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THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL QUESTION.

By the "Social Question" we mean those "scattering problems", such as "the family, philanthropy, industrial life, racial divisions and collisions", which grow out of the relations of men to each other. The inquiry, then, before us is, What is the duty of the church with regard to this group of questions?

Few subjects could be more important, and certainly none could be more pertinent. Prof. Stein has remarked¹ that as the fifteenth century had for its task the renaissance of art, and the sixteenth century the reformation of religion, and the seventeenth century the development of science, and the eighteenth century the promotion of democracy; so the task of the twentieth century is to be the reformation and reconstruction of the social world. "A new renaissance," he says, "must break upon the modern world, a deliverance from the gloom of pessimism, which is the symptom of an overworked and weary period; a transformation of the instincts of social evolution into rational laws; a quickening of the glad and confident service of the social world as it is and as it is to be". Such a prophecy Prof. Francis Greenwood Peabody pronounces² "too restricted to cover the infinitely varied life of the twentieth century". "Other problems", he rightly says, "are pressing besides that of social redemption." 'Art seems likely to receive fresh attention. Religion is more widely applied than it was. Democracy must be redeemed by more democracy.'

"Yet even if one may hesitate to prophesy about a cen-

¹ *Die soziale Frage im Lichte der Philosophie* 1897, p. 773.

² *The Approach to the Social Question*, p. 1.

DR. WATTS' "RENOVATION OF PSALMODY".*

I.

HIS PROPOSAL OF AN EVANGELICAL "SYSTEM OF PRAISE".

With the work of Isaac Watts (1664-1748) a new epoch began in English Church Song. Behind it was a great personality, clear of vision, fertile of resource, dominant in leadership. And no small part of his equipment was his youthfulness.¹ He planned and began his work in the ardor of youth, its singleness of conviction, its preference of radical remedies over compromise, its comparative disregard of other people's feelings.

There is no better way of approach to Watts' work than that of comparison with the contemporaneous Eastcheap movement toward bettering Nonconformist Psalmody.² Both dealt with the same conditions, and sought to undermine the indifference that had produced them. But they differed both in diagnosis and in the remedy proposed.

The Eastcheap lecturers put the emphasis on "The Duty of Singing in the Worship of God."³ The failure to comprehend this duty had brought about the current neglect and unskillful performance of Psalmody. As to what should be sung they were not agreed. Three favored, or took for granted, the singing of Psalms: three favored supple-

* Being the third of the lectures upon "The Hymnody of the English-speaking Churches", delivered on the L. P. Stone Foundation at Princeton Theological Seminary, in February, 1910.

¹"Many of Dr. Watts's hymns were not, it is understood, written by Dr. Watts at all, but by young Mr. Watts; not by that venerable man with venerable wig, who figures opposite so many a title-page, but by a young immature Christian, who afterwards became this venerable and truly admirable person." Thomas Toke Lynch, in *Memoir of him*, ed. by Wm. White, London 1874, p. 95.

² See in the April number of this *Review*, pp. 192 ff.

³ *Practical Discourses of Singing in the Worship of God*, London, 1708, preface, p. iii.

menting Psalms with New Testament songs; the other simply recounted the triumphs of Psalm singing in the past. Watts attributed the great part of current indifference to the use of Psalms, and exposed the foundations on which Church Song had been laid at the Calvinistic Reformation as inadequate to support a Christian ordinance of Praise:

"I have been long convinc'd, that one great Occasion of this Evil arises from the Matter and Words to which we confine all our Songs. Some of 'em are almost opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel: Many of them foreign to the State of the New-Testament, and widely different from the present Circumstances of Christians. Hence it comes to pass that when spiritual Affections are excited within us, and our Souls are raised a little above this Earth in the beginning of a Psalm, we are check'd on a sudden in our Ascent toward Heaven by some Expressions that are more suited to the days of *Carnal Ordinances*, and fit only to be sung in the *Worldly Sanctuary*. When we are just entering into an Evangelic Frame by some of the Glories of the Gospel presented in the brightest Figures of *Judaism*, yet the very next Line perhaps which the Clerk parcels out unto us, hath something in it so extremely *Jewish* and cloudy, that darkens our Sight of God the Saviour: Thus by keeping too close to *David* in the House of God, the Vail of *Moses* is thrown over our Hearts. While we are kindling into divine Love by the Meditations of the *loving Kindness of God and the Multitude of his tender Mercies*, within a few Verses some dreadful Curse against Men is propos'd to our Lips . . . Some Sentences of the *Psalmist* that are expressive of the Temper of our own Hearts and the Circumstances of our Lives may Compose our Spirits to Seriousness, and allure us to a sweet Retirement within our selves; but we meet with a following Line which so peculiarly belongs but to one Action or Hour of the Life of *David* or *Asaph*, that breaks off our Song in the midst; our Consciences are affrighted lest we should speak a falsehood unto God."⁴

If Watts had been alone in these views, probably he would have failed. He goes on to say that

"Many Ministers and many private Christians have long groan'd under this Inconvenience, and have wish'd rather than attempted a Reformation: At their importunate and repeated Requests I have for some Years devoted many Hours of leisure to this Service."⁵

In the way of remedying the low state of Psalmody it is not clear that the Eastcheap lecturers had anything in mind beyond quickening the sense of duty to sing, and attention to musical instruction such as the Society of Gentlemen

⁴ Preface to *Hymns*, 1707, pp. iv-vi.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. vi.

furnished at the King's Weigh House. Watts, on the other hand, believing that the cause of trouble lay in the matter and words commonly sung, proposed a renovation of Psalmody itself. He set up a new standard of Church Song, having these criteria:

First, it should be *evangelical*: not in the sense that New Testament songs be allowed to "supplement" Old Testament Psalms, but so that the whole body of Church Song be brought within the light of the gospel.

Second, it should be *freely composed*, as against the Reformation standard of strict adherence to the letter of Scripture or the later paraphrasing of Scripture.

Third, it should *express the thoughts and feelings of the singers*, and not merely recall the circumstances or record the sentiments of David or Asaph or another.

From this point of view Watts planned a full-rounded system of evangelical Hymnody. This system, in form rather than contents, was in two separate parts; one being "imitations" of canonical Psalms, the other being hymns more or less Scriptural in content.

I. AS TO PSALMS. Watts had no intention of laying them aside.⁶ But he drew a sharp distinction between reading the Psalms and singing them, and between the right methods of translating them for the particular use designed. He held that the Psalms are to be read as God's word to us, and for that end must be translated as literally as possible.⁷ Such translation must be in English prose, since the exigencies of rhythm and rhyme make a really faithful rendering of the Hebrew into English verse an impossible thing.⁸ Incidentally therefore he held that those who believed we may sing nothing but the pure word of God must resort to a prose translation, and must learn the Hebrew music or at least employ the method of chanting practiced in English cathedrals.⁹

⁶ *Ibid*, p. vi.

⁷ "A short Essay toward the Improvement of Psalmody", 1707, p. 243.

⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 241-242.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 243.

For himself he believed that Congregational Song should represent not God's word to us, but our word to God, and that the thoughts and language of the Psalms could be employed only so far as we could properly make them our own.¹⁰ Ancient Jewish songs were to be accommodated to modern gospel worship.¹¹ This involved the omission of several Psalms and numerous other passages 'improper for any person but the Royal Author';¹² also the adaptation of the remaining material so as to make David always speak as Watts had reason to believe he would have spoken if he had been a fully instructed Christian living in the day and under the circumstances of Watts himself.¹³ Such adaptation was really a two-fold process,—making David speak like a Christian and making him a contemporary.

For the first process, that of "Christianizing" the Psalms, Watts claimed precedents, especially Dr. Patrick's.¹⁴ But Watts contemplated from the first, and ultimately himself carried out, a reconstruction along this line far more systematic and thoroughgoing than any one had hitherto ventured upon. On this subject his feelings were deeply stirred, and he wrote and acted with a studied aggressiveness that aimed to conquer, but did nothing to conciliate, those whom he styled "the Patrons of another Opinion."

The second process, however, that of making David a contemporary, was surely Watts' own conception, and it involved some curious transformations of the sacred text. "Judah and Israel may be called England and Scotland, and the land of Canaan may be translated into Great Britain."¹⁵ Historical allusions must be modified accordingly. David must be made to play the part of an orthodox and patriotic English Christian of the early XVIIIth century, and all royal references must be accommodated to the person of the

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 244.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 254, and preface to *Psalms, &c.*, 1719, p. xvi.

¹² Preface to *Psalms, &c.*, p. viii.

¹³ "Essay", pp. 252-254.

¹⁴ Preface to *Psalms, &c.*, p. vi.

¹⁵ "Essay", p. 246.

reigning sovereign. Only thus, in Watts' words, can the Psalms "be converted into Christian Songs in our Nation".¹⁶ If this seem to us now a doubtful device, and seemed then to a watchful remnant of Psalm Singers nothing short of sacrilege, it did not offend the general taste of the time, and proved no impediment to the widespread approval of Watts' scheme for the improvement of Psalmody.

II. AS TO HYMNS. Watts' plan included also the composing of "Spiritual Songs of a more evangelic frame for the Use of Divine Worship under the Gospel". Their use in worship he supports in his "Essay" by five arguments:¹⁷—

First. A Psalm properly translated for Christian use is no longer inspired as to form and language: only its materials are borrowed from God's word. It is just as lawful to use other Scriptural thoughts, and compose them into a spiritual song.

Second. The very ends and design of Psalmody demand songs that shall respond to the fullness of God's revelation of Himself. God's revelation in Christ, and our own devotions responding to it, require Gospel songs.

Third. The Scriptures themselves, especially Eph: v, 19-20, and Col: iii, 16-17, command us to sing and give thanks in the name of Christ. Why shall we pray and preach in that name, and sing under terms of the Law?

Fourth. The Psalter does not provide for all occasions of Christian praise, or express all Christian experiences.

Fifth. The primitive "Gifts of the Spirit" covered alike preaching, prayer and song. It is admitted by all that, under the present administration of Grace, ministers are by study and diligence to acquire and cultivate gifts of preaching and prayer. Why shall they not also seek to acquire and cultivate the capacity of composing spiritual songs, and exercise it along with the other parts of worship, preaching and prayer?

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 246.

¹⁷ "Essay", pp. 256-266.

II

HIS FULFILLMENT: "WATTS'S PSALMS AND HYMNS."

With this understanding of Watts' "Scheme for the Renovation of Psalmody", we may go forward to consider his own contributions to it.

Dr. Gibbons made himself responsible "for the familiar account of the beginnings of Watts' hymn writing, upon information received from the Rev. John Morgan, who claimed to have obtained it from Watts' colleague, Samuel Price.¹⁸ It is to the effect that young Watts, having expressed to his father his disapproval of the hymns sung at the Southampton meeting-house, was invited to improve upon them. The hymns in question were those of Barton, of whom Watts' brother Enoch wrote: "Honest Barton chimes us asleep".¹⁹ Watts furnished a specimen hymn, which was so successful that it was followed by others, until a considerable number were in use by the congregation.

