

shutting themselves up in their virtuous homes, provided with all that ministers to a virtuous taste, they try to let others alone, in hope that they will be let alone in turn. No course can be more mistaken. A father should remember that his child must come into contact with the immoralities around him, and may be seduced without the knowledge of his parent. Servants must come, too, from the general community, and may have known and been infected with its immoralities. Let no one think that he can live in a community in which morality is low, and not feel, to some extent, its fatal effects. The present crisis has made many exclaim against corruption and fraud, who cared nothing about it till it affected their own purses. And if the floods of immorality gather strength and sweep over our country, many will have cause to cry out with aching hearts, who now care little for the good of their fellowmen or the moral interests of our country.

## HYMNOLOGY.

*(Abridged from the Encyclopædia Britannica, New Edition).*

Hymn, a sacred ode, adapted in its original design to religious services of a public character. The primary idea of the hymn was adoration; but its specific meaning and purpose have been gradually extended, till the name has come to be applied to all classes of devotional compositions treated in the shorter metrical forms. Hymns were an important feature in the religious festivals of the ancient world. The classic mythology, that wonderful product of the legends of an imaginative people, yielded rich materials for poetical treatment; and numerous specimens of the lyric ode, sung in temple and theatre amidst music and choral dances—the exulting pæan, and shrill, maddening dithyramb—are preserved in Greek and Roman literature.

### *Hebrew Hymns.*

It is in the sacred poetry of the Hebrews that we find the perfect development of the hymn. In the odes of Moses and Deborah, there is a higher and purer inspiration than that of Aonian mount and Castalian spring. Daily, in the temple of Jerusalem, bands of priests and Levites with alternate voices chanted psalms, in which saintly genius had been consecrated to the noblest ends. These psalms, chiefly composed by David, continued to be employed in the more spiritual worship of the Christian Church. They formed the language of its earliest praise, as they found in its faith their clear and full interpretation; and on this ancient and sacred basis has the whole superstructure of Christian hymnology been raised.

### *Christian Hymns—Early and Mediæval.*

At what period hymns distinctively Christian were introduced into evangelical worship cannot be exactly ascertained. The apostolic writings speak of “psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs”; and the last of these expressions has been supposed to refer to the doxologies, or fervent strains of thanksgiving uttered by those who possessed spiritual gifts. We learn from Philo (*De Vit. Contemplat.*) that hymns of their own composition were used by the Essenes or Therapeutæ, a set of Jewish ascetics, in their religious assemblies. Michaelis and others think they discover fragments of apostolic hymns in such passages as Eph. v. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 16; 2 Tim. ii. 11, which have a kind of rhythmical flow. We have the testimony of Pliny, in the famous letter to Trajan, early in the second century, that the Christians “repeated hymns among themselves to Christ, as to a God.” An early Christian writer remarks, that “the praises of Christ, the Word of God, were set forth in psalms and hymns of the brethren, written at