

"The Scottish Hymnal" contains two hundred hymns, and among these there are to be found almost all the really good hymns ever written in or translated into the English language. We can scarcely think of a hymn which on any occasion ever struck us as being very good and devotional, which is not to be found in the admirable collection now under review. We observe, further, another feature of the book with which we are intensely delighted, and that is, the hymns are not mutilated. Wherever a hymn appears in this book, it is unchanged,—that is, we find occasionally portions omitted from the long hymns of Isaac Watts, but whatever appears is reproduced in the words of the original writer. Also, the compilers of the Hymnal have avoided a mean and contemptible system practised by so many, that of mixing up the verses of a hymn with the mongrel effusions of some ranter's pen so as to avoid being prosecuted by those holding copyright or any other claim over the same. In this way such persons save money, but may the day never come when any such clandestine act shall put cheap Church literature into the hands of the people of the Scotch Kirk. The manly and christian and honest method was taken by the Assembly's Committee. They bought and paid for permission to transcribe into their collection any such hymn as was really valuable, and was in the legal possession of any particular author or publisher. The result of all these precautions is simply this: We have now, with the sanction of the General Assembly and our Maritime Synod, a Book of Praise of which every minister and member of the Church ought to be proud—a collection of hymns comprising all the best in the language, and entirely purged of trashy rhyme so often found passing current under the name of "Hymns." Among many other well known authors, we observe in the index the names of Bishop Heber, Watts, C. Wesley, J. R. McDuff, Toplady, Milton, J. Keeble, Montgomery.

Arrangement is a matter of very great importance in any book, but especially so in a book of Praise. In this particular, the compilers of the Hymnal have been singularly fortunate. It is divided into eight sections:—I. Hymns of the Holy Trinity; II. Hymns of Creation; III. Hymns of our Lord, (1) Incarnation, (2) Death, (3) Resurrection, (4) Ascension, (5) Second coming; IV. Hymns of the Holy Spirit; V. Hymns of Missions; VI. Hymns of Christian Life; VII. Hymns of Heaven: VIII. Hymns of Natural and Sacred Seasons.

Blackwood & Sons are the Publishers, and, like all the works issuing from that celebrated Church publishing house, the book itself is got up in substantial styles. The best edition, a really handsome book, costs 1s. 6d. sterling. (37½ cts.); another edition costs 1s. sterling; another, 6d.; and another, 2d. Arrangements have been made with Messrs. Mackinlay of Halifax, who promise to furnish the books at the currency money of the sterling figures, i. e., the 1s. 6d. edition they furnish at 1s. 6d. currency, and so with the cheaper copies.

The only thing which appears to us to be an oversight in the book, is the want of a metrical index. This, of course, can easily be supplied in future editions, and for obvious reasons it is desirable. The *twopence* edition might be made more serviceable by being bound in cloth boards, instead of paper as at present.

On the whole, therefore, our opinion of the Hymnal is that it supplies, in a most efficient manner, a want in our Church's service of Praise. It is not intended to supercede the grand old version of the Psalms of David at present in general use (and ours is the best metrical edition ever written), but simply to supplement it. Neither is it intended that all congregations *must* use them. If congregations do not want to sing Hymns, they never will be asked by the Church to do so; but in other congregations where the people desire so to do, they can now, with ecclesiastical as well as apostolic sanction, teach and admonish one another "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," singing and "making melody" in their hearts to the Lord. Col. iii. 16, and Eph. vi. 19.