

THE WESLEYAN.

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1875.

THE NEW HYMN BOOK.

One copy of the New Hymn Book, prepared and published under the direction of the British Methodist Conference, and but a single copy, was forwarded by the last English steamer.

The new Hymn Book comprises three sections; the "collection of hymns for the use of the people called Methodists," containing 539 hymns, originally published by John Wesley in 1780.

For all such valued memories we can, in the right place, cherish a grateful and reverent regard; but, in the preparation of a book, which for a century to come should be retained as a standard of worship, ought not the first consideration to be: The greatest good of the whole Church of God?

We miss, on first opening the new book, the engraving of the venerable John Wesley, by which all former copies were embellished, and, which in childhood days never failed to inspire suitable feelings of veneration and recognition.

The revision of the original "collection" has resulted in the omission of thirteen hymns. These include two dramatic hymns on the crucifixion of Christ,—"Ye that pass by behold the Man!"—"O thou dear suffering Son of God,"—which an account of their literalism and strong language have long been considered objectionable.

It is somewhat a matter of surprise to one uninitiated, that they have not been replaced by hymns of Calvary. A "funeral hymn," which will command appreciation, has been published for the 53rd,—on "the death of a widow."

The Unitarian fiend expel And chase his doctrine back to hell; but such expressions are repulsive in strains of worship. Three hymns, including one, "on England," have been substituted by others from the present supplement, and one on Christian unity, "Behold how good a thing," &c., has in the new book, with the omission of three stanzas of about as pure nonsense as ever marred a sacred song, been transferred to the supplementary collection, and in these abbreviated form will be more highly valued.

and the addition of twenty verses—containing over a hundred and thirty lines. In most cases these added stanzas are very beautiful. The well known hymn, "Jesus Thy blood and righteousness," has one verse more than before, and now closes as it begins;

"Their beauty this, their glorious dress, Jesus thy blood and righteousness."

The verses which have dropped out include objectionable lines and phrases of which the line: "If Thy bowels now are stirred," may be taken as an example. In one of the earliest hymns of the book the exceedingly offensive line: "Nor envy the swine their brutish delight," has been unhappily retained; but in the hymn "for the Heathen" the epithet applied to the Aborigines of this Western Continent, not always in this connection distinguished from civilized and Christianized communities has been revised; and "dark Americans" has been changed to "deluded votaries."

The middle section of the new Hymn-book is composed exclusively of select psalms. "There will be found seventy versions of psalms, or parts of psalms, by means of which that portion of holy Scripture, "it is claimed by the Committee, which has supplied so large a share of the devotional exercise of Christians generally, will become more fully available for the use of Methodists than it has been for a long time past." Possibly it is not generally known that long before the publication of the volume, which for a century has been the standard of Methodist worship, versions of the psalms were published by John and Charles Wesley for the use of their people in congregational service.

The interjection of these "select psalms" between two sections of hymns, instead of placing them at the commencement or at the close of the book, strikes one as an undesirable and unattractive arrangement.

The supplement contains in addition to the versions of psalms, 368 hymns. They are selected from a great variety of authors, including Bishop Woodsworth, of Lincoln, the Dean of Canterbury and Dr. Morley Punshon. "The volume is enriched by a selection from the works of modern hymnologists as well as from the accumulated treasures of the past. The names of authors will help to exemplify the substantial unity existing between all believers in Christ, notwithstanding the many causes which hinder its full manifestation in the world."

We find in this supplement Cowper's "Fountain filled with blood," Permett's noble coronation hymn: "All hail the power of Jesus' name;" Montgomery's verses "on prayer;" and his beautiful melody, "Forever with the Lord;" "Just as I am," and "Thy will be done;" Stowell's "Mercy-seat," Lyle's exquisite production, "Abide with me," the widely known hymn "Nearer my God to Thee," and other treasured hymns of the Christian church. The selection comprises compositions of a very different character and widely apart such as the fine rendering of the Medialer Hymn, "Dies Ite" by Dr. Jrons, the well known hymn of Dr. Neale, "Art thou weary, art thou languid," which carries with it a suggestion of Gothic Architecture and elaborate vidual; and "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," which in the Services of the American Evangelists, has become so widely celebrated and which in the great religious assemblies, has moved thousand of souls more than the singing of a Cathedral choir. The Supplement concludes with no less than sixteen "graces before and after meat;" and even these do not include the familiar lovefeast lines: "Be present at our table Lord," in asking a blessing, and "We thank Thee Lord for this our..."