This account rests on hearsay evidence, but is probably substantially true. As early as March 1700, Watts' brother wrote, reminding him of importunities already made to put the hymns into print for the common good.²⁰

Watts printed his first volume of verse in December 1705,²¹ as *Horae Lyricae: Poems, chiefly of the Lyric kind. In two books. I. Songs &c. sacred to Devotion. II. Odes, Elegys, &c. to Vertue Loyalty and Friendship. By I. Watts. London, printed by S. and D. Bridge, for John Lawrence, at the Sign of the Angel in the Poultry. MDCCVI.*

¹⁸ *Memoirs of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.* By Thos. Gibbons, London, 1780, p. 254.

¹⁹ *Life, Times and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.* By Thos. Milner, London, 1834, p. 177.

²⁰ Milner, *op. cit.*, pp. 176 f.

²¹ It bears date 1706. For the actual time of publishing, see the writer's note in *The Journal of The Presbyterian Historical Society* for Sept., 1902, p. 358.

The preface is a protest against the moral decadence of current poetry, and a justification of religious themes as suitable for poetic treatment. Book I contains twenty-five hymns and four Psalm paraphrases in the metres of the *Old Version*, and eleven religious songs or pieces of varying metrical form. In Book II Watts spreads his wings "in the free and unconfin'd Measures of Pindar" (which he regarded as best maintaining the dignity of religious themes, and giving a loose to the devout soul),²² in blank verse and in other metres.

The book as a whole is addressed to lovers of poetry, and Watts' explanation of the inclusion of the hymns reveals much of his mind and purpose. They "were never written with a design to appear before the Judges of Wit, but only to assist the Meditations and Worship of Vulgar Christians." They are a small part of two hundred hymns of the same kind ready for public use if these are approved by the world. They are divided from their fellows and here printed because "in most of these there are some Expressions which are not suited to the plainest capacities, and differ too much from the usual Methods of Speech in which Holy Things are propos'd to the general Part of Mankind."²³ This partition of his materials was final. The hymns were augmented in the second edition of the *Horae* (1709), but they always constituted a distinct group apart from his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* for congregational use, within whose covers they never appeared.²⁴

It appears then that Watts' admission of some hymns to a place among his poems was not with a view of showing that hymns could be made poetic, but was the result of a winnowing process in which the body of his hymns was freed from the suspicion of being literary. He accounted himself a religious poet, with a right to address "the

²² Preface, p. [vii].

²³ Pp. [viii, ix].

²⁴ Some of the hymns from the *Horae* came into use after Watts' death. The two most familiar are:— "Father, how wide thy Glory shines"! and "Eternal Power! whose high Abode".

Judges of Wit." He felt also a real sympathy with plain people and a call to provide them with hymns on the level of the unpoetic mind. This note of conscientious condescension in his hymn writing he never failed to sound on every available occasion. He chose the humbler task, and thus inadvertently secured a permanent fame to which his poetical effusions give him a doubtful title.²⁵ What is more to the point, he thus freed his hymns from the artificial standards and to a large extent from the perverted taste of his time. Having demonstrated in the *Horae* that he could compose pindarics, he expected "to be for ever free from the Temptation of making or mending Poems again,"²⁶ and was ready to give his hymns to the churches.

The body of the Hymns appeared in July, 1707,²⁷ in a 16mo. volume, entitled *Hymns and Spiritual Songs. In three Books. I. Collected from the Scriptures. II. Compos'd on Divine subjects. III. Prepared for the Lord's Supper. With an Essay towards the improvement of Christian Psalmody, by the use of evangelical Hymns in worship, as well as the Psalms of David. By I. Watts. London, printed by J. Humfreys, for John Lawrence, at the Angel in the Poultry, 1707.*²⁸ The hymns numbered 210, fol-

²⁵ On the strength of his *Horae Lyricae*, Watts found a niche in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*. A later historian discerns that Watts' "real artistic successes" are attained in his best hymns: (Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. v., 1905, p. 336). For a favorable view of his metrical experiments, see George Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody*, vol. ii, 1908, pp. 508, 509.

²⁶ Preface to 2nd ed. of *Horae Lyricae* (1709), which is a very different book from the first edition.

²⁷ See "Autobiographical Table" reproduced in E. P. Hood, *Isaac Watts; his life and writings, his homes and friends*; London, Rel. Tr. Soc., n. d., p. 345.

²⁸ The first edition of the *Hymns* was almost thumbed out of existence. At the publication of Dr. Julian's scholarly *Dictionary of Hymnology* in 1892, every copy was supposed to have perished (see 2nd ed., p. 1724). The announcement of the sale of a copy at Sotheby's, London, in Dec. 1901, attracted wide attention, and it brought £140. There are now at least two copies in this country, one in the New York Public Library and one in the writer's collection. An article in *The Guardian* for January 29, 1902, by Rev. James Mearns,

lowed by a group of doxologies, at least three of which must be accounted as hymns. Their arrangement humored current prejudices. Those willing to sing paraphrases only might find 78 in the first book: those willing to sing hymns at the Communion only might find 22 in the third book: those welcoming "free composures" had 110 more in the second book. The hymns were confined to three metres, Long, Common and Short. An inspection of the original text of the hymns shows that the differences between it and the familiar text of later issues are fewer and less important than might have been expected.²⁹

was the first account of this epoch-making book ever published. For collation and bibliographical data of this and subsequent editions, with facsimiles of title pages of eds. 1 and 2, see the writer's paper on "The Early Editions of Doctor Watts's Hymns" in *The Journal of The Presbyterian Historical Society* for June, 1902.

²⁹ The following are among the more interesting of these:

"Come, we that love the Lord," has for its closing lines:

"We're marching thro' *Immanuel's* Ground
To a more joyful Sky."

"Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove," has in the second verse:

"Look, how we grovel here below,
And hug these trifling Toys."

"When I can read my Title clear," closes thus:

"Nor dares a Wave of Trouble roll
Across my peaceful Breast."

"When I survey the wondrous Cross," has for its second line:

"Where the young Prince of Glory dy'd."

"Why do we mourn departing Friends?" has in the fifth verse:

"Thence he arose and clim'd the Sky."

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?" has at the close of the second verse:

"While the firm mark of Wrath Divine
His Soul in Anguish stood?"

"Now to the Lord a noble Song!" has in the fifth verse, "ye Skies" (for "ye heavens"), and at the close of the hymn:

"And play his Name on Harps of Gold!"

In 1707 Watts was capable of offering this to the churches for congregational use (Bk. I, No. 24, vv. 5,6):—

"5. There the dark Earth and gloomy Shades
Shall clasp their naked Body round,
And welcome their delicious Limbs
With the cold Kisses of the Ground.

In a lengthy preface Watts restated and overstated his sense of condescension in his task as an intent to write down to "the Level of Vulgar Capacities" and to furnish in Book I hymns for the meanest of Christians.³⁰ This language he modified in the second edition. But the fullest and most characteristic expression of his views on Psalmody is contained in "A Short Essay toward the Improvement of Psalmody," from which quotations have been already made. It covers pages 233-276 in the first edition, and did not appear again in print until the collected *Works* after Watts' death.³¹ It was his purpose to prepare a fuller treatise on Psalmody, which he never executed.³²

The Hymns being printed, Watts invited criticisms from his friends, and continued his writing. In April 1709 "the Second Edition. Corrected and much Enlarged," appeared. Some fifty lines of the original hymns were altered, and 145 additional hymns appeared here, and also in a separate supplement to the first edition, printed at the same time.

With this second edition the department of Hymns in Watts' System of Praise was completed. None of the hymns written later was incorporated in subsequent editions; and although Watts toward the end of his life expressed a desire to make some changes of text to accommodate its expressions to modified theological views, no such changes were ever made.³³ This situation is partly explained by the fact that Watts parted with the copyright of the *Hymns*, apparently in 1709. They thus passed out of his control, although a note in the seventh edition of

"6. Pale Death shall riot on their Souls,
Their Flesh shall noisom Vermine eat,
The Just shall in the Morning rise
And find their Tyrants at their Feet."

³⁰Preface, pp. viii, x.

³¹There were no less than seven collective Editions of Dr. Watts' Works: the earliest being that of 1753, in 6 vols., 4to., ed. by Drs. Jennings and Doddridge.

³²"Advertisement" to the 2nd. ed. of *Hymns*.

³³For a discussion of the evidence concerning Watts' desire to accommodate the text to his later views, see the writer's paper already cited, pp. 276-279.

1720 shows that he still exercised a certain supervision of their printing.

Turning now to the Psalms:—

Among the hymns of the first part of the *Horae* was a little group of four Psalm versions, with the inscription "An Essay on a few of David's Psalms Translated into Plain Verse, in Language more agreeable to the clearer Revelations of the Gospel;" showing that the System of Praise as just described lay in Watts' mind in its integrity from a very early date. And these versions did in fact prove to be the actual nucleus of his own *Psalms Imitated*, as published 13 years later. But it is altogether unlikely that Watts originally proposed to depend altogether upon his own resources for filling out his proposed System of Praise. The work he entered upon as his own was the department of Hymns.

We can readily trace the evolution of his purpose regarding the Psalms. In the first edition of his *Hymns*, 1707, he included in all among the Scripture paraphrases fourteen Psalm Versions. Referring to them in his preface, he says:

"After this manner should I rejoice to see a good part of the Book of Psalms fitted for the use of our Churches, and *David* converted into a Christian. In the first, second and third Psalms especially, I have attempted a Specimen of what I desire and hope some more capable Genius will undertake."⁴

In the preface to the 2nd edition of the *Hymns*, two years later (1709), Watts states: "Because I cannot persuade others to attempt this glorious Work, I have suffered myself to be persuaded to begin it, and have, thro' Divine Goodness, already proceeded half way thro'." In the preface to the third edition (1712), he speaks of being daily urged to proceed in the work, of having been hindered by professional duties, and of his expectation "e're long to fulfill my Designs". The long illness beginning in that year debarred Watts from his pulpit, but afforded the opportunity of finishing his work upon the Psalms.

⁴ Pp. x, xi.

The results appeared in 1719 in a 16mo. volume with the title *The Psalms of David imitated in the language of the New Testament, and apply'd to the Christian state and worship. By I. Watts.* (London: Printed for J. Clark, R. Ford and R. Crittenden).

The volume presents to the eye a marked contrast with the early editions of the *Hymns*, which were rather cheap and poor. Its fine paper and open page, its engraved head-pieces and vignettes, suggest an assured welcome. Numerous copies survive with each page set in a frame of hand-ruling, and bound in richly tooled red morocco, in the style of luxurious Prayer Books of the period.

The book contains versions of 138 Psalms, the remaining 12 Psalms being excluded from Watts' System as unsuitable for Christian use. Frequently passages from other Psalms are omitted for the same reason, and Psalms are divided into parts, and passages are transposed for considerations of convenience; a note explaining that the custom of singing with excessively prolonged notes makes impracticable the singing of more than six or eight verses at one time.³⁵ Of many Psalms versions in two or three metres are provided, differing at times in the degree of closeness to the original, at times in the Christian interpretation adopted.³⁶

A characteristic feature is the notes appended to the Psalms, sometimes critical or hermeneutical; often frankly written in the first person, to tell the reader his reasons for what he did, or of the lines he borrowed from some earlier translator. These notes, and the preface of twenty-nine pages, entitled "An Enquiry into the right Way of fitting the Book of Psalms for Christian Worship," were omitted from the second edition, appearing the same year as the first, but in smaller and cheaper form. At the close of this preface Watts characteristically claimed the "Pleasure of being the First who have brought down the Royal

³⁵ Preface, p. xxiv.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xxvii.

