

its purpose. Of all previous collections it seems to have followed most largely the Andover "Sabbath Hymn Book"—no bad guide and on which one of the editors was employed. The worst faults of that excellent compilation were carelessness about authors (when their names were attempted to be given at all) and about texts. The first error has been handsomely avoided here; the other not so thoroughly. There are here, as there were there, occasional signs of tinkering; not, indeed, reckless and indiscriminate. Dr. Neale's exquisite version from St. Stephen, the Sabote, is here made to read "Art thou weary, *heavy laden*," instead of *art thou languid*. The change, indeed, as more biblical, may be acceptable to persons not familiar with the original; that, when one is used to it, needs and admits no improvement. Less defensible is the alteration in the fourth stanza: "If I find Him, if I follow, What's *my portion* here?" "What *his guerdon* here" expresses the idea vastly better; and, though *guerdon* be a not very familiar word, anybody who learns to know and love the hymn could find out its meaning, surely, in no long time. A very creditable feature of the book is the Index of Authors, with dates. Two or three dozen corrections (which have been already sent to the editors and which are to be incorporated in the second edition) would make this as nearly complete as the limitations of present knowledge permit. As it is, the Index is equaled by no book of this size, and only surpassed by the admirable ones of Dr. Hatfield, Dr. Hitchcock, and the present Methodist Hymnal. (The forthcoming "Evangelical Hymnal" of Hall and Lasar promises a "Biographical Index" that will be ahead of anything yet known in America and a new feature.) It has become a sort of fashion to decry any attention to the origin of this part of the material of worship. Says a writer in the last number of the *American Church Review*: "Who is the author of a hymn is of no sort of account." That, not to put too fine a point upon it, is nonsense. One might as well say it is of no sort of account who painted a picture or designed a famous building. If any given work be beautiful or useful, its maker deserves to be remembered in that degree. Why should hymns be an exception to the universal rule? People nowadays demand to know something about them and their authors, as is shown by every recent collection, except the Episcopal Hymnal. The only question is, whether the information they want shall be given intelligently and conscientiously; and any compilers who endeavor, like those of the *Oberlin Manual*, to give it thus are entitled to recognition and thanks.

It seems as if the day of enormous hymn-books might be approaching the beginning of its end. Fourteen or fifteen hundred lyrics are too many for any possible congregation to become familiar with, and against the advantage of so wide a range to select from has to be set over the detriment of a book almost too big to handle, and a great mass of compositions which in any given place are practically never used. Yet size has been the rule of late years. The "Plymouth Collection," as early as 1855, offered no less than 1,374 hymns; and since then Congregationalists and Presbyterians have thought it necessary to have from 1,000 to 1,540, generally coming near the latter figure. Baptists and Methodists have been content with 1,000 to 1,200, while Episcopalians and Old School Lutherans have managed to get along with less than 600. Some whisper of protest against this extravagance was first raised, as far as we know, in the Yale College Chapel Hymn book, some six years ago, and in the manual prepared at Providence for the Central Congregational Church in that city, and which contained only the inadequate number of about 300 hymns. The effective reaction may, however, prove to have been led by the *Oberlin Manual of Praise for Sabbath and Social Worship*, which has but 595 metrical hymns, with eleven prose chants and seven doxologies. The editors, Professor Hiram Mead and Professor Fenelon B. Rice, very sensibly say that "it would have been a less laborious task to make a compilation which, with its larger range of hymns, might have suited a greater variety of peculiar tastes; but it is believed that the average want will be now fully met by a winnowed selection, even though a few kernels of grain should be blown away with the chaff. For experience proves that hymns and tunes do not become useful until worshippers have become used to them; and certainly no single congregation will ever use familiarly more than 600 hymns." The book is likely to attain success in the West, where people are peculiarly American and eminently practical. It is very neatly gotten up by E. J. Goodrich, in two convenient and cheap forms. The tunes are of the familiar popular sort, Lowell Mason and W. B. Bradbury being far ahead and Dr. Hastings next. The hymns have been selected with a good deal of discrimination, so as to offend no judgment. There are no disgracefully bad ones; none, probably, that do not come up to a fair standard. The average of merit (as it ought to be in a book of the size), is somewhat above par. Dr. Watts vastly preponderates; then comes Charles Wesley, followed closely by Doddridge, Montgomery, Steele, and Newton. All this is Orthodox and what is expected in a collection of the type. Recent writers, also, both English and American, are fairly represented, and (no less than the old stand-bys) by what are generally considered their best verses. Of originals—always interesting to the hymnologist, but doubtful additions to the practical value of a hymnal—there are a few, and a few only. The book, as a whole, is not without marks of brain and individuality; yet no less it is up to the requirements of the time and of