

The difference between the old and new hymn-books is more apparent than real, from the circumstance of the classification and grouping of the hymns in a more natural and appropriate sequence. Instead of being divided between the first "Collection" and a "Supplement," they are now all brought together under proper heads, which greatly facilitates reference and gives a logical and systematic unity to the whole. This we consider one of the distinguished merits of the new book. A number of the longer hymns have been judiciously abridged—five or six verses are as many as are ever sung at once. Some of the emendations of familiar hymns will probably provoke criticism, because they are changes from our accustomed use and wont. But we think they will commend themselves to the deliberate judgment. Some persons assume that a hymn is a sacred entity which may not be altered in the least without committing a sort of sacrilege. But a hymn that is to be sung by a great congregation as the expression of their own feelings is a very different thing from a poem which expresses only the writer's private sentiments. In framing what is really a liturgy for the use of the whole Church, it seems to us quite legitimate to so emend, if necessary, any hymns as to bring them into fuller harmony with our received theology, or to remove blemishes which, through the change of meaning or obsolescence of certain words, may have accrued.

The compilers of this book have concentrated upon their work a vast amount of thought and careful study and critical ability. They have laid, by their labours, the whole Church under great and lasting obligation. We again repeat, we know of no hymnal extant equal to this for general excellence and adaptation to the necessities of our religious services. We believe it will be a most valuable aid to the worship of Almighty God. In singing its noble hymns, both new and old, the soul will be lifted on wings of faith and love toward heaven, the heart will be inflamed with holy zeal, and the

aspirations elevated and quickened. It is a grand body of divinity, conveying in words of richest harmony and strongest expressiveness the great truths of religion, and those special views of certain truths which characterize us as Methodists—the consciousness of sins forgiven and the breathing after full salvation. As a manual of private devotion it will be a means of grace of richest value. It should broaden our sympathies and make us more catholic in spirit to know that, however the Churches may differ in formulating their creeds, yet when they gather around the cross to sing the praises of the great Three-One, the sweetest concord marks their songs. The voices of such different schools of thought as those of Wesley and Watts, and Doddridge and Cowper, and Heber and Stanley, and Keble and Lyte, and Faber and Baring-Gould, and Charlotte Elliot and Phœbe Cary, and Bonar and McCheyne, and mediæval monks and the Moravian poet Montgomery, and the Fathers of the early ages and the sweet singers of to-day, all blend in one harmonious strain, in one grand pæan of praise to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever. We rejoice in the broad catholicity of this book.

It says much for the rapid development of our publishing establishment, and for the energy and enterprise of the Book Steward, that he is able to prepare and will shortly issue simultaneously five distinct editions—two of which are now ready—of this book. In mechanical execution the books would be a credit to any printing-office or bindery in the world. The stereotyping is sharp and clear; the binding substantial and elegant; quite like an English book; and the prices moderate, ranging from fifty cents upwards, for a book of nearly eight hundred pages. In consequence of these additions to its increasing regular work, few busier spots can be seen than our publishing house. Its staff of composers, pressmen, electrotypers, stereotypers, binders, clerks in store and warehouse, are kept hard at work, often till late at night. The