Author into the common Affairs of the Christian Life, and led the Psalmist of *Israel* into the Church of *Christ*, without any thing of a *Jew* about him."

With the publication of *The Psalms imitated*, in the forty-sixth year of his life, the System of Praise which Watts had begun as a youth, and carried forward through years of ill-health, was complete. He was by no means unaware of the importance of his performance, and anticipated something at least of the success it attained. In a note appended to the 1720 edition of the *Hymns*, he says:

"It is presumed that" [*The Psalms imitated*] "in conjunction with this, may appear to be such a sufficient Provision for Psalmody, as to answer most Occasions of the Christian Life: And, if an Author's own Opinion may be taken, he esteems it the greatest Work that ever he has publish'd, or ever hopes to do, for the use of the Churches."

This judgment has been sometimes quoted as referring only to his work upon the Psalms, but it plainly includes his whole System of Praise.

Some notice must also be taken of Dr. Watts' work in hymn writing outside the limits of this System of Praise. Of this the most important was the *Divine Songs attempted in easy language, for the use of children, with some additional composures*, which had already appeared in 1715. This book had its origin in the request of a friend for hymns to be used in connection with his catechetical instructions. Both for its contents and its influence it is worthy to stand beside the *Psalms and Hymns*; for it must be regarded as the fountain of the afterwards extensive Children's Hymnody in the English language. In the course of time objection came to be made to the appropriateness of its theological teachings. But Watts' original preface makes it abundantly clear that he aimed to avoid anything like theological partisanship, and sought to put into simple verse the beliefs and the tone of thought that were generally held at the time. He claimed that "children of high and low degree, of the Church of England or dissenters, whether baptized in infancy or not, may all join together in these songs."³⁷

³⁷ Preface, in the early editions.

In three volumes of *Sermons*, appearing in 1721, 1723, and 1727, Watts printed hymns suitable to the subjects of discourse. In his *Reliquiae Juveniles: Miscellaneous thoughts in prose and verse* (London 1734), Watts returned to "the Service of the Muse" he had abjured twenty-five years earlier, and the hymnic element is very small. It is even smaller in the volume, *Remnants of Time*, printed from his papers after his death. From these sources numerous hymns ultimately found their way into hymn books and into common use, and in 1806 John Dobell printed *Dr. Watts's Fourth Book of Spiritual Hymns*, which he had gathered together in his zeal that nothing be overlooked. Nevertheless the *Hymns* of 1707-09 and *The Psalms imitated* of 1719, which by the middle of the XVIIIth century began to appear bound together in a single handy volume, contained Watts's System of Praise in its entirety.³⁸

III

HIS SUCCESS: THE ERA OF WATTS.

I. IN ENGLAND.

1. THE INDEPENDENTS.

From their first appearance Watts' *Hymns* proved a spiritual delight to many, and were introduced into such congregations as were prepared to receive them. On the other hand many Independent congregations continued their Psalm singing without regard to the new hymns, so strong was conservative habit and prejudice against hymns. In view of the extraordinary success ultimately attained, it is easy to form an exaggerated idea of the facility of their actual introduction into public worship.

The English Independent congregations at the time (1707) probably numbered from 350 to 400, and were much

³⁸ The hymns appearing in the so-called *Posthumous Works* (1779) had either appeared before or else were by another hand. Cf. Gibbons, *Memoirs of Watts*, appendix ii.

reduced both in size and zeal.³⁹ The fact that each congregation was free to sing what it chose and under no obligation to make record of the choice, and the further fact that one copy in a precentor's hands might serve a whole congregation, make it difficult to trace or estimate the process of introducing Watts' *Hymns*. If we are to follow Walter Wilson, the historian of London Dissenting Churches, the *Hymns* must have found their earliest welcome in the provinces. Writing in 1810, under the full sway of the Watts tradition, he says:

"The poetry of Watts was received but slowly into most of our congregations. It is only of late years that it has acquired so general a patronage, and even in the present day there are many who prefer the rhyming of Brady and Tate, or the bald version of the Scotch. The reason is, mankind are afraid of innovation, and it is only by degrees that their prejudices are loosened."⁴⁰

The actual demand for the *Hymns* can be judged from the editions called for. The first edition of 1707 was exhausted apparently before the end of 1708,⁴¹ but the second did not appear until April 1709, being delayed in the printing. The third edition appeared in 1712, the fourth in 1714. At the appearance of *The Psalms of David imitated* in 1719, the *Hymns* were in their sixth edition; the seventh following in 1720.

The Psalm Imitations, though rousing intense hostility in a minority, found a double welcome, from those wishing to use Psalms and hymns jointly, and from those ready for modified Psalm versions though not as yet for hymns. We have Watts' own testimony that some thousands of copies were sold within a year of publication.⁴² Within ten years seven editions were called for. The practical effect of introducing the Imitations was to extend the use of the *Hymns* also. Congregations used to Dr. Patrick's versions

³⁹ Cf. R. W. Dale, *History of English Congregationalism*, London, 1907, bk. v, chap. v.

⁴⁰ *The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches . . . in London, &c.*, vol. iii, 1810, p. 527.

⁴¹ Milner, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

⁴² Note to the 7th ed. of *Hymns*.

seemed to be taking but a short step in passing to Watts' Imitations. But, the step once taken, they found themselves within the area of a free Christian Hymnody, in which the distinction between Psalm and Hymn seemed hardly more than a convenience in classification and a deference to accustomed usage.

The strengthening hold of the *Hymns* appears from the preface of Simon Browne's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, published in 1720 at London, where he had come as pastor of "The Old Jewry." Its lengthy justification of hymn singing was doubtless directed to the London congregations to which Wilson referred. But Browne found it wise, even at that early day, to disclaim any purpose of superseding Watts' *Hymns*: "The World, I hope, will not do me the injury to think that I aim at being his rival. These hymns are design'd as a supplement to his, not intended to supplant them. 'Twill satisfy my ambition, if they may assist the devotion of private Christians, or public assemblies, upon such subjects as he hath not touched."⁴³

Twenty-four years later Doddridge was able to say to Watts:

"Above all I congratulate you that by your *sacred poetry*, especially by your *Psalms*, and your *Hymns*, you are leading the worship and I trust also animating the devotion of myriads in our public assemblies every Sabbath, and in their families and closets every day. This, Sir, at least so far as it relates to the service of the sanctuary, is an unparalleled favour by which God hath been pleased to distinguish you, I may boldly say it, beyond any of his servants now upon earth."⁴⁴

After forty years more the predilection of Independent congregations for Watts' hymns had become so jealous that Dr. Gibbons felt called upon to introduce a volume of his own compositions in these terms:

"But, though [Watts] has done much and perhaps in a happier Manner than what any after him may be able to perform, yet he has by no Means precluded the Endeavours of others in the same Service. Are there not Subjects untouched by him in the almost infinite Extent of spiritual Matter that may be very suitably wrought up into sacred Songs? And is it not a Pleasure to the human Mind not to be perpet-

⁴³ Preface, p. [xv].

⁴⁴ Doddridge to Watts, Dec. 13, 1744, in Gibbons, *Memoir*, p. 306.

ually restrained to the same Odes, but to have something new with which to employ itself, though it should not be equal in Composition with what it has been entertained already; and why should not new Hymns as well as new Sermons be sent into the World, or if the last have proved serviceable, why may not the former?"⁴⁵

The situation revealed by this apology and plea had not come about by authority or contrivance, but by the deepening love of the people for the hymns of Watts. He had sought and found the plane of their thought and emotion, and in the general response of their hearts had found his just reward. An illustration of this is furnished by Dr. Doddridge, in a letter to Dr. Watts, dated April 5, 1731:⁴⁶

"On Tuesday last, I was preaching to a large assembly of plain country people at a village a few miles off, when, after a sermon from Hebrews, vi. 12, we sang one of your hymns, which, if I remember right, was the 140th of the 2nd book, and in that part of the worship I had the satisfaction to observe tears in the eyes of several of the people; and after the service was over, some of them told me that they were not able to sing, so deeply were their minds affected! and the clerk, in particular, said he could hardly utter the words as he gave them out. They were most of them poor people, who work for their living, yet, on the mention of your name, I found that they had read several of your books with great delight; and that your psalms and hymns were almost their daily entertainment: and when one of the company said, 'What if Dr. Watts should come down to Northampton!' another replied, with remarkable warmth, 'The very sight of him would be as good as an ordinance to me'"

The feeling for Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* thus grew into an intense personal loyalty. It is well known that as late as the XIXth century there were many older Congregationalists who refused to sing any other hymns, and who kept their seats when such were announced.⁴⁷

The supremacy which Watts gained and for a long time kept in the worship of the Independent churches (as also far beyond them) was indeed a triumph of personal influence and of principles that at first seemed radical enough. If we seek a date at which his domination of Independent

⁴⁵ Preface to the *Hymns adapted to Divine worship* of 1784, pp. xii, xiii.

⁴⁶ Philip Doddridge's *Correspondence and Diary*, London, 1829-31, vol. iii, pp. 74, 75.

⁴⁷ Cf. W. G. Horder, *The Hymn Lover*, London, n. d. p. 100.

worship culminated,—that is to say when the use of his *Psalms and Hymns* came nearest to unanimity, and there was least disposition to look beyond its covers—it would lie probably somewhere between the middle and end of the XVIIIth century. But Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* kept their place in the hearts of his people, and continued to be used, either alone or supplemented, until far into the XIXth. If we include all the religious bodies that used them, their actual circulation and use must have continually increased, till past the middle of the XIXth century. It is calculated that in its first twenty-five years a new edition appeared every year, and claimed that as late as 1864 60,000 copies were sold within the year.⁴⁸

Striking as are these facts, some of the claims made for Watts go beyond them. It is difficult to follow even so competent a hymnologist as Mr. Garrett Horder, when he says that "For more than a century Watts remained undisputed master of the hymnody of the Independents. No other hymns than his were heard in any of the assemblies"; and again, that "for more than a century Watts was the only hymnist of the Independent sanctuaries of our land."⁴⁹

Where is the place of that century in the calendar? And is such absolute uniformity predicable of any single year of either the XVIIIth or XIXth centuries? It is hardly conceivable even under the workings of a Uniformity Act, and least so among Independents. We have to take account of the little band of opponents and detractors, led by Thomas Bradbury within their ranks, and by Romaine⁵⁰ without, who accused Watts of lampooning⁵¹ and "burlesquing"⁵² the Psalter, and refused to sing "Watts' Whims":⁵³ also of the congregations in which Psalm sing-

⁴⁸ Duncan Campbell, *Hymns and Hymn Makers*, London, 1898, p. 38.

⁴⁹ *The Hymn Lover*, p. 100.

⁵⁰ "Why should Dr. Watts . . . take the precedence of the Holy Ghost?" Romaine, *Essay on Psalmody*, 1775, p. 106.

⁵¹ Bradbury to Watts, March 7, 1725-6, in Watts' *Posthumous Works*, vol. ii, p. 202.

⁵² Watts to Bradbury, March 15, 1725-6, *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 212.