The Arrangement of the Supplementary hymns is much superior to that of the Collection. We have Adoration—The Person, Office and work of Christ—the experiences and privileges of believers—Christain Ordinance and institutions—Death and future Life. A re-distribution of all the really essential and most valued hymns which have been only revised, according to their subjects, with the supplement would have generally increased the value of this volume as a systematic compendium of theology, greatly facilitated the selection of hymns in public worship, and would have afforded superior advantages for private perusal.

The main defect in the Supplementary Selection of Hymns, as viewed from a different and distant standpoint is perhaps accounted for in a prefatory paragraph: "Here also will be found some adapted to personal and private rather than to collective worship. Surely the revised "collection" contains a sufficient number of hymns, meditations, expositions, and lengthy religious poems for all the purposes of private edification, and also for "praising the Lord in "secretly among the faithful." Instead of occupying the space and adding to the bulk of the volume by additional compositions for personal and private devotion; should not the growing necessities and claims of social and sanctuary worship have been the sole consideration?

What of the general adaptation of this new Hymn Book to all the requirements of Methodist worship? It is a grand selection of hymns unquestionably. The revision and varied additions from the best productions of ancient and modern hymnologists have vastly increased its value, but must a hymn-book for all purposes of Christian life and public worship contain over a thousand psalms and hymns? Such a book will probably be found to be too large. It has been proposed to publish the supplement on a separate form; but the result of such an arrangement would be two books instead of one. In this way the original "collection," containing the most distinctly Methodistic hymns, would be gradually superseded—a consequence to be most seriously deprecated.

J. L.

THE BAPTISTS AND Y. M. C. ASSOCIATIONS.—A correspondent this week writes upon this subject. A letter in a recent number of the Messenger, challenging the consistency of any recognition of the Y. M. C. A. by Baptists, has led to a considerable feeling among Christians. For ourselves, we are never surprised at any expressions dictated by the purely Baptist conscience. If we were a close communion Baptist—with all that the name implies—we would, in all sincerity, aim at being consistent and logical. We would regard all unimmersed believers as only nominal Christians—as not entitled to fellowship—in any way—with the select followers of the Lord. Baptists, if they believe what they profess, should not encourage rebellion in one place, and denounce it in another. Here is just what makes outsiders doubt their sincerity. They fraternize with all good men everywhere but at the place principally designed to show the unity and devotion of true disciples—the table of the Lord. Either open the way to the Sacramental table, or close the door entirely.

Rev. WILLIAM WILLIAMS and W. H. Gibbs, Esq., the Missionary Deputation from the West, now in the Lower Provinces, represent different interests and departments of our United Church. Mr. Williams is an ex-President of the late New Connexion. He was, we believe, one of the foremost advocates of the advantages of Union, and assisted materially to bring about its consummation. He consequently represents that large and intelligent class of ministers and people who abandoned their distinctive name to merge it in that of a common Methodism. The New Connexion was essentially missionary. So far as we had opportunity of judging, its ministers were earnest, evangelical, and successful preachers of the Word. Mr. Gibbs has made a political reputation in his own constituency, having represented that portion of the Canadian country in the Local Legislation.

His brother, has, at present, intimate and influential relations with the rulers of the Dominion. Our lay delegate possesses an enviable position in the hearts of his fellow-citizens, where he is best known.

Most admirable is the spirit by which our beloved brethren are actuated in coming amongst us. There is hardship in travelling fifteen hundred miles, even with the luxury of Pullman Cars. The route mapped out for the deputation necessitated exposure and fatigue. But particularly do they make sacrifice in leaving home and duties for several weeks. To Mr. Gibbs time must be money. Yet when requested by unanimous vote of the Central Board, he gave himself up unhesitatingly, though apparently conscious that the act involved very considerable cost.

This fact should be known, if the mission of our brethren would stand in its true light before our people. Any appeals they may make for sacrifice on behalf of missions, will have the merit of originating with men who give the very best practical proof of their sincerity. Congregations can scarcely be other than benevolent who are addressed by such speakers.

THE NEW ENGLISH HYMN BOOK.—A copy of this work, so eagerly looked for, reached us by last steamer. A critical notice of it appears in another place, from the pen of one qualified by poetic and literary accomplishments to do it with some measure of justice. We only allude to it here, to correct an impression which might naturally accompany the intimation that the new Hymn Book was issued.

