

Literary Notices.

HYMNS FOR THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Glasgow—David Robertson. Toronto—C. Fletcher.

Previous to the union of the Scottish dissenters which was consummated a few years ago, and formed what is now known as the United Presbyterian Church, the one portion of that body used a hymn book in their public services, known as the Relief Hymn Book. The Secession church had never used hymns in their services further than the collection published at the end of the Scottish Psalms and it therefore became a matter of forbearance with the United Church, whether or no, they would use hymns as the one body had previously done. In order to make the union complete, a committee was appointed to prepare a hymn book for the United Church, we have now the result of their labors. This very excellent collection of hymns is published by Mr Robertson in a variety of forms, and Mr. Fletcher has received a supply for the Churches in Canada. We believe that the Synod here have left it optional with each individual church to use the hymn book or not, but it is very likely that it will become general. In preference to any remarks of our own we substitute a notice of this work from the Glasgow Citizen, without exception the best weekly paper in Scotland. The Citizen says:—

"This appears to us a well-selected and judicious collection of sacred songs, somewhat over-numerous, we think, for the purposes of public worship. Hymns for private or public worship, we do not think, should be too much varied in form, expression, and sentiment. The fewer they are the better. The Sacred Muse has never been very prolific of her highest strains. Even when she wanders in imagination "by Siloa's brook, fast by the Dracres of God," her pinions are apt to droop, and her highest thoughts to sink under the overwhelming grandeur of her conceptions; and mere human expression toils painfully along to realize the thick coming furies and solemnizing impressions in which the spirit is rapt. A promiscuous congregation requires to be directed, for devotional purposes, into the broad lines of Christian principle, duty, and feeling, rather than to be left to float on the heaving waves of a vague sentimentalism, or be caught up in the transcendental raptures of a high-wrought and fugitive train of emotions. In this latter aspect, many of the hymns of the Methodists are, in our judgment, much at fault. The object of the writer seems to be to excite the sensibilities and the passions to an extravagant and dangerous height. Persons the most sacred, and themes the most solemn are often treated with a daring familiarity, and a coarse vigour of expression, which we do not like further to particularize. From such defects this collection of hymns seems to be completely free, and when we add, that they have been selected from the most approved writers of sacred songs, from such as Addison, Doddridge, Watts, Cowper, Newton, Heber, James Montgomery, Stennett, Wesley, Barbauld, Logan, Bruce, &c., &c., we have said enough in vindication of the claims of this truly excellent collection of devotional songs and hymns.

Arts and Manufactures.

THE GALLERY OF PAINTINGS.

The necessary connexion of this excellent Gallery of Paintings in the Legislative Chambers, with a certain selfish, local, monetary collection, at a time when a public call was made upon our citizens, prevented us in any way enjoying the treat afforded, and we regretted very much to find the name of Captain Lefroy mixed up with so small an affair. We have here, however, a brief sketch of his introductory

lecture from the *British Canadian*, which will repay perusal.

Whence does it arise that the imitative arts painting and sculpture alike in their rudest and their most perfect forms, convey a pleasure so universal that the prince and the cottage, the savage and the civilized man, equally invoke their aid and delight in their employment. Is it because of the abstract beauty of the representations, or the things represented—where does that exist in the barbarous idol of a New Zealander? yet to the savage who carries that idol it conveys a delight identical in kind, inferior only in degree to that of "the fond idolator of old" to whom it was given to embody the ideal of loveliness in the Venus de Medici. Not it is the appeal which these representations make in different degrees, according to their beauty and our susceptibility—to our higher spiritual sentiments of love or veneration, or sympathy, or faith: it is because there is within us a consciousness of something nobler and purer than the actual condition of things in this world, and a craving for our immortal part to unite with it—that these arts, whose triumphs have extended our conceptions of the grand and the beautiful, and in their less perfect efforts, still, like the shattered fragments of a mirror, reflect some gleam of light, have become a part, if I may so speak of the common utterance of humanity—a confession of our faith in that unseen perfection of which external nature is but the degraded type—the interpreter of our conscious wish. There are certain general requisites or excellencies any of which, in a high degree, stamps the merit of a painting—where they are not to be found, no matter what name the picture bears, it is an indifferent one; where they, or any of them exist, however obscure the artist, it is as worthy of our admiration and study as if it came from the hand of a Correggio or Vanlyke. The best artists have painted many indifferent pictures, and taken many not permissible liberties; we are not to be misled by names, nor skeptical of the possibility of modern merit. We may criticize if we please the design of Rubens and the colouring of Poussin, provided we do justice to the colouring of the former and the design of the latter; but we may not judge of paintings by one part, the part we like, ignoring or neglecting the merits which we like or understand less. First and highest in the scale of merit—a merit which few subjects are susceptible and few artists have attained, is that indefinable quality of *greeness*, but so few of us are ever likely to see pictures in which this may be looked for, that I pass at once to those qualities of invention, expression, composition, colouring, drawing, and execution or handling, which we are entitled to expect in some degree in every picture. First then, of invention. The subject must, as Richardson expresses it, be finely conceived, and if possible improved in the painter's hand. He must form his conception strongly and clearly—his mind like that of a great actor entering into the spirit of the subject or the character he represents—It is evident that the quality of invention, thus placed first on the list is one we are not to look for in every painting, only the greatest masters, and in their greatest works, exhibit it to any eminent extent. Next in order of excellence and of difficulty is expression: of excellence, because without it no painting can please—of difficulty, because it requires a combination of appropriate colouring and effective composition with force of drawing. It does not consist of mere action, still less in a broad literal rendering of the intended passion or emotion, but in the concurrence of all the action of the picture, the fitness of its whole composition, to express the idea, whatever it may be, which the picture has chosen to embody. A picture, says some writer, must be like a bunch of grapes, not like a great many single grapes scattered on a table. Of however many parts composed there should be unity in them; something to which the eye is attracted before the details are perceived, and from which "with kindest change upheld," the leading characteristics of expression, coloring, light or shade, are extended to the other parts of the piece. After invention and expression, the greatest merit of a painting, and, perhaps, the one which is most readily reducible to fixed rules, is composition. Drawing is a quality ranks next in importance after invention, expression and composition, or, according to many, before the last of these.