⁵³ Wilson's *Dissenting Churches*, vol. iii, p. 527.

ing long continued,⁵⁴ partly for conscience' sake, more often doggedly.

Moreover the very success of Watts' *Hymns* raised up a succession of imitators, and their use called forth a succession of "Supplements". These Supplements did not respond to any demand of the people for more hymns, but arose from the ambition of ministers to get their own hymns into use, or their wish for hymns illustrative of a greater number of sermon topics. It is true that their supplementary form bore the strongest testimony to Watts' ascendancy, but they also prevented that ascendancy from becoming complete. Some gained a considerable circulation. Even the relatively unsuccessful ones were doubtless used in the compiler's own congregation and more or less in the congregations of his friends.

These Supplements began in 1720 with Simon Browne's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, containing 266 hymns, all by himself. This reached a second edition in 1741, a third in 1760, and a number of the hymns continued in later use.⁵⁵ In 1769 Dr. Thomas Gibbons (Watts' biographer) published a collection, partly original, of *Hymns adapted to Divine worship*, and a second (entirely original) in 1784, under the same title. Their narrow welcome and use appears from the statement in the 1784 preface that some copies of the earlier book remained unsold. Nor was the later book ever reprinted. George Burder, author of the once famous *Village Sermons*, published in 1784 *A Collection of Hymns from various authors, designed as a Supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns*. He aimed to gather up the best hymns published since Watts' death by such writers as Doddridge, Newton and Cowper, the Wesleys, and Toplady. His book met a warm welcome, found

⁵⁴ Cf. Wilson, as already quoted.

⁵⁵ A recast of his "Come, holy spirit, heav'nly dove", is still familiar. Browne aimed at "the improvement of Psalmody." He bound up with his *Hymns* "A Sett of Tunes in 3 Parts (Mostly New)," wrote a 'book' of hymns in "uncommon metres", and designated an appropriate tune for each hymn.

continuous use, and by 1840 had reached its thirty-seventh edition. So far was Burder from wishing to dislodge Watts from his supremacy that he published in 1812 an edition of the *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs by the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D.*, with some improvement in their arrangement. William Jay of Bath, a warm admirer of Watts, but desiring a greater variety of metres and corresponding tunes, published in 1797 *A Selection of Hymns of peculiar metre, for the use of the Congregation meeting in Argyle Chapel*. It reached a second edition in the same year, and became the basis of his *Hymns as an Appendix to Dr. Watts* (Bath, 1833). The supplementing of Watts assumed great proportions in *A Collection of above six hundred Hymns: designed as a new Supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns. By the Rev. Edward Williams, D.D., and the Rev. James Boden* (Doncaster, 1801). It reached a second edition in 1803, a third in 1806, and a fifth in 1812. Dr. Williams also printed an improved edition of *The Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts*, claiming that "as the current editions are almost innumerable, so by far the greater number of them are shamefully incorrect." John Dobell sought even greater bulk in his *A new Selection of seven hundred evangelical Hymns intended as a Supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns* (London 1806). After additions the title read *more than eight hundred*, and Dobell arranged for binding in with it his *Dr. Watts's Fourth Book of Spiritual Hymns*. In the *Hymns, partly collected, and partly original, designed as a supplement to Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns: by William Bengo Collyer, D.D.* (London, 1812), no less than 979 hymns were provided, 57 of them original. Thomas Russell's *A Collection of Hymns designed as an Appendix &c.* (London, 1813), was somewhat smaller and was more popular, attaining its twenty-second edition in 1843. Dr. Andrew Reed's *Supplement* of 1817 became the nucleus of his more important *Hymn Book* of 1842. Something in the way of concerted action as to Hymnody began to seem exped-

ient, and in 1822 a committee of ministers in Leeds published *A Selection of Hymns for the use of the Protestant Dissenting Congregations of the Independent Order in Leeds*.

This succession of 'Supplements' to Dr. Watts' tells its own story of a progress so natural and inevitable as to require little emphasis were it not for the curious and familiar assumption of the exclusive use of Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*, which even Dr. Conder expressed in 1851 by speaking of "our having been for a long time confined to this one Book."⁵⁶

When the Congregational Union undertook the preparation of an official hymn book for general use, Dr. Conder and others who discerned the signs of the times favored a selection of Watts' best and of hymns by others in a single volume.⁵⁷ But the majority were unwilling to give up "Watts Entire"; and in 1836 *The Congregational Hymn Book* appeared as still *A Supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns*, containing a good selection of 620 hymns edited by Dr. Conder. The result was that in the years following many congregations gave up the use both of Watts and *The Congregational Hymn Book* in favor of private collections more compact and convenient.

The striking ascendancy of Dr. Watts over Independent worship had at last reached its inevitable end. The reaction, equally inevitable to a popularity so great as to be indiscriminating, soon followed. It was discovered that a considerable percentage of Watts' work was prosaic and mechanical, and sometimes in questionable taste. People began to wonder why the churches had so long allowed a single mind to dominate their song. A winnowing of the familiar *Psalms and Hymns* began, and has steadily proceeded to our own time, with the result that in some recent Congregational hymnals Dr. Watts' contributions are outnumbered by the Methodist Wesley and the high-church

⁵⁶ Josiah Conder, *The Poet of the Sanctuary*, London, 1851, p. 68.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 69.

Neale. It is, however, to be said that the adoption of a hymn book by a single author had not seemed strange to congregations accustomed to one version of the Psalms. And we may agree with Conder⁵⁸ that the addition of the Independents to Watts fixed the character of their devotions, and under Providence preserved an evangelical tone of sentiment in their church worship.

2. THE PRESBYTERIANS: AND EARLY UNITARIAN HYMNODY.

The measure of welcome given by Presbyterians to the *Psalms and Hymns* of Watts is hardly to be distinguished from that of the Independents with whom they fraternized. Some congregations, desiring an evangelical Hymnody, were ready to introduce the *Hymns*; some awaited the appearance of the *Psalms*; others were prejudiced in favor of the stricter type of Psalmody.

It was the refusal in 1717 of James Peirce, pastor of a Psalm singing congregation at Exeter, to continue the accustomed singing of the doxology after the Psalm that marked the beginning of the end of English Presbyterianism.⁵⁹ He might, and probably did, allege his objection to sing anything but the words of Psalms.⁶⁰ But the doxology was specifically Trinitarian, and the time one of dread lest the Arianism that had affected the Church of England should spread to Dissent. Peirce denied holding Arian views, but refused as tyrannous the demand of a Committee exercising Presbyterian charge of the five Exeter meetings that he sign a declaration of belief in the Trinity. In this refusal he had wide sympathy. As a result of the Salter's Hall controversy of 1719,⁶¹ to which it gave rise, the

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁵⁹ McCrie, *Annals of English Presbytery*, London, 1872, p. 301.

⁶⁰ Cf. Drysdale, *History of Presbyterianism in England*, London, 1889, p. 500.

⁶¹ For an account of it see H. S. Skeats, *A History of the Free Churches of England*, 2nd ed., London, 1869, pp. 302 ff. Watts, like Calamy, refused to attend the meeting at Salter's Hall.

majority of Presbyterian ministers became committed to the attitude of non-subscription to any doctrinal formulas. In the fifty years following, most of the churches that did not die out or seek a refuge in Independency yielded one by one to the influences of the time, and drifted through various stages of Arian belief into the developed Unitarianism of the latter part of the XVIIIth century.

During the earlier of these years the propriety of using Watts's *Psalms and Hymns* remained unquestioned. But it was inevitable that certain passages should be confronted by the new opinions, especially the "Song of Praise to the ever-blessed Trinity", as Watts entitled the doxologies at the end of his volume of *Hymns*.

Martin Tomkins, dismissed from a dissenting pulpit as an Arian, and attending the Mare Street Presbyterian Meeting at Hackney, frequently protested against the use of the doxologies there. The pastor, the Rev. John Barker, one of the minority for subscription, declined to discontinue the custom. Tomkins printed in 1738 *A calm Enquiry whether we have any warrant, from Scripture, for addressing ourselves, in a way of prayer or praise, directly to the Holy Spirit, etc.*; prefaced by a letter to Mr. Barker, repeating his protests, and reinforced by quotations from Watts' later works. In a letter to Dr. Watts, dated April 21, 1738, Mr. Tomkins put to him the direct question,—

"Whether you now approve of what you have said concerning the *Gloria Patri*, in your Book of Hymns; and whether, upon your present notion of the Spirit, you can esteem some of those Doxologies you have given us there, I will not say, 'as some of the noblest parts of Christian worship,' but as proper Christian worship? And if not, whether you may not think it becoming you, as a lover of truth, and as a Christian minister, to declare as much to the world; and not suffer such forms of worship to be recommended by your name and authority, to the use of the Christian Church in the present time and in future generations?"

On the margin of this letter (then in Mr. Palmer's possession) Dr. Watts had endorsed some twenty remarks, and opposite the last paragraph wrote:

"I freely answer, I wish some things were corrected. But the question with me is this: as I wrote them in sincerity at that time, is it

not more for the edification of Christians, and the glory of God, to let them stand, than to ruin the usefulness of the whole book, by correcting them now, and perhaps bring further and false suspicions on my present opinions? Besides, I might tell you, that of all the books I have written, that particular copy is not mine. I sold it for a trifle to Mr. *Lawrence* near thirty years ago, and his posterity make money of it to this day, and I can scarce claim a right to make any alteration in the book which would injure the sale of it."⁶²

A perhaps exaggerated impression of the change in Dr. Watts' views served to endear his *Psalms and Hymns* to the Presbyterians. Some congregations, by the simple expedient of omitting certain passages and the doxologies, kept them in use until the end of the XVIIIth century.⁶³ But long before that various ministers, by modifying or supplementing Watts, had prepared for their congregations praise books more consonant with the new views. In most of them Watts' text was freely 'tinkered'. The report was industriously circulated that he had planned and even executed a revision of his *Hymns* on Arian lines, all evidence of which was suppressed at his death.⁶⁴ The report was plainly unwarranted, but it encouraged the hymn book makers to do for him what they supposed he would have done on his own behalf.

The eminent Michajah Towgood is thought to be the editor of *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for Divine worship* (London, 1757; 2nd ed: 1779). In it Watts was supplemented by Tate and Brady, Addison, Doddridge and Browne. Michael Pope of the Leather Lane Meeting, London, followed with *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for Divine worship* (London, 1760). Of these more than half were from Watts, freely altered; and there were original contributions from Kippis, Grove and other Presbyterians. Two books, the first partly, the second

⁶² These documents were printed from the originals by the Rev. Samuel Palmer in his notes to Johnson's *Life of Watts* (1791). They were reprinted in the Boston *Memoirs of Watts and Doddridge* (1793), and substantially in Milner.

⁶³ Cf. preface to *A Collection of Hymns and Psalms*, ed. by Kippis et. al. 1795.

⁶⁴ See "The Early Editions of Watts's Hymns", already cited.

wholly, edited by Dr. Enfield, had a much longer life: *A new Collection of Psalms proper for Christian worship* (Liverpool, 1764), and *Hymns for public worship, selected from various authors, and intended as a Supplement to Dr. Watts's Psalms* (Warrington, 1772). To the latter the editor's neighbor, Mrs. Barbauld, contributed six hymns, two of which are still sung. *An abridgment of Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, with some alterations &c.* (n.d.), edited by W. Wood and B. Carpenter, is interesting for its reversion to that author and restoration in the main of his text.

