

terodoxy? Or have I strayed into a ritualistic church? What is orthodoxy? What is heterodoxy? I remember Bishop Wordsworth's famous definition: "Orthodoxy is my doxy; heterodoxy is another man's doxy."

You might have heard a pin drop when the preacher stood up, and yet the congregation was unusually large. His text would be taken from the Twenty-second Chapter of Matthew: "What think ye of Christ?" In speaking to his own people he was spared the need of much explanation. There were two answers to the query. One declared that Christ was Almighty God, equal with the Father, the Creator of the Universe. The other, the one which we held, was that He was of like nature with ourselves. Unitarians said the birth of Christ was not supernatural, but natural. That though Christ differed from ordinary men and women He did not differ in kind. They believed that though far removed from the common type, Christ was yet a man of like passions with ourselves. Now he, the preacher, did not love controversy, but the Bishop of Worcester had been holding forth on certain disputed points, and it was well that they should give a reason for the faith that was in them. Bishop Gore had set before them a dilemma; either Christ was God, or He was not a good man. The Bishop had handled his subject with great ability and with admirable temper. He appeared to believe that the dilemma was sound. The popular mind would be with him. People liked decided views one way or the other. The middle course was never popular. Yet the middle course might be the true course.

The Bishop had said that if Christ were not God, then He must have been a wicked person. That He should be anything but God was an intolerable thought: for if not God His whole life was imposture. Here the preacher spoke of the Bishop's ability to get together a thousand men at noontide in the middle of the week as a very remarkable fact which certified to the immense interest men still took in religion. It was said that faith was failing, that the foundations of religion had been undermined. But was it so? Could the phenomenon have taken place a hundred years ago? Would the Bishop have come out of his palace to lecture in a great city on the historical reliability of the New Testament? And if he had done so, would a thousand men have left their work in the middle of the day to go and hear him? Certainly not. Returning to the argument, we were invited to examine one of the Bishop's statements, namely, that to believe in the Divine origin of Christ we needed a pre-conceived conviction of its truth. This was an extraordinary admission, urged the pastor. What of earthly matters, matters of business? What if we approached other enquiries with "pre-conceived convictions?" Surely enquiry would be vitiated from the first. A more unsound canon of New Testament criticism could not be imagined. It gave the whole case away.

I listened to the end, but no better point was made; nay, much of the speaker's sermon after this was rather rhetoric than logic, rather hypothetical proposition than marshalling of arguments. It was urged that the discriminating public was neither large nor popular, from which I gathered that the speaker regarded his own party

as the party of discrimination. Our opinions often take colour from our surroundings. Not long ago a preacher called attention to the "vast congregation" around him as a powerful testimony to the truth of his cause. On the evening of the same day I heard another preacher profess to glory in the smallness of his following. "Twas ever thus: the chosen of all ages have been few: the leaders must of necessity be select: look at Galilee!" At the close the choir trooped out to Beethoven's "Hallelujah" from the "Mount of Olives," played as a postlude; they had been played in to the noble Andante from Beethoven's 7th Symphony. Obviously the organist was a devotee of the Bonn master, and so far all was well. In fine, the sermon was polished, the singing was good, the church was handsome. But if I can credit my dictionary, the congregation was heretical, and this consideration spoilt everything. Still, I think it would have been possible to bear up if I had not at the same time been heartlessly deprived of my customary Confession and Absolution.—The Chronicle. (England.)

### Notes Musical.

BY UNCLE WILL.

Rev. Dr. Pentecost writing of Hymns in Public Worship says: "It would be easy to fill many pages with interesting facts in connection with the use of hymns in the public worship in the house of God.

I have seen vast audiences melted and swayed by a simple hymn when they had been unmoved by a powerful presentation of the gospel from the pulpit.

From close and repeated observation I am persuaded that the late Rev. Mr. Spurgeon the great metropolitan preacher of England, placed great reliance on the use of his hymns in public worship. By them he prepared his vast audiences for the service that was to follow, and fastened his discourse with a hymn, which he always read with great power, and which was sung by that vast choir of 7500 people with an effect that is indescribable.

Indeed, the use of hymns in the service of the sanctuary when in the hands of a pastor or leader who understands and feels the inspiration of them cannot be too highly estimated.

It is a great pity that the power of "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" had been so sadly weakened, if not utterly destroyed by the introduction of "fancy quartettes," who sing neither with the "spirit nor with the understanding," and who practically forbid anyone else to sing. Lord, hasten the day when the service of song shall be restored to the people.

In Canada we are drifting fast to the condition lamented by Dr. Pentecost of the churches in the United States and it behooves all who are interested in the service of praise to help to stem the tide of professionalism that is taking hold of the service of praise in our churches.

Amongst the women hymn writers in the Book of Praise none stand higher than Mrs. C. F. Alexander, wife of Dr. Alexander, Archbishop of Armagh and primate of all Ireland. It is worthy of note that in a vote taken in 1887, of the readers of the Sunday at Home on the best hundred hymns two of Mrs. Alexander's were accorded a place, viz., "There is a Green Hill far away," and "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult." One good feature in The Book of Praise is that the hymns, both for old and young, are under one

cover. The same hymns can be sung both in Church and Sabbath School. And when one remembers that we are all children in the eyes of God, to whom one thousand years are but as a day, and that our sojourning here is but the school to fit us for the great hereafter, we can join heartily in even the simplest of the children's hymns, and as little children, learn therefrom. We can form some idea how Mrs. Alexander's poetry is esteemed, by the fact that her "Hymns for Little Children" of which the first edition appeared in 1848, is now in its 60th edition. John Keble, in the preface, expressed the opinion, that the hymns contained in it would "win a high place for themselves in the estimation of all who knew how to value true poetry and primitive devotion." The profits of the publication were applied to the support of an Irish school for maids.

Of these hymns The Book of Praise contains six. Hymn No. 46: "There is a green hill far away," for simplicity and purity of language cannot be excelled. It is beautiful Saxon in almost every word, and no less attractive is No. 512: "All things bright and beautiful." Hymn 527: "We are but little children weak" will rank with Mrs. Alexander's best works and for lessons plainly and directly put there is no better hymn than No. 529: "Do no sinful action." One of her most successful compositions and a great favorite is hymn 519: "Once in Royal David's City." Hymn 242 is one of the hundred best hymns already referred to, is a good hymn for congregational use.

Testimony is borne to the great usefulness in the mission field of Mrs. Alexander's hymns, as teaching in a form easily remembered, the elements of Christianity.

These hymns have exceptionally good musical settings. That of A. L. Peace, late organist in Glasgow Cathedral, "Green Hill," seems wedded to the words. "All things bright," by John Hallah, should be often sung. It looks more difficult than it really is, the modulations are easy, giving bright contrasts. Sung with animation; it should become a universal favorite.

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