

CHRISTIAN HERALD.

EDITORS:

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Our Music Books.

We have been asked a number of times to give our opinion of the comparative merits of the new Christian Hymnal and the new Hymn and Tune book. We have taken plenty of time to examine both quite fully before giving any report.

An examination shows us that there is far more difference in the mechanical part than there is in the price, and the difference is all in favor of the Hymnal. It is much better print, better paper, and the binding is very much superior. The Hymn and Tune Book is stiff in the back and does not remain open well, while the Hymnal opens out nicely and will lie open at any desired page. The effect of this difference in binding will be that the Hymn and Tune Book will break and the cover come off like it always did from the old Hymnal, while in our judgment the Hymnal will be found to be a book that will give a great deal of service. We refer to the editions bound in cloth.

In the matter of musical selection we think the difference still greater in favor of the Hymnal. It has been our lot to conduct congregational singing many years, and speak from experience in this matter. The Hymn and Tune Book has been copied after the Hymnal both in the selections and arrangement to a much greater extent than is considered honest in the book-making world, but enough changes have been made to spoil the book badly, for almost every change is for the worse.

So far as the errors are concerned we find about the same number in each, but none in either that are any detriment to the usefulness of the books.

A few churches, through the influence of the *Christian Standard*, will adopt the Hymn and Tune Book, but the Hymnal is being almost uniformly adopted. We hope our Pacific coast brethren will pursue a uniform course in the matter, and that we shall have but one book in all our churches, for the two books will undoubtedly prove a fruitful source of discord among the brethren.

The Missionary Spirit Essential to Life.

The following from the *Evangelist* is especially appropriate for the brethren to read just before the time for the State Coöperation:

Ours is an age of generalization. Facts, which in a less philosophical age had no meaning are now grouped together, and the classifications make a science. Thus have been created the various branches of physical science: a similar process has created the science of mind, or mental philosophy; a similar study of the countless tongues spoken by the decedents of the Babel builders has resulted in Philology; and a comparative examination of the various religions of mankind has wrought out discovery of certain principles and rules which have been called the Science of Religion.

There is one lesson impressed by this comparative study of religions, whether true or false, which has a deep practical significance for us. Every religion that has ever had an existence, which is not missionary, is either dead or decaying, and doomed to a speedy disappearance from the earth. Upon the other hand the religions that are still vigorous, which show no signs of decay and give promise of continued existence, are the aggressive religions, which aim at universal conquest, and hence are all, each in its own way, intensely missionary.

A glance is sufficient to demonstrate this principle. Though there be gods many, and as many religions as gods, there are only three of the great faiths of the earth that show at this time a vitality that seems to promise long life. These are Mahometanism, once seeking to force the Coran upon all nations by the sword, but now seeking the same end by means of its Ulemas; Buddhism, which has propagated itself over all Southern Asia by means of its teachers; and Christianity, whose Founder has left the eternal charge to his followers; "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The other religions, religions of a race or a class, narrow and selfish, not seeking to convey their Gospel to the whole of mankind, are either dead, or are waxing feebler and feebler and are doomed to perish. The examination may be extended to all religions and sects, but it would only serve to emphasize the conclusion that the religion which lacks the missionary element is doomed to weaken, decay, and die. The religions that are aggressive, and seek to become universal are, other things being equal, destined

to the most prolonged and vigorous existence.

This conclusion will be confirmed by a study of the sects of Christendom. The world is familiar with the schism of the Baptists into missionary and anti-missionary. About the beginning of the century, the anti-mission Baptists were as strong in numbers as their missionary brethren, but with each succeeding census their numbers have lessened, and, at the present time, have become almost unknown. Upon the other hand, the missionary Baptists have grown to be a mighty host, numbering two millions. The churches of John Wesley and George Fox were ushered into existence in England. That of Fox was the older, but it carried its principles of peace to such an extent, that it did not aggressively seek universal dominion. On the other hand, the Methodist Church has been intensely active, and has sought every field of conquest. Today, the Friends are just learning the lesson, that their life as a body depends on missionary activities, and find themselves to number not more than 100,000 in all the earth, while the centenary of Methodism, enabled this enterprising, but somewhat boastful people, to make a count of millions. Proud of its triumphs, and ambitious as ever of universal sway, Methodism enters upon its second century with all the enthusiasm and vigor of youth.

Notwithstanding the absurdities of Mormonism, our own country is a witness to its vigor and tenacity of life. Driven in succession from Ohio, from Missouri and from Illinois, divided by schism and odious to civilization, it has still thriven and shows no signs of decay. Repulsive as are some of its features, when missionaries are sent from Utah by hundreds, and are found in England, Wales, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, the Sandwich Islands, and various States of the Union, none will deny its intensely missionary character, or fail to find in this feature, an explanation of its vigorous life.

Do not these additional facts prove our conclusion to be well founded? Do they not teach us that any non missionary body, whatever its profession, is weighed in the balance and found wanting, and that the kingdom will be taken from it and given to a worthier people?

The practical lesson is as vital as life itself. It is evident that the mission spirit is a principle of life

and that God has so ordered it, that every religion, or sect, or body, that is devoid of this spirit, whatever may be their excellencies, shall perish from the earth. The moral is so plain that he who runs may read.

The Conversational Style of Preaching.

The following is from the *Church Advocate*:

It was a rainy Sunday, and but few were present in the little country church. As the preacher came in, some of the sisters gathered about him, and said: "Don't preach to us to-day, Brother——. Just talk to us." How many longsuffering congregations, with systems wearied, and nerves rasped under the loud, shrill, high-pitched, declamatory tone of the preacher, if they could only find a voice during the sermon, would cry out to the pulpit, "Don't preach to us any longer; do just talk to us!"

Hooker, in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," tells of the complaint of the people about the preaching in his day: "Some take but one word for their text and afterward run into the mountains that we cannot follow them, not knowing how they went up, or how they will come down again." So some preachers no sooner name their text than they mount up into a high swelling tone as far removed from the ordinary way in which a man talks as the East is from the West; and, having once mounted, they never come down again until the end of the sermon. Etymologically, the sermon or homily is a talk, and not a speech; a conversation, and not an oration. The best rule, then, for the ordinary preacher is to make the conversational style the basis of his delivery. Not that he is never to rise from this, but let this be the point from which he starts out as his fervor leads him, and to which he returns after a short excursion. The following advantages will result: The preacher will not be so much in danger of wearying himself. One may talk for hours in conversation without fatigue. It is the unnatural declamatory tones that make the throat ache. Again, he will not be so much in danger of wearying the people. One may listen to a conversation for hours without feeling tired, but one cannot listen to one declaiming in a uniform pitch for half an hour without aching. In conversation one varies his tone to suit the