It is impossible to see how far this compilation will affect the Methodist Hymnology of the Dominion: but it is certain, from the action of our General Conference that a Hymn Book for the Methodist Church of Canada will be compiled and issued at some period between the years 1878 and 1882. No decision upon the subject can be reached till next General Conference at which the reports will be made by the Hymn Book Committee, and disposed of according to the best light of that time. The present hymn book will be used for a period of at least five years from the present, as it will be impossible to publish a sufficient quantity to meet the demand of the Church until at least twelve months or two years after next General Conference.

The hope of ever seeing a common Hymn Book for the Methodism of the world, is now pretty fully destroyed. The next best thing will be to provide a book as cheap and excellent as possible for each branch of the Church. In the racy "Table Talk" of the London Methodist we find the following allusions to the new Hymn Book:

Methodist Table-talk, in select circles, has been almost absorbed during the last week by the new Hymn Book, a few very few—copies of which have been enclosed in this month's book-parcels. If all the editions are as well and cheaply got up as this—foolscap 8vo, red edges, capital print and paper, all for two shillings—the grumblers who have been busy lately will have to seek "fresh woods and pastures new" for their amiable performances. Table-talk noticed at once that Wesley's likeness had been omitted. The Committee were unanimous in their rejection of man-worship, and intelligent Table-talk is equally unanimous. But it was not always so. On a former occasion the very un-faithful likeness was omitted, and popular clamour compelled its re-insertion. Alas! der their congregations by announcing hymn and page in the same breath. "The page will be heard no more. The Committee profess to have made little change in the portion of the Hymn Book published during Wesley's life, as far as Hymn 539 inclusive: but Table-talk has already noticed that this portion has been very thoroughly revised. Verses, and some more suitable ones inserted. Even the punctuation has been carefully corrected. The revision-work has been admirably done; but critical Table-talk is a little surprised that verse 4, in Hymn 19, has been allowed to reappear. Is it well to call sinners "swine"? There is, however, a far greater blemish. Table-talk is indignant at amazement that so careful and judicious a revision committee should have reproduced, in Hymn 181, "a tyrant, brandishing his sting." It had really been hoped that this medieval monster would have been allowed to breathe his sting in Methodist chapels no more. Is it yet too late to slay the grotesque creature, or at least banish him to the Scilly Isles? In the meantime the unexpected re-appearance of this "tyrant" has suspended the talk at intelligent Methodist tables. Like Banquo's ghost, he has caused "the most admired disorder," and each talker, not standing upon the order of his going, has gone at once out of his terrible presence.

MISAPPREHENSIONS.—Our Montreal correspondent, in referring to Bank failures, included the "Merchants' Bank among that class. We are informed by authorities that the "Mechanics Bank" must have been intended, as the "Merchants" is perfectly safe.

New Subscribers will receive the Wesleyan from 1st October till 1st January 1877, fifteen months at \$2 postage paid.

THE EURETORIAN ARGOSY for Oct. reached us this week. Wesley College is intelligently and learnedly represented by our young and talented editorial friends. They seem to be well supported—in the literary sense at least.

MT. ALLISON COLLEGE AND ACADEMIES advertise their second term in our issue this week. Every department is prosperous, even to an unusual degree. No better home or school can be found in our Provinces. Students should apply early.

PORT HAWKESBURY.—An obliging correspondent writes that the weather has been very stormy in that region. The Port is full of vessels seeking shelter. The steam boats are delayed, with many passengers.—The Academy, with new teachers—Mr. Thomas and Miss Embury—opened on the 1st inst.—The great auction sale of the late Levi Hart was to have been held on the 2nd.—The proprietors of the Marine Railway are busily employed.

Y. M. C. A.—The Rev. John Read will deliver an address on Temperance under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. in Association Hall on Monday evening at 8 o'clock. All are welcome, Admission Free, No collection.

MINUTES OF CONFERENCE.—The new edition of the N. Scotia Minutes, will be ready to send out next week. They will be forwarded as soon as possible.

Y. M. C. A.—The Third Quarterly Meeting of the Association will be held on Saturday evening, Nov. 6th., in the Rooms. A Service of Song will be held from half-past 7 o'clock till 8, when the business, which will consist of Reading Reports and a discussion on the General work of the Association, will commence. A full attendance of members is requested.

THE examination of the Rev. Mr. James, Bermuda, by the Attorney General, and his cross-examination by Mr. Cassidy, we give this week as far as we possess the material. When the next Bermudian papers reach us we will conclude this interesting case. Really, in reading over the proof of this examination, we came to the conclusion that Mr. James rather than Mr. Cassidy, is on his defence for having committed a trespass.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS continue to come in. But are our brethren making a thorough canvass? We sent circulars to each Minister on this subject, some time ago. Please give the interests of the paper some attention each week. Your families, if we may credit intelligence which reaches us from every quarter, would benefit by it largely. FREE to new subscribers for the remainder of this year.

