

## OUR NEW BOOK OF PRAISE.

BY A MEMBER OF THE HYMNAL COMMITTEE.

Congregations have been long and eagerly looking for our new Book of Praise, and they will be glad to know that our book-sellers are to have it on hand on the first of May. The following particulars as to its contents and editions may be of interest. "The Presbyterian Book of Praise" will consist of two parts,—Psalms and Hymns. Our present complete book consists of four parts,—Psalms, Paraphrases, and 6 Hymns, and the Hymnal of 349 hymns; and to newcomers to our Church it is a complicated volume. Moreover these parts need not be bound together, and in fact the Hymnal is oftener published separately, so that the worshipper has two volumes in his pew, namely, his Psalm Book with psalms and paraphrases and hymns, and his Hymnal.

But the General Assembly has ordained that no edition of the hymns in the new book will be allowed without the psalms; and as the paraphrases are incorporated in the Hymnal, the new book will consist of two parts *only*, and two parts *always*.—Psalms and Hymns.

The hymns are 620 in number and include (a) all the hymns in our present Hymnal except a few that it was thought well to drop; (b) all the paraphrases that congregations are accustomed to sing; (c) nearly all the hymns in our "Children's Hymnal"; (d) all the useful and approved evangelistic hymns in the Sankey collection; (e) a large number of new hymns from the joint "Draft" Hymnal of the Scottish churches; and (f) a number of magnificent hymns from other sources.

The book therefore contains all that is needed for Church services, Sabbath Schools, prayer meetings, young people's meetings, evangelistic meetings, and family worship; so that henceforth we will not require several sets of books,—one for one purpose, and another for another; but the one book will be found to contain all that is needed for all purposes, and only one book will be published. Thus the pupils in the Sabbath School, and Endeavorers in their meetings, or congregations in evangelistic services will become familiar with the book used in the ordinary worship of the Church.

Of the 600 hymns in our new book, about 400 are common to all the great hymn books of English-speaking churches. This gives

assurance of the excellence of the hymns, and it will provide that the hearts of our people shall beat in sympathy with those of Christendom.

The Psalms in the Book of Praise will be either the complete Scottish version or a Selection of Psalms; and they can be ordered either way.

That congregations may be assisted in deciding this matter it will be well to give some information about the Selections.

The selections from the Psalms are 121 in number and are given in the order in which they occur in the complete book. Many are whole psalms; but some are only portions; for instance, of Ps. 22 the only portion given is verses 23 to 28; but these are the only verses of that psalm that congregations usually sing; and it will be found that the Selections include almost every portion ever sung in any of our churches; so that for practical purposes they make a complete psalter.

Moreover these selections are a *revision* as some inaccuracies have been corrected and striking inelegancies removed, and in some cases new versions have been given. In doing this the committee had before them the Scottish version as revised by three churches that bestowed much care upon the Psalms of David, as they sang nothing else, namely The Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and the United Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches of North America.

As an illustration of the revision it may be stated that in every case where the ending "-ation" had to be sung "a-ti-on" or "a-a-tion" the line has been corrected; and so

"My soul with expectation  
Depends on God indeed,"

becomes

"My soul with expectation doth  
Depend on God indeed."

Who has not hesitated about singing the imprecation in the second stanza of Ps. 25? But in the Revised Bible, as in the Hebrew psalter it is not an imprecation, but an expression of confidence; and so it appears in our selection:

"Yea, none that wait on thee  
Shall be ashamed at all;  
But those that without cause transgress,  
On them the shame shall fall."