

## PREFACE.

hymns in the old Wesleyan Hymn-Book should be omitted, and what abbreviations or emendations should be made in those retained. This work was submitted to the General Conference, which met in Montreal the following September, with a recommendation that all the hymns selected for the New Hymn-book, whether from the original Collection, or from other sources, should be arranged under suitable heads, according to their subjects. After full consideration, the following resolution was adopted:—*"That the Report of the Hymn-Book Committee be adopted, and that the Committee be re-appointed, and authorized to complete and publish the Hymn-Book within two years."* The Hon. L. A. WILMOT having died before the first meeting of the Committee, DAVID ALLISON, LL.D., was appointed in his place.

Having their authority renewed, and their work definitely specified, the Committee applied themselves to carry out to successful completion the important task assigned them by the General Conference. The main work still to be done was the selection of new hymns, and the proper classification of the whole. In numerous meetings as separate sections, and afterwards in a protracted session of the Committee, held at Cobourg, during September, 1879, a great deal of prayerful thought and earnest labour were devoted to the work of preparing such a Hymn-Book as would fully meet the requirements of our Church, in all its varied services.

The revision of the "Collection," so long used in every section of Wesleyan Methodism, was the most delicate and difficult part of the work. It was surrounded by many hallowed and cherished associations; having been for a century a source of consolation and strength to multitudes of God's people. The Committee, therefore, were unanimous in resolving to leave out no hymn which, by its adaptation to public worship, or private devotion, had vindicated a right to a place in the psalmody of the Church. But they felt that hymns which, after a trial of nearly a hundred years, had revealed little or no adaptation for use, might be safely omitted, to make place for others of greater practical value. Some long hymns have been divided; and others shortened to a moderate length, by omitting imperfect or inferior stanzas. In a few instances, where some solecism, or offensive confusion of figures, marred a beautiful hymn, it was thought