DEATH OF NEWSPAPER MEN.—We exceedingly regret to hear of the death of Mr. Hogg, Editor and Publisher of the New Brunswick Reporter. Mr. Hogg succeeded his father—a gentleman of fine literary tastes and qualifications—in the management of the paper. While out shooting recently, his gun accidentally went off, lodging its contents in his body. He survived but a few hours. The family of the deceased have been highly esteemed by the community of Fredericton, and particularly by the Methodist Church with which they have long been connected. Mr. McMurtry, one of the proprietors of the Summerside (P. E. I.) Journal, also departed this life last week.

PERSONAL.—Rev. James Burnside of our Conference, writes from San Jose, October 19th.—We are all well and enjoying this far West country, and are this year living two blocks from the Santa Clara University where our children attend.

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THE "RIPPLE" OF THE "CHRISTIAN MESSENGER."

There appeared in the Christian Messenger of the 20th ult., an article signed "Ripple," in which an effort is made to create discord and strife in the Young Men's Christian Association, and thus mar the good work being done by an institution enjoying the approval and blessing of the Holy Spirit.

This "Ripple" may be what he pretends to be, a Baptist, and a member of the Church, but there are some of that Communion who believe he is a Jesuit, and, consequently, at his legitimate work, endeavouring to destroy the unity and good fellowship between all Christian workers who do not use his shibboleth as the touch stone of fitness and authority. If, however, he is what he assumes to be, then is he also a vilifier of his brethren, charging hypocrisy upon a large number of Christians, who by the fruit of their lives show their devotion to God and his cause.

Pharisaism is the same in every age of the world, and, whether viewed in the exclamation of those who said of the world's redeemer behold he catcheth with publicans and sinners, or in the "Ripple," who says, the Baptist Church alone holds and teaches the truth, and we of that church who say to the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists stand aside for we are holier than thou, are the only consistent members of it, it is the same arrogant exclusive thing so emphatically denounced by our Saviour when he had to feel in his own person its biting withering influences.—It is the fruit of a vine not of the Lord's right hand planting, and circumcision and immersion have alike failed to sweeten its bitterness or cleanse its corruption.

"Ripple" doubts if there is enough Christianity in the Y. M. C. Association to hear Baptists if they were to tell us their real sentiments towards us.

I believe "Ripple" misrepresents the Baptist Members of the Association when he intimates that they entertain unkind and uncharitable feelings towards their fellow members of other denominations, but should their be such a declaration on their part as he suggests he would find just as much forbearance and longsuffering in the Association as there is in the Baptist Church. Paedobaptist Christians have long been accustomed to hear the arrogant claims of some, and boastful vauntings of others of the hard shell wing of the Baptist Denomination without departing from a christian line of conduct towards them, and divine grace will enable them to do so still.

There is form and consistency in the pretensions to Papal infallibility, and in Anglican High Churchism, but the Baptists claim to the exclusive possession of truth in without shape or proportion, and its unsightliness becomes more apparent as its advocates hold it up to view.

The day is not far distant when, by general consent of the Evangelicals of every denomination of Christians, the measure of Scriptural truth held in the doctrines and forms of any of our denominations, as compared with any other, shall be determined by the measure of success in subjugating the world to Christ vouchsafed by Him who is the fountain and source of truth to the preaching and practicing of those doctrines and forms: and then the absurdity of the claim founded upon the pretended validity and efficiency of the ritualism of water will be fully exposed.

If those who (using "Ripples" language) "segregate to themselves doctrines and forms which are at war with the spirit of Christianity" and as successful in their labors to bring the world to Christ (the object for which Jesus died and the Gospel is preached) as those who hold the truth unadulterated with error, then, what is the value of truth. If a Church which, as compared with the Baptist Church is as yet in its infancy drawing according to his Fejoering, or the ring of His trumpet of peace? It is a fact that God's care is more manifest in some instances of it than in others to the dim and often bewildered eye of humanity. Upon such instances we seize, and call them providences. We will that they can; but it is grievously after if they could believe that the whole number is one grand providence.—George Donaldson.

Grace cannot be severed from its fruits. God gives you St. Paul's faith, you will have St. James's work.—Tozady.