellence, or of accepting tunes after the tastes and predilections of only one school of musicians, and that, thereby, a book has been produced that will be useful to the greater number, and, it is hoped, may become a favourite with both old and young, in the rural circuits, as well as the town and city congregations of Canadian Methodism.