While every one can perceive in what circumstances fidelity of drawing is absolutely essential, and the want of it inexcusable, it is not so obvious when literal accuracy in that respect may be sacrificed to attain some higher excellence. We are told of the old masters by Sir Jos. Reynolds that such was the avidity with which they wrought their works that when they had conceived a subject, they first made a variety of sketches, then a finished drawing of the whole, and after that a more correct drawing of every separate part, heads, hands, feet and pieces of drapery; they then painted the picture, and after all retouched it from life. Winkie went to such a length that he prepared models of the scenes of some of his best pictures for studies of grouping, light, and composition as well as drawing. The pictures, he adds, thus wrought with such pains, now appear like the effect of enchantment, and as if some mighty genius had struck them off at a blow. Accuracy, then, is the first general requisite in the drawing of the subject, but it is far from the only one. It is required besides that it be bold, clear and free from ambiguity, neither the outlines nor the forms of lights and shadows must be confused nor uncertain, or really upon any pretence of softness—nor on the other hand may they be sharp hard or dry. That there is in nature, almost always a reflected light by which the outlines of objects are softened off without sinking in any way their clearness, is strikingly shown by the strange sharpness and distinctness they acquire shortly after sunset when the quantity of light reflected from other objects is diminished to almost to nothing. This is a very beautiful effect in itself and properly characteristic of a sunset scene, but unpleasant because unnatural in scenes not belonging to that evanescent period of the day.

Biographical Calendar.

Oct.	17	1535	Sir Philip Sidney, died.
		1727	John Wilkes, born.
	18	1622	Matthew Henry, born.
		1744	Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, died.
	19	1645	Sir Thomas Browne, born.
		1622	Do., do., died.
		1715	Dean Swift, died.
		1704	Leigh Hunt, born.
		1816	Henry Kiko White, died.
		1813	Prince Poniatowski, drowned.
	20	1632	Sir Christopher Wren, born.
	21	1558	J. Caesar Scaliger, died.
		1627	Edmund Waller, died.
		1772	S. T. Coleridge, born.
		1705	George Cumbe, born.
		1805	Lord Nelson, killed.
	22	1715	Sir Cloudesley Shovel, drowned.
		1743	Sir Philip Francis, born.
		1840	Lord Holland, died.
	23	526	Balthus, beheaded.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, eminent as a poet, essayist, and moral philosopher, was born at Bristol, in 1770, where he received the rudiments of his education. He was afterwards sent to Christ's Hospital, London, at which establishment he made great progress in the Classics, and he completed his studies at King's College, Cambridge, where, in 1792, he obtained the gold medal for the best Greek ode. Shortly after leaving the University, he, on account of some disappointment, enlisted as a private soldier in a regiment of cavalry, but, being soon discovered by his officers to be a man of education, his situation was made known to his friends, and he was bought off. It appears, that he was first inspired with a taste for poetry by the perusal of Lisle Bowles' sonnets; and his intimacy with such men as Southey and Wordsworth, which commenced early in life, was likely to produce a congeniality of feelings, and lead to similar results. But, great as Coleridge was as a poet, he was equally great as a writer on morals, philosophy and politics; and, as a public lecturer, he was almost without a rival; while such were his powers as a debater, that he riveted the attention of his audience by the charm