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The Hymnal Controversy.

We have so far refrained from saying anything on this much to be lamented controversy. We desired to wait until we could be sure of having all the facts in the case and arrive at an impartial conclusion. We have read nearly every thing that has been said on both sides, and have reached a conclusion that seems as clear to us as the noon-day sun.

We feel sure we can act without partiality in the case, as we have no earthly interest in it, never expect to sell a book for either party, and look only to the good of the cause in general and on the Pacific coast in particular, in what we shall say. We would not say one word now, were it not that the two rival books are being advertised extensively and our readers desire some information on the merits of the question.

The facts, as gleaned from both sides of the discussion, and from our own knowledge are these: Seventeen years ago Bro. Alexander Campbell transferred his interest in the Christian Hymn Book to a Board of Trustees. In accordance with the terms of the transfer, a new Hymn Book and subsequently a Hymnal, were published. These were both books of much excellence and met a large sale. The royalty on the copyright has been given to the missionary society and has aided largely in our general missionary work. We wish here to state a fact that we have not seen in any of the articles in this controversy. Just prior to the publication of the Hymnal, the Christian Hymn and Tune Book was prepared by Bro. A. S. Hayden as the companion of the New Christian Hymn Book. The book was published by the Roots in Chicago in good shape and was a most excellent work. When the Hymnal first appeared, we thought it lacked considerably of reaching the standard of excellence attained in Bro. Hayden's book.

The brethren acted wisely, when the Hymnal appeared by authority of the Trustees, the royalty on the copyright to be for missionary work, they uniformly bought the Hymnal, thus securing unity in our

songs, as well as in our plea. We do not suppose there were ever enough of the Hymn and Tune Book sold to pay for the plates.

Everything went on smoothly.

The Hymnal has grown into the affections of nearly all with use. Something over a year ago, the work of revising the Hymnal was begun and in due time completed with perfect harmony. Bids for publishing the new book were received, on the proposition that the publication would be awarded to the one who would pay the most royalty for the missionary fund.

Fillmore Bros. bid 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents royalty and H. S. Bosworth 21 cents per copy. The contract was accordingly awarded to the latter.

Jas. H. Fillmore, of the firm of Fillmore Bros., was one of the committee on revision and had personal charge of the copy in connection with Bro. Hobbs, up to the time it went to the hands of the printer. Bro. Fillmore is a man whose musical ability we have admired and his Christian character, so far as we know, has remained unimpeached. But when he failed to get the contract for publishing the New Hymnal, for some reason he conceived the idea of publishing one of his own and sending it forth as a rival book.

We have carefully read all he has said in the papers in justification of his course, but must confess we have seen nothing like the shadow of an excuse for causing so grave a trouble. He says the New Hymnal contains typographical errors. Nothing else could be expected in the first edition of any book, especially one with mixed words and music. He helped to read the proofs, and such errors as have since been found are being corrected in the plates. He says the office where the book was put in type had not sufficient facilities to bring it out in proper time. That is of no consequence after it is all in type and the plates are made. He says the book is too high priced. But in his bid for its publication, he wanted to make 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents per copy more than the present publisher, as his bid will show. It does not seem in good taste to say that the publisher who made a better bid than he, is making too much on the book. The price of the Hymnal in cloth is 90 cents per copy, of which, 21 cents royalty goes into the missionary fund, leaving 69 cents as the price realized by the publisher on the books at

retail. The Fillmore book is to sell at 60 cents, is a much smaller page and that it is more than 9 cents cheaper to publish, we estimate from Fillmore's bid on the Hymnal. We care nothing for either of these publishers, except that they are brethren, but we do feel that Bro. Fillmore has made a serious mistake in the course he has taken. It is serious for two reasons: One result will be a want of uniformity in the psalmody in our churches which is an important matter, unless the Fillmore book shall go like the one by Bro. Hayden before referred to. Another result will be, necessarily, a crippling of our general missionary work. On the first edition of 15,000 copies of the Revised Hymnal, over \$3,000 goes into the missionary fund. When the book has reached a sale of 100,000 copies, \$21,000 would be the result to the cause of missions, had J. H. Fillmore done what it seems to us any man of honor would have done—simply acquiesced when another party made a better bid than he for the publication of the Hymnal.

This loss to the missionary fund is serious, but it is now inevitable. The Trustees of the Hymnal must either allow it to be partly crowded out, or they must make a new contract with the publisher, reducing or wholly forfeiting the royalty, so that the price can be reduced.

We do not believe the Hymnal too high priced, considering the royalty paid, but something must now be done to prevent this catastrophe.

We hope to see the Trustees make a new contract with the publisher, by which he shall pay no royalty for a term of three years, and be required to publish the book at a price as low as any similar rival book is offered, and not above 65 cents each. This would place the Revised Hymnal in all our churches, when the present contract could be resumed. We want this, not for the purpose of punishing Fillmore, but to secure unity among the churches. The entire press of the brotherhood deplores the action of Fillmore, except the *Christian Standard*. It defended him for a while, but nearly all the causes for its so doing having been removed, it would now gladly get out of the controversy were it not for the many criticisms it must answer in self-defense. It is strange to us that Bro. Earett should have allowed his influence to go in the di-

rection it has done at all. Nor do we believe he intended to create division at first.

We think it well for brethren to hold their orders for new books for a few weeks, when we hope this matter will be settled, and uniformity be the result.

A Good Thing.

The subjoined note we clip from the *Rescue*:

A good thing has been done by the Texas Legislature to protect the public morals. A bill has been passed, taxing all persons selling the *Police Gazette*, *Police News* and similar illustrated journals, \$500 per annum in each county where such papers are sold. This is equal to a prohibition, and the suppression of that class of literature is a public blessing.—*Santa Ana Herald*. That is an example that should be followed by every State.—*Rescue*.

Good! Hurrah! Three cheers! Why, how is this? Away down there in Texas they are teaching the good civilized (!) people of the empire State that they are allowing a business which Texas will not countenance. This is the first ban under which this class of literature is placed. And if, as the *Herald* states, this is equal to prohibition, so much the better. We have said before, this is a giant evil, and in every State in the Union a similar law should be passed, and that right speedily. If the future generations are to be restrained from evil their eyes and ears and imaginations must not become so familiar with those things, many of which, in the language of the apostle, "It is a shame to speak of." When persons are no longer educated for crime, criminals will decrease.

Now, we have this suggestion to make. Let the legislature of this State pass a bill taxing those who sell such papers as the *Police Gazette* \$500 or \$1000 per annum, and it will have done much to help on the cause of temperance in the State. Not only so, it will make many reporters for our dailies careful what and how they write for the press. We believe the moral complexion of the present legislature is as good as, if not better, than any former one, and we confidently expect from them many reforms. As we have no authority to do so, we will, therefore, appoint Bro. J. H. Hawley, of Bethel, to look after this bill and report early in the session. If he does not move on this appointment, he, with other good men, will surely do so for the sake of human rights and Christian principles.