The new "Presbyterianism" had already been augmented by recruits from the Church of England, who brought with them a taste for liturgical worship. A series of Psalm and hymn collections appended to Forms of Prayer began with *A Form of Prayer and a new Collection of Psalms, for the use of a Congregation of Protestant Dissenters in Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1763).⁶⁵ Theophilus Lindsey's *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for public worship*, which followed in 1774, was appended to Dr. Samuel Clark's rescension of the Prayer Book. The most interesting of the group is *A Collection of Hymns for public worship: on the general principles of natural and revealed Religion* (Salisbury, 1778). It aimed at the common denominator, shunning spheres of controversy. It reflects also the poetic feeling of one of its editors, Benjamin Williams, last minister of the old Presbyterian congregation in Salisbury: it has metrical variety, and attains a flavor of letters.

By this time the number of available hymn books had grown large in England, and one was about to appear in Ireland. The older Presbyterianism was being completely submerged by Unitarianism of the more aggressive type, as represented by Priestley, leaving hardly a vestige of its earlier denominational existence beyond the name "Presbyterian" still applied to Unitarian chapels.

⁶⁵ Cf. an interesting note by Jas. Martineau in the index to *The University Hymn Book*, Cambridge, Mass., 1895, under "Collet, Samuel".

It will not be practicable here to follow much further the course of English Unitarian Hymnody as it leaves the main stream of English Church Song. But it would not be true to say that it ever separated itself entirely from that stream. In 1837 John R. Beard published *A Collection of Hymns* of exclusively Unitarian authorship, which was not welcomed. Unitarians have continued to make large use of hymns from orthodox sources, and have felt free to apply to later authors the same drastic process of doctrinal alteration originally applied to Dr. Watts. English and Irish Unitarian Hymnody has no corporate history, but proceeds by a succession of individual hymn books.⁶⁶ *A Collection of Hymns and Psalms for public and private worship* (London, 1795), edited by Andrew Kippis and others, came the nearest to being representative, until happily succeeded in 1840 by the *Hymns for the Church and Home* of James Martineau. Apart from the warmth and elevation of its devotional spirit, this book is characterized by such a recasting of the hymns that "the technical modes of Thought peculiar to any portion of Christendom" are changed into "a different or more comprehensive language." For this process Martineau claims the precedent of Dr. Watts in "reforming and spiritualizing" the Judaism of the Psalms.⁶⁷

There was no further (old) Presbyterian Psalmody or Hymnody in England, beyond that of a faithful remnant in the Northern counties and some scattered congregations of resident Scotchmen, until the formation in 1836 of the Presbyterian Church in England, which began its career by harking back to *The Psalms of David in Meeter* of 1650.

3. THE BAPTISTS.

Among the older General Baptist churches the strong prejudice against public singing lingered through much of the

⁶⁶ The fullest presentation of the subject is the article "Unitarian Hymnology", by the Rev. Valentine D. Davis, in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*. He estimates that between 1795 and 1840, a new Unitarian hymn book appeared every year.

⁶⁷ Preface of 1840.

XVIIIth century, encasing their worship in a hard shell which even the influence of Watts found it hard to penetrate. And as one by one these churches yielded to the modern spirit, it would be hard to measure his part in the many inducements to the change. There was no notable church extension in the denomination until the Methodist Revival, when numerous congregations of those led to adopt Baptist sentiments were organized in Yorkshire and neighboring counties. These new churches came at once within the influence of Methodist hymn singing. With some seceders from the Old Connexion they formed in 1770 the New Connexion, under whose auspices the first General Baptist hymn book appeared at Halifax in 1772 as *Hymns and Spiritual Songs, mostly collected from various authors; with a few that have not been published before*. In 1785 Samuel Deacon of Barton, published his original *Barton Hymns*, having much of the revival spirit. In 1791 the General Baptist Association authorized a new hymn book, which appeared in 1793 as *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (London, D. Taylor). But in 1800 John Deacon, who had helped to compile it, issued on his own account *A new and large Collection of Hymns and Psalms* (London, H. D. Symonds); and this, after winning its unauthorized way among the churches, became by revision and adoption of the association, the hymn book of the Connexion.⁶⁸

Among Particular Baptist churches some were already singing hymns, especially on sacramental occasions, when Watts' *Hymns* first appeared. His *Hymns*, and later his *Psalms*, doctrinally acceptable, fell in with the desire to enlarge the use of hymns, and helped much also to create such a desire. It is significant that after the appearance of Stennett's *Sacramental Hymns* no Baptist hymn book was published until 1769. There is little difficulty in filling the apparent gap of half a century. It was the time when Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* were gradually working their way into the churches and into the hearts of the General

⁶⁸ Cf. H. S. Burrage, *Baptist Hymn Writers and their Hymns*, Portland, Me., n. d., p. 632.

Baptists, and establishing there a place only second to that they held among his own people.

But one effect of the use of Watts' hymns, was to encourage the habit of employing the last hymn in the service as an application of the sermon. In the course of time it became apparent that the *Hymns* were not in sufficient variety to cover all the sermon themes. Preachers were led to search other books for hymns pertinent to their sermons, and a number to compose hymns of their own on the Watts model, to be lined out to the people after the sermon.⁶⁹ With some of these compositions in hand, but especially in view of the publication in 1760 of the hymns of Miss Anne Steele, two pastors, John Ash of Pershore and Caleb Evans of Bristol, felt that the time had come for a Baptist hymn book. They published at Bristol in 1769 *A Collection of Hymns adapted to public worship*. As it was designed to supersede Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*, many of his best hymns were included. Of the new Baptist writers, there were 62 by Miss Steele, and some by Beddome, Daniel Turner, Joseph Stennett, and James Newton. It was well received, and continued in use for more than half a century, reaching a tenth edition in 1827. But it was far indeed from superseding Watts in Baptist use. So many churches remained which were unwilling to give up his *Psalms and Hymns* and yet desired other and especially Baptist hymns, that John Rippon, Gill's successor at Carter Lane, published in 1787 *A Selection of Hymns from the best authors, intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns* (London, T. Wilkins). This book of 588 hymns was conceived in the interest of the "Hymn after Sermon", and in the belief that "A too great Variety is a thing scarcely to be conceived of."⁷⁰ Nevertheless, Rippon's judgment and taste, his command of originals, and his editorial discretion, were such as to ensure lasting success, and

⁶⁹ Cf. preface to Rippon's *Selection*, 1787. Rippon states that only then was the practice of singing without lining "gaining ground" in some congregations "in London, at Bristol, and elsewhere."

⁷⁰ Preface, p. 3.

to secure to himself a permanent place in the history of hymn singing. His *Selections* reached its tenth edition in 1800, enlarged by sixty hymns, and was again enlarged in 1827. After Rippon's death, it appeared in 1844, increased by an addition of 400 hymns, as *The Comprehensive Rippon*, containing 1174 hymns. When we remember that these were an appendix to "Watts entire", we become aware of the lengths to which the homilectical conception and use of hymns naturally leads. Well had Rippon feared, in introducing his original 588 hymns, "that after sermon there will be many Subjects sought for in vain, both in this Appendix, and in Dr. Watts".⁷¹

Rippon's *Selection* became, in connection with Watts, the standard of Baptist Hymnody, which it did so much to enlarge. It served also as a source book for the makers of many hymn books in the Church outside, in a period when hymnal making was largely done with scissors; and by this means Rippon has permanently impressed himself upon the Churches as having influenced their choice of hymns. His book in itself carries forward Baptist Hymnody to our own time, being used in Spurgeon's Tabernacle till 1866 in connection with Watts.⁷² It was also a link of connection between Baptist Hymnody in England and America, and was reprinted in New York as early as 1792.

II. IN SCOTLAND: THE PARAPHRASES.

In Scotland Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* circulated largely, and their influence brought about a renewal of the long shelved movement for what was called "The improvement of the Psalmody." In 1741 an overture came before the General Assembly proposing that some Scripture passages be turned into metre for use in public worship. This was the beginning of the movement out of which came the famous "Scottish Paraphrases".⁷³

⁷¹ Preface, p. 4.

⁷² Preface to *Our own Hymn Book*.

⁷³ Extracts from the minutes of General Assembly and of Presbyteries covering the movement are conveniently gathered in Maclagan, *The Scottish Paraphrases*, Edinburgh, 1889, pp. 167 ff.

The proposal had come at the very close of the session, and was referred to the Assembly's Commission without discussion. That probably would have been the end, had not the Presbytery of Dundee interested itself, and secured from the Assembly of 1742 the appointment of a Committee to make a collection of paraphrases. This committee accomplishing nothing, it was enlarged, and in 1745 presented a collection of forty-five paraphrases. After much debate the Assembly agreed so far as to order these printed and sent down to Presbyteries for their "observations" on them and on the whole project.⁷⁴ They appeared in July, 1745 as *Translations and Paraphrases of several passages of Sacred Scripture. Collected and prepared by a Committee appointed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. And by the Act of last Assembly, transmitted to Presbyteries for their consideration* (Edinburgh, MDCCXLV). This pioneer volume of Scottish Presbyterian Hymnody reveals the extent to which Dr. Watts's influence was behind the movement toward hymns. Of the forty-five pieces, no less than nineteen are by him, five are by his follower Doddridge, and several others are based upon hymns of Watts. In the native contributions and compilations which make up the remainder, the manner of Watts is hardly less evident. In both the title and preface of the volume care is taken to emphasize the purely Scriptural character of the proposed additions to Psalmody, and the securing of this end furnishes the only obvious justification of the system of hymn-tinkering which the compilers carried to a great extreme. The paraphrases so printed had as yet no status, and by refraining from any report upon them the Presbyteries succeeded in blocking their authorization. A determined minority kept the matter alive for ten years. It being alleged in 1749 that the confusions incident to the Jacobite rising had caused the copies of the *Paraphrases* in the hands of numerous Presbyteries to be mislaid, a new edition was printed in 1750, and again sent

⁷⁴ *Acts of General Assembly*. Edinburgh, 1843, p. 681.

down. Perhaps to satisfy the minority, these amended paraphrases were authorized for private use, and they obtained some unauthorized public use.⁷⁵ But their approval still awaited the action of Presbyteries. In 1755 it appeared that thirty-two Presbyteries had never yet acted on the *Paraphrases*. Such determined opposition seems to have disheartened the progressives, and while the delinquent Presbyteries were formally ordered to report to the next Assembly, the whole project was allowed once more to drop out of sight as still impracticable.

The agitation of the proposal to enlarge the Psalmody acted as a constant stimulant to hymn production, and numerous collections of original hymns were published within the bounds of the Church of Scotland. That of John Forbes, *Some Scriptural Hymns, selected from sundry passages of Holy Writ, intended for the service of the Church in secret or society, as may be thought agreeable* (Aberdeen, 1757), plainly presents his productions as candidates for liturgical use; and hence they are kept within the limits of paraphrase. John Willison, on the other hand, in his *One hundred Gospel Hymns* (Edinburgh, 1747), professedly refrains from paraphrasing Scripture, "seeing this design is under consideration by publick authority, and committed to hands more capable." He offers freely composed gospel hymns as "much adapted to Sacramental Occasions;" presumably for meditative use, as he could hardly have contemplated their liturgical employment at that date. William Cruden, in his *Hymns on a variety of Divine subjects* (Aberdeen, 1761), takes a middle course, which may be described as a more or less free paraphrasing of Scripture; hardly presuming to suppose he can contribute to the enlargement of church Psalmody he so earnestly desires, but hoping that the use of his hymns in families "may be attended with no impropriety." Cruden's preface is interesting as showing the state of feeling which underlay the movement for the authorization of paraphrases:

⁷⁵ Preface to edition of 1781.

