

In this lofty "song of praise," to which attention is directed only because of its place in the volume, and with the opening hymn grandly representative, we have deep Scriptural truth finding expression in simple language, and therefore suited to congregational worship; but rising to a strain grand and hallowed as ever burst from the lips of St. Ambrose in the early heroic days of the Christian Church.

Prayer is also an important element of worship; and our hymn-book supplies language of petition, penitential confession, earnest supplication, and intercessory pleading. Feeling the need of giving greater prominence to supplicatory exercises in their forms of worship, the question of liturgies has engaged the attention of leading minds in several sections of the Protestant Church. Of this defect we cannot complain. One-half of our hymns are the utterance of desire, prayer and supplication, solemn litanies, earnest pleadings with God. The contrite heart finds comfort and faith is greatly aided in such hymns as that beginning,

"Would Jesus have the sinner die?"

with its tender and impassioned litany :

"Thou loving, all-atoning Lamb,
Thee—by Thy painful agony,
Thy bloody sweat, Thy grief and shame,
Thy cross and passion on the tree,
Thy precious death and life—I pray
Take all, take all my sins away."

The intense personality of Wesleyan hymnody cannot be overlooked in any estimate of its excellence and adaptation to the purposes of worship. The hymns of Charles Wesley are mainly lyrical—eminently hymns of the heart, of thought and feeling, original, tender, pure, and welling up from the depths of the soul. Even the hymns of Dr. Watts, with all their classic purity and depth of tenderness, of blended strength and sweetness, are often didactic rather than lyrical. The hymns of the Wesleyan bard were woven from the chequered experiences of his own life; and therefore all emotions of the mind, all modes and moods of mental and moral being, all phases of spiritual life, find full and ample expression. "Christian experience," says the accomplished poet and critic of sacred poetry, James Montgomery,