

PREFACE

By way of preface are here subjoined the following reports which were adopted unanimously by both Houses of the General Synod on Saturday, September 26, 1906.

REPORT OF COMPILATION COMMITTEE.

In the Report here presented your Committee set forth the manner in which they have endeavoured to follow out the instructions and directions given them by the Synod itself, and also those given by the large General Hymnal Committee.

But, before entering upon the main subject of this report your Committee desire to review briefly the circumstances under which the Synod was moved to action in the matter of compiling and publishing a hymnal.

Several different hymnals have hitherto been in use in the Church of England in Canada. The inconvenience of this state of things combined with other circumstances to make the compilation of a hymnal under the direction of the General Synod advisable. In 1904 memorials were presented from nearly every Diocesan Synod favouring the appointment of a Committee of Compilation. Before the meeting of the General Synod the widest possible publicity was given to the discussion of the proposal, and so fully and so strongly was the matter laid before the Synod that it was unanimously decided to proceed at once with the work. It was felt by every one that the time had arrived when all parties in the Church could work sympathetically and enthusiastically together in the preparation of a hymnal of which the guiding principle should be 'unity by inclusion and not by exclusion'; and that in such a hymnal all Churchmen might unite upon the broad and catholic lines of the Book of Common Prayer.

At first there were some misgivings as to the magnitude of the financial responsibility involved in the undertaking, but it was made clear in debate that the Synod could enter upon it without assuming financial risk, and might indeed reasonably expect a large return in the form of royalties.

Your Committee were in session from January 1 to 5, April 24 to 27, August 21 to 28, 1906; January 2 to 10, July 23 to August 1, 1907; and February 20 to 28, 1908; the above dates being inclusive.

Throughout the three years much detail and clerical work was also accomplished by sub-committees and by wide correspondence, every point being eventually passed upon by the full Committee.

As expressed by formal resolution of the General Hymnal Committee during the session of Synod in 1906, the Compilation Committee's aim has been 'that in the selection of hymns and tunes the book be as representative as possible of all legitimate schools of thought and taste within the Church.' With this object in view it was directed that 'to each member of the Upper House and to every clergyman of the Church of England in Canada in active work a list be sent of the hymns contained in the hymnal in use in his parish, and he be requested to indicate thereon: (1) the hymns generally used by him; (2) the hymns never, or practically never, used; (3) the hymns considered indispensable; and that a similar list be sent to each branch of the Woman's Auxiliary.'

The Committee have not considered themselves bound in all cases to exclude a hymn in strict accordance with the opinions thus expressed, inasmuch as some hymns, though beautiful, have failed to win general acceptance owing to their being set to unattractive tunes. At the same time the Committee believe that no hymn has been omitted which has hitherto been found of general practical value. Moreover, by providing alternative tunes your Committee trust that they have made it possible for any congregation under ordinary circumstances to sing any hymn in the book.

Not only were the clergy asked to express their opinions, but professional and amateur organists in Canada were, as far as possible, consulted, and invited through the public press and otherwise, to communicate with the Committee. The publisher has spared no expense to enable the Committee by means of four printed drafts, issued from time to time in the past three years, to secure the utmost publicity for every detail of the work. Thousands of suggestions were received and considered, and it is difficult to give any adequate