"Several attempts have been made of late years to improve our Psalmody: and yet when we consider the vast extent of the subject, its inconceivable importance to mankind, and how delightful a field the plan of redemption spreads to view; 'tis surprizing that more has not been done in that way; especially when many subjects, dry and uninteresting, are every day canvassed, and almost exhausted by the unwearied efforts of genius. Also when so loud a cry has been raised of late, thro' many corners of our national church, for the reformation of our music in the praises of the sanctuary; it might have been expected that frequent attempts would have been made, to enlarge the matter of our Psalmody, by an addition of New Testament Hymns suited to these days of clearer light, and superior advantages vouchsafed to us above former ages."

It may be presumed that such views and feelings were gradually extending, but it was not till twenty years had elapsed from the failure of 1755 that the *Paraphrases* were again brought to the attention of the General Assembly. In 1775 the Presbytery of Glasgow and Ayr sent up an overture alleging that many ministers and congregations desired to employ them in worship, and praying that their use be authorized. This overture resulted in the appointment of a committee who entered systematically upon the compilation of an enlarged collection of paraphrases, and after some disagreements on their part and the customary postponements on the part of the Assembly, were able to present their completed work to the Assembly of 1781, and to solicit definite action upon it. The Assembly passed an "Interim act anent the Psalmody", sending down the *Paraphrases* to the Presbyteries for examination and report, "and in the meantime they allow this collection of Sacred Poems to be used in public worship in congregations where the Minister finds it for edification".⁷⁶ The committee was authorized to correct and publish the collection, and the exclusive right to print it was vested in James Dickson, printer to the Church. This act, however lacking in finality, is the authorization on which the use of the *Paraphrases* has ever since rested. Excepting to extend the printer's patent, the Assembly has at no time taken further action concerning them. It is probable that those who had at heart the

⁷⁶ Extract from "Act of the Assembly", in 1781 ed. of *Paraphrases*.

enlargement of the Psalmody, thought it prudent to rest satisfied with what they had gained. Most of the Presbyteries also were content to take no action. That of Kirkcaldy, on the other hand, condemned the collection as defective in execution; and expressed their unanimous opinion that it ought to be rejected.⁷⁷

The new collection appeared in 1781 as *Translations and Paraphrases, in verse, of several passages of Sacred Scripture. Collected and prepared by a Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in order to be sung in Churches* (Edinburgh, MDCCLXXXI).

It included the forty-five paraphrases of the earlier edition, often much revised, and twenty-two that were new; among the latter several of the best-known, such as "Few are thy days, and full of woe," "Come, let us to the Lord our God", and "Where high the heavenly temple stands". Apart from their inherent value, the interest of the *Paraphrases* of 1781 lies in their success. They mark no development in the principles of Scottish Psalmody, but they embody the means by which the earlier authorization of paraphrases became actually carried out in public worship. In one respect, however, the collection of 1781 registers an advance. At the end appears a little group of "Hymns." The preface offers no explanation, saying merely, "a few Hymns are subjoined." Of these hymns, three are Addison's, first appearing in the *Spectator*, one is Watts' ("Bless'd morning, whose young dawning rays"), and the last is probably of Scottish origin ("The hour of my departure's come"). Most of these are decidedly "hymns of human composure", and constitute an apparently unconsidered intrusion of free Hymnody into the Scriptural Paraphrases of the Scottish Church.

The use of the *Paraphrases* being not of obligation, their introduction into the worship of the parish churches was by no means universal, and was not always accomplished without disturbance. Where minister and people were

⁷⁷ Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

agreed in wishing the *Paraphrases*, their introduction involved no more than the protest or perhaps secession of one or more irreconcilables. At Leith, in 1782, where the Rev. John Logan, one of the active spirits in the movement, and the alleged author of a number of the *Paraphrases*, gave notice on his own responsibility that the "Additional Psalmody was to be introduced into the public worship, Sabbath next",⁷⁸ the session met and protested against the precipitant manner of making the change, but seem to have submitted. There were, however, many among the ministers and people of the Scottish Church, who never received the *Paraphrases*, or took any part in singing them, to the end of their lives. Although they were soon customarily printed along with the Metrical Psalms and bound up with them at the end of the Bibles, from numerous pulpits they were never announced, and from numerous private copies of the Bible containing them they were torn out or pasted down.⁷⁹ This opposition was partly that of the advocates of the singing of Psalms alone, but by no means altogether. It was a time of bitter feeling, and, in the minds of many Evangelicals, the movement for enlarging the Psalmody had been allowed to fall into the hands of the party of "Moderates". The presence in the Assembly's committee of Logan, and the Blairs, the Wisharts, Cumming, Robertson and Alexander Carlyle, made such association inevitable in the case of the *Paraphrases* of 1781. Dr. Martin of Monimail, one of the minority of the Committee, claimed that he had no proper share in the compilation, and that the results were not what he was led to expect.⁸⁰ He may have been prejudiced by the fact that all but one of his own compositions, and all those "of a pious lady of his acquaintance" which he fathered, were rejected; but he was one of many who looked at the *Paraphrases* as unsound in some particulars and as lacking generally in evangelical tone and feeling.

⁷⁸ Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁷⁹ Cf. J. S. Curwen, *Worship Music*, 1st series, p. 166.

⁸⁰ See letter of his grandson in *Free Church Magazine*, August, 1847.

The attitude of the Secession in regard to Church Song does not appear to have differed greatly from that of the Church of Scotland. Soon after the secession of 1733, the attitude of the Burgher portion is revealed by the determination of the Associate Synod in 1748 to enlarge its Psalmody. Ralph Erskine had published his *Gospel Sonnets* in 1726-1734, and had become a seceder in 1737. The Synod recommended him to put the songs of Scripture into metre for its use, basing its action upon the similar recommendation of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland of 1647 to Zachary Boyd.⁸¹ A committee was afterwards appointed to examine Mr. Erskine's work, but his death in 1752 stayed the whole project of enlarging the Psalmody. The subject did not come up again till 1787, and nothing was actually done till the Synod in 1812 authorized the use of "the Paraphrases and Hymns of the Church of Scotland".⁸² The anti-Burgher portion of the Secession seems to have occupied a similar position. Their *Solemn Warning* of 1758 does not deal with Psalmody, but their original position was doubtless that of the manifesto of the General Associate Synod of 1804. It places the Psalms and New Testament Songs on a common plane of privilege as the divinely inspired and only authorized Church Song. Its only protest is against all allegation of a lack of evangelical spirit in the Psalms, and against substituting for them "hymns of human composition containing erroneous doctrine."⁸³

While the principles of the Secession favored New Testament songs, it is probable that the *Paraphrases* of the Church of Scotland, which happened to contain the only New Testament songs practicable, were not employed in the services of either branch. In this way the Seceders

⁸¹ See D. Fraser, *Life of Erskine*, Edinburgh 1834, p. 508, note.

⁸² On this whole subject, see Maclagan, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19; and also Mc Crie, *The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1892, pp. 196-301.

⁸³ *Narrative and Testimony . . . by the General Associate Synod*, 1804, pp. 163, 169.

furnished a refuge for many who came from parishes in which the *Paraphrases* were used; but it was only by further secessions from their own ranks that the principle of a restricted Psalmody was ultimately maintained.

Another branch of separated Presbyterians carried forward the process of enlarging the Psalmody in advance of the Church of Scotland itself. This was the Presbytery of Relief, formed in 1761, and, until merged in the United Presbyterian Church in 1847, known as the Relief Church. Some of these men were not contented to be confined to the *Paraphrases* of the mother Church, principally because they lacked clear evangelical expression.⁸⁴ James Steuart showed the way to a new Hymnody, and in 1786 printed at Glasgow *Sacred Songs and Hymns on various passages of Scripture; selected for the Congregation at Anderstoun*, and introduced it into the worship of his church. It offended those of the congregation opposed to "human hymns", some of whom seceded, but the book was retained. Hutchison of Paisley adopted Steuart's book with the addition of new hymns, and still more were added by James Dun of Glasgow. The ground being thus prepared, the Synod in 1793 was overtured on the subject, and, after hearing from the Presbyteries, agreed in 1794 to enlarge the Psalmody not only by paraphrases of Scripture, but by hymns agreeable to its tenor. A committee was appointed to select them, which included Messrs. Steuart, Dun and Hutchison, and they, doubtless as had been arranged, at once reported, recommending the book compiled by Stewart and completed by Dun. The book was approved by Synod, and published at Glasgow in 1794 with a new title as *Sacred Songs and Hymns on various passages of Scripture, approved by the Synod of Relief, and recommended to be sung in the Congregations under their inspection*. The book contains 231 hymns. The preface is frank in its justification of a New Testament Hymnody, but there is perhaps a certain lack of candor in its statement that the hymns following are, when not paraphrases of passages of Scripture, founded upon

⁸⁴ Cf. Maclagan, *op. cit.*, p. 28; McCrie, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

individual texts. To justify this statement, each hymn is preceded by a reference to its Scriptural source; that of Addison's "When all Thy mercies, O my God", being Psalm civ, 34,—“My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord”: That of Cowper's "O for a closer walk with God" being Genesis v, 24,—“Enoch walked with God.”⁸⁵ The anticipated opposition, whether or not thus hoodwinked, proved not very serious, and the new hymn book was soon in use throughout the Relief Church.⁸⁶ According to the historian of that Church, the new book developed a new animation in the service of praise, and was followed by “a corresponding improvement in church music.”⁸⁷

The Relief Church was not the first religious body in Scotland to make use of free hymns and to introduce a hymn book into its services. The Glasites, or Sandemanians, while adhering to Psalm singing in their public worship, used in their fellowship meetings the *Christian Songs*, whose first edition appeared in 1749. Sir William Sinclair in 1751 introduced a hymn book into the worship of the Baptist Church he formed in his castle at Keiss in Caithness; its sixty hymns being of his own composition.⁸⁸ And no doubt the hymns of John Barclay,⁸⁹ the earliest of which were contained in his *Rejoice Evermore; or Christ All in all* (Glasgow, 1767), were sung in the assemblies of the Bereans.

But, so far as Presbyterian Scotland is concerned, the Relief Church was the first to carry forward the enlargement of Psalmody to the full freedom of an evangelical Hymnody, officially embodied in a church hymn book, and used by authority in public worship.

In the Church of Scotland no further action followed the *ad interim* allowance of the *Translations and Paraphrases*

⁸⁵ Cf. McCrie, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

⁸⁶ It was revised in 1833, and was a progenitor of the *Hymn Book of the United Presbyterian Church*, 1852.

⁸⁷ G. Struthers, *History of the Relief Church*, 1843, p. 376.

⁸⁸ It was reprinted in 1879. See Julian, *Dictionary*, p. 1027.

⁸⁹ For their bibliography, see Julian, p. 1031.

in 1781. The close of the XVIIIth century was a period of indifference and of that slovenly performance of public worship pictured in the anonymous *A Letter from a Blacksmith to the Ministers and Elders of the Church of Scotland*. The enlargement of the Psalms came before the Assembly again early in the XIXth century, and specimens of "Additional Psalms" were submitted in 1811, 1814 and 1820. The latter were printed as *Additional Psalms; submitted to the General Assembly, 1820; and printed by their order, for the inspection of Presbyteries* (Edinburgh; Peter Hill & Company, 1821). Its thirty-two Psalm versions aim at introducing metrical variety: its seventeen paraphrases of other Scriptures include "Father, whate'er of worldly bliss" (I Tim. vi, 6-8), and "Lo! he comes with clouds descending" (Rev. i, 7). These efforts were quite futile and deservedly so. And nothing was accomplished until after the middle of the XIXth century, when the Church came under the general influences that play upon and mould modern Church Song in all denominations, notably the powerful influences emanating from Oxford. Meanwhile the Church was left to its historic Psalter of 1650, and the Paraphrases and five appended hymns of 1781. The *Paraphrases* were not only the first, but remain the only characteristic Hymnody of the Church of Scotland. They were of the school of Watts, but the new Scottish writers and a deft editorial hand gave them a marked individuality. The latest historian of Scottish Literature has not hesitated to say that they "form incomparably the best collection of sacred lyrics, for its size, which has ever been made in the English language."⁹⁰ There are few who would deny to them a dignified restraint, a grave devotion and a somewhat haunting sonorousness of rhythm. But they owed their origin to the desire for a distinctively evangelical Hymnody; and it is not difficult to understand that they should be regarded by many as somewhat lacking in contents and somewhat cold in tone.

(To be concluded.)

Philadelphia.

LOUIS F. BENSON.

⁹⁰ J. H. Millar, *Literary History of Scotland*, New York, 1903, p. 379.

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THE VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE SECOND CENTURY.

At the close of the second century, the virgin birth was a firmly established part of the creed of the Catholic Christian Church. What was the origin of that belief? This question can be answered only after an examination of the birth narratives which are included in our first and third Gospels. But an examination of extra-canonical sources is also not without value. At the time of Irenaeus, belief in the virgin birth was firmly established. Can a gradual establishment of that belief be traced in the history of the second century, or was the belief firmly fixed from the very beginning? The present article will attempt to give some answer to this question, and thus lay the necessary foundation for answering the further and more important question: is the belief in the virgin birth based upon fact, or did it originate in some other way?

Of course, no one denies that the belief in the virgin birth arose long before Irenaeus. The most that could by any possibility be held is that the doctrine did not attain the full assent of the Church until his time. Even such a view, however, can be dismissed very quickly.

In the first place, the virgin birth has a place in the so-called Apostles' Creed.¹ The form of that creed which is now in use was produced in Gaul in the fifth or sixth cen-

¹ The following discussion of the Apostles' Creed is not based upon independent investigation. All that has been attempted is to point out the bearing which the commonly accepted conclusions in this field have upon the question of the virgin birth. See especially Harnack, *Vetus-*

DR. WATTS' "RENOVATION OF PSALMODY."*

III

HIS SUCCESS: THE ERA OF WATTS.

III. IN AMERICA.

I. THE CONGREGATIONALISTS.

When Watts' *Hymns* of 1707 and his *Imitations* of 1719 appeared, the Puritan sense of the duty of singing Psalms prevailed generally in New England, although "cases of conscience" still kept alive the memory of the "controversy concerning singing."⁹¹ But the total neglect of music had compelled the suspension of all singing in some congregations, and in others had brought about conditions in Church Praise which the Rev. Mr. Symmes described as "indecent."⁹² In the lack of music books and the inability to sing by note, a very few tunes were sung from memory, "tortured and twisted as every unskillful throat saw fit," producing a medley of discordant noises; sounding, as Mr. Walter reports,⁹³ "like five hundred different tunes roared out at the same time", with the singers often one or two words apart, and in a manner so drawling that he himself has "twice in one note paused to take breath".

Inconceivable as it seems, this disorder had acquired the force of a tradition, and the attempt to better it involved the churches in years of bitter controversy between the advocates of "the usual way" and those determined to introduce "regular singing."

* Being the third of the lectures upon "The Hymnody of the English-speaking Churches," delivered in the L. P. Stone Foundation at Princeton Theological Seminary in February 1910.

⁹¹ *Cases of Conscience about singing of Psalms*, Boston, 1723. It is reprinted in S. H. Emory, *The Ministry of Taunton*, 2 vols., Boston, 1853, vol. i, pp. 269 ff.

⁹² *The Reasonableness of Regular Singing*, Boston, 1720.

⁹³ *The Grounds and Rules of Musick explained*, by Thomas Walter, A.M., Boston, 1721.

Through these confusions the voice of Watts did not reach the people at all. He none the less had his eye on New England. Before his *Imitations* were printed, some were submitted in Ms. to Cotton Matlier for his examination and approval:⁹⁴ the 107th of *The Psalms imitated* was entitled "A Psalm for New England": he sent over copies of all his books, and was, through correspondence with Colman and others, kept informed of conditions. Meantime he was content to bide his time, and discouraged his friends from premature efforts to introduce his "System of Praise".⁹⁵

The first American reprint of *The Psalms imitated* came from the Philadelphia press of Benjamin Franklin in 1729. It represents no actual demand, since Franklin afterwards complained of its remaining unsold upon his shelves.⁹⁶ Franklin published another reprint in 1741; and in the same year appeared the first Boston edition (Rogers and Fowle).

The first American reprint of the *Hymns* appeared in Boston, 1739 (J. Draper for D. Henchman):⁹⁷ the first Philadelphia edition in 1742 (Franklin): the first New York edition (Hugh Gaine) in 1752.⁹⁸

Throughout New England it was only as one and another parish first reëstablished the old Psalmody on a musical basis, that any need was felt for more singable materials than *The Bay Psalm Book* furnished. Even then there was

⁹⁴ See letter in George Hood, *A History of Music in New England*, Boston, 1846, p. 155.

⁹⁵ See his correspondence in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2nd series, vol. ix, especially pp. 397, 401, 408.

⁹⁶ Cf. Paul L. Ford, *The Many-sided Franklin*, N. Y., 1899, p. 195; There is also a facsimile of the title-page.

⁹⁷ Not in Evans' *American Bibliography*.

⁹⁸ The early American reprints of Watts may be grouped as follows:
Psalms alone: Philadelphia, 1729, 1741, 1753, 1757, 1760, 1766, 1773. Boston, 1741, 1743, 1761, 1763, 1767, 1768, 1770, 1771, 1772(2). New York, 1754, 1756, 1760, 1772. Woodbridge, 1760. Norwich, 1773, 1774.
Hymns alone: Boston, 1739, 1743, 1769, 1771, 1772 (2), 1775. Philadelphia, 1742, 1767, 1771, 1772. New York, 1752, 1771. Norwich, 1775.
Psalms and Hymns together (earlier issues were sometimes bound together): New York, 1761. Boston, 1767, 1773. Philadelphia, 1778.

no general turning toward Watts. It was rather in congregations deeply moved by the revival influences of "The Great Awakening" that the desire arose for song more in consonance with the revival preaching and more expressive of the evangelical fervor which the preaching aroused. The coming of Whitefield and his large share in the Great Awakening might be presupposed to favor the introduction of the hymns of the Wesleyan Revival, out of which he came. But he was no singing evangelist, and never a propagandist of the Methodist Hymnody: he preferred a sober strain of song, and greatly admired Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*.

At Northampton itself Jonathan Edwards, returning from a journey, found that the congregation had begun to sing Watts' *Hymns* in his absence; "and sang nothing else, and neglected the Psalms wholly." He "disliked not their making some use of the Hymns; but did not like their setting aside the Psalms", and compromised by arranging that when they sang "three times upon the Sabbath", they should sing "an Hymn, or part of a Hymn of Dr. Watts's, the last time, *viz*: at the conclusion of afternoon exercise."⁹⁹

This was in 1742, and shows how with the spread of the revival the people began to sing from Watts with a certain spontaneity in which sincerity counted for more than precedent. The singing was not confined to the meetings. John White reports¹⁰⁰ that at Gloucester in 1744 the singing of Watts's *Hymns* had taken the place of the usual diversions of the people when met together. A new phenomenon was the "singing through the streets, and in Ferry-Boats" by companies of people coming or going between the meetings. To this Chauncy objected as "ostentatious".¹⁰¹ Gilbert Tennent, in a letter in *The Pennsyl-*

⁹⁹ Letter of Edwards in *Proceedings of Mass. Hist. Soc.*, 2nd series, vol. x, p. 429.

¹⁰⁰ *The Christian History*, Boston, vol. i, 1743, p. 41.

¹⁰¹ *Seasonable Thoughts on the state of Religion in New England*, Boston, 1743, p. 126.

vania Gazette, refused to defend it:¹⁰² Jonathan Edwards on the other hand failed to find any valid objection against it.¹⁰³ Edwards thought "abounding in singing", both in and out of meeting, a natural expression of the feelings awakened.¹⁰⁴ The disorderly singing in meeting, and the careless singing of sacred words at home,¹⁰⁵ he liked no better than Chauncy.¹⁰⁶ To the objection taken by many to the "making use of Hymns of humane Composure", Edwards responded in terms as decided as those of Watts himself.¹⁰⁷

In parishes which kept to the old Psalmody through the revival period, the introduction of either the Imitations or Hymns of Watts involved difficulties. Apart from the prejudice of many against hymns¹⁰⁸ and their affection for *The Bay Psalm Book*, the free character of Watts' Imitations and his omission of several Psalms¹⁰⁹ told against it. There was also a preference of many others, especially the 'liberal'-minded, for the smooth renderings of *Tate and Brady*.¹¹⁰

The parish of Spencer, Mass., affords an illustration of the actual situation. After making trial for some time of *Tate and Brady*, the church met in June, 1761 and decided to restore *The Bay Psalm Book* for four Sabbaths, then to use Watts' Imitations till September, and finally meet for decision. At the meeting the vote stood, for *The Bay Psalm Book*, 33; for Watts, 14; for *Tate and Brady*, 6. It was agreed to refer the matter to three ministers, who recommended a trial of *Tate and Brady* for six months. After eight years of adherence to *The Bay Psalm Book*, it was voted in May 1769, to make the trial of *Tate and Brady* as

¹⁰² Reprinted in his *The Examiner, examined, or Gilbert Tennent Harmonious*, Phila. 1743, pp. 64-66.

¹⁰³ *Some Thoughts concerning the present Revival of Religion in New-England*, Boston, 1742, pp. 317-323.

¹⁰⁴ *Some Thoughts*, p. 182.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

¹⁰⁶ *Seasonable Thoughts*, p. 239.

¹⁰⁷ *Some Thoughts*, p. 184.

¹⁰⁸ *Cf. Proc. of Mass. Hist. Soc.*, 2nd series, vol. ix, pp. 401, 408.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

recommended. There was a dissatisfied minority, and it was agreed to use *The Bay Psalm Book* and Watts jointly "till the church and congregation shall come to a better understanding as to what version may be sung". This arrangement continued until October, 1769, when it was agreed to adopt Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*, by a vote of 26 in his favor, and "about 6 votes for the old version."¹¹¹ Even so Spencer was years ahead of very many New England parishes.

A number of churches followed the lead of the Brattle Street Church, to which we shall more particularly refer, in adopting *Tate and Brady*, supplemented by a selection of hymns taken mostly from Watts: Worcester in 1761,¹¹² Newton in 1770,¹¹³ Charlestown in 1772,¹¹⁴ Westminster in 1773.¹¹⁵ The Old South of Boston balked at the freedom of Watts' Imitations, and requested Thomas Prince to make a revision of *The Bay Psalm Book*, to which, as published and introduced in 1758, was added an appendix of fifty hymns, all but eight of which are from Watts.¹¹⁶ On the other hand the Imitations, without the *Hymns*, were adopted by the South Church at Portsmouth, N. H., as early as 1763,¹¹⁷ and in 1769 Byfield voted to "make trial" of both.¹¹⁸

The parishes were thus feeling their way and of many minds. The use of Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* did not become general throughout New England Congregationalism until after the Revolution. They were introduced at the

¹¹¹ Jas. Draper, *History of Spencer, Massachusetts*, Worcester, 2nd ed., n. d., pp. 110, 111.

¹¹² W. Lincoln, *Hist. of Worcester*, 1837, p. 179.

¹¹³ F. Jackson, *Hist. of Newton*, 1854, p. 136.

¹¹⁴ *Memorial Hist. of Boston*, vol. ii, p. 319.

¹¹⁵ W. S. Heywood, *Hist. of Westminster*, 1893, p. 282.

¹¹⁶ *The Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs of the Old and New Testament, . . . being the New England Psalm Book revised and improved . . . with an addition of fifty other Hymns . . . Boston: N.E., 1758, 2nd ed., 1773.*

¹¹⁷ C. W. Brewster, *Rambles about Portsmouth*, 2nd series, 1869, p. 338.

¹¹⁸ Joshua Coffin, *Sketch of Hist. of Newbury, &c.*, 1845, p. 235.

Old South in Boston in 1786; in 1790 at Worcester¹¹⁹ and Newton:¹²⁰ in 1791 at Shrewsbury.¹²¹ To make the Imitations palatable at that epoch to the newly won liberties of America, some changes were necessary in those passages in which Watts had made David appear as a patriotic Englishman. Outside of Connecticut these changes were made without common action of the churches, under the auspices of private printers.

Connecticut, which had its distinctive church government, took also a distinctive attitude toward Watts. In the first place its adoption of his System of Praise included only the Imitations. In the second place, the Connecticut Association superintended two revisions of their text, with a view of 'accommodating it to America' and also of filling out the omitted Psalms. The earlier of these¹²² appeared at Hartford in 1785 as *Doctor Watts's Imitation of the Psalms of David, corrected and enlarged by Joel Barlow*. The later was made with the concurrence of the Presbyterian General Assembly, and appeared at Hartford in 1801 as *The Psalms of David . . . by I. Watts, D.D. A new edition, in which the Psalms, omitted by Dr. Watts, are versified, local passages are altered, and a number of Psalms are versified anew, in proper metres. By Timothy Dwight*.¹²³ In the third place, the Connecticut Association, while proposing to retain *The Psalms Imitated* as the main feature of Church Praise, provided its own collection of hymns (in the stead of Watts' *Hymns*) as an appendix to the Psalms. The hymns appended to Barlow's revision numbered 70, se-

¹¹⁹ Lincoln, p. 179.

¹²⁰ Jackson, p. 141.

¹²¹ A. H. Ward, *History of Shrewsbury*, 1847, p. 179.

¹²² The history of these various adaptations of Watts' Psalms to American conditions is an interesting and distinctive episode in the progress of American Church Song. But in spirit and intent they were a prolongation of the older Psalmody, to whose history a fuller account of them may be relegated. The writer has attempted such an account in "The American Revisions of Watts's Psalms" in *The Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, for June and Sept., 1903.

¹²³ In this appeared the familiar "I love Thy Kingdom, Lord", as a rendering of the 137th Psalm.

lected from Watts, with a few originals added. Like the revision itself, they were set aside when Barlow's name became discredited in Connecticut. Dwight, between his own preference for a large collection and that of a number of his advisers for a small one,¹²⁴ compromised on an appendix of 263 hymns. Of these 168 were from Watts, 95 by other writers, mostly of Watts' school. "Dwight's Watts" was received with great favour and used in Connecticut churches, perhaps without an exception; and in some for over thirty years.¹²⁵

Dwight's book was not interfered with by *The Hartford Selection of Hymns*, 1797, edited by Nathan Strong, Abel Flint, and Joseph Steward. This reached a sixth edition in 1818, but was especially designed for use in connection with revival services. Some pastors were, however, finding Dwight's selection of hymns too limited. He had spoken in his preface of the "so great reverence" for Watts in this country at that time. Of this, Samuel Worcester of Salem, warmly interested in Church Song, was made painfully aware. He thought room could be made for the new hymns desired and for a selection of tunes in one volume with Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* by the process of dropping some of the less used Psalms and shortening the longer ones. A volume so made up he published at Boston in 1815 as *Christian Psalmody, in four parts*. The churches resented this mode of dealing with Watts' Psalms, and the book was met by charges of "mangling", "amputating", and "robbing" Watts, and by calls for "Watts Entire."¹²⁶ In view of this prejudice and demand and the solicitation of his publisher, Worcester abandoned his *Christian Psalmody*, enlarged the selection of hymns it contained, and, against his own taste and judgment, appended them to the complete *Psalms and Hymns* of Watts. The new

¹²⁴ See his preface of 1800.

¹²⁵ Cf. O. E. Daggett, "The Psalms in Worship," *The New Englander*, July 1846, p. 328.

¹²⁶ S. M. Worcester, *Life of Rev. Samuel Worcester*. Boston, 1852, vol. ii, p. 267.

collection appeared at Boston in 1819 as *The Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D., to which are added select Hymns from other authors; and directions for musical expression. By Samuel Worcester, D.D.* It was revised in 1823, and again in 1834 by his son, and came into wide use throughout New England and even beyond it. Familiarly known as "Watts and Select", it became one of the best recognized channels of Watts' ascendancy over Church Song, and so continued as long as the churches were disposed to regard the ever widening area of English Hymnody in the light of an appendage to Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*.

The transition from the older Psalmody to Watts in New England became associated after the Revolutionary War with a great change in the character of the tunes used in the churches. This was brought about through the efforts of an eccentric but gifted tanner's apprentice of Boston, William Billings, who had printed in 1770 his first book of original compositions, as *The New-England Psalm-Singer: or, American Chorister, containing a number of Psalm-tunes, Anthems and Canons. In four or five parts. [Never before published.] Composed by William Billings, a native of Boston, in New England* (Boston, Edes and Gill). The book proved acceptable to New England singing schools. During the war Billings wrote or adapted patriotic Psalms, and set them to stirring melodies of his own composition. His original "Let tyrants shake their iron rod", to his tune "Chester", and his "Lamentation over Boston", beginning "By the Rivers of Watertown we sat down and wept", are now best remembered.¹²⁷ The words stirred the patriotic heart, and with their striking melodies were sung at home and by the choirs, and especially in the military camps. The New England soldiers learned the words by heart, and every fifer the tunes, and carried them to whatever part of the country duty called them.

In 1778 Billings published at Boston *The Singing Mas-*

¹²⁷ Words and music may be found in his *The Singing Master's Assistant*, 1778; the former as No. 12, the latter as No. 33.

ter's Assistant, or Key to Practical Music. Its tunes of lively rhythm and captivating melody, with much independence of movement in the various voice-parts and some unexpected harmonic results, proved very popular with singing schools and church choirs, and drove out the slower and more solemn Psalm-tunes. Billings established a distinctively American school of church music,¹²⁸ carried on by Jacob Kimball, Oliver Holden, Daniel Reed, Timothy Swan, and others, who were his followers; and it dominated Congregational Song in New England for many years.

The new music, while tickling the senses, lacked the reverence and spiritual feeling of the old. But the close of the Revolution was particularly distinguished for the absence of just those qualities; and the swing and virility of the new tunes suited the occasion, while the exciting contests of the voice-parts gave welcome occupation to the singing schools and the new choirs. The new style of church music did not spread over New England without considerable protest. The growing volume and earnestness of this protest, together with the spread of better musical knowledge and taste, were eventually to clear the way for the Lowell Mason epoch in American church music.

Meantime, Andrew Law, one of the most successful "Professors of Psalmody" contemporaneous with Billings, seems to have resisted his influence, and aimed to avoid "fuguing tunes". It is likely also that Samuel Holyoke re-

¹²⁸ The personality and work of this one-eyed, illtaught, and enthusiastic natural genius, form an engaging theme, from whatever view-point it be approached. The only adequate materials for studying him are the music, treatises, prefaces, &c. contained in the series of his tune books. The most satisfactory approaches to the musical side of his work are found in Dr. F. R. Ritter's *Music in America*, new. ed. New York, 1890, chap. iii; and Louis C. Elson's *The History of American Music*, New York, 1904, chap. i. Something of the human side appears in George P. Upton's *Musical Pastels*, Chicago, 1902, in a sketch of him, wrongly entitled "The first American Composer." It is now well established that both Hopkinson and Lyon were his predecessors (see O. G. Sonneck, *Francis Hopkinson and James Lyon*, Washington, 1905); though the fact abates nothing of Billings' original force.

garded *The Columbian Repository of Sacred Harmony* (Exeter, N. H., n. d.), which he published in the first decade of the XIXth century, as adapted to forward the reaction from the extremes of the Billings school. Whether it was so or not, his book remains as a colossal monument of the ascendancy of Watts over the Congregational Praise of New England. This folio volume of 496 pages contains nothing less than a complete reprint of Watts' *Psalms of David imitated*¹²⁹ and his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, with every Psalm version and hymn set to its special tune in four parts. As an offering to New England choirs, unable to read at sight or to use so great a variety of music, it was ineffective from the first; but as a tribute to Dr. Watts its testimony remains unimpaired.

The closing pages of Holyoke's book are occupied by a "Supplement" of tunes "suited to Metres in *Dr. Belknap's* and *Tate & Brady's* Psalms and Hymns, which are not in Dr. Watts'." This supplement serves to remind us that a dissenting type of Congregational Hymnody had already risen in New England, which now demands consideration.

2. THE EARLY UNITARIANS.

The church at Brattle Square, Boston, had been the first to break away from the fixed order of New England Congregationalism. Though regarded as radical, it was organized upon the basis of the Westminster Confession, and in the matter of Church Praise was most conservative. When Thomas Brattle, whose will was probated May 23, 1713, bequeathed his organ to the church, the congregation voted that they did not think it proper to use the same in the public worship of God.¹³⁰ To the efforts of its pastor, Benjamin Colman, Watts attributed the introduction of his

¹²⁹ Holyoke seems to have taken as his text for the Imitations an Americanized version first printed by Isaiah Thomas at Worcester in 1786, and characterized by its omission of the C. M. Version of Psalm 21.

¹³⁰ S. K. Lothrop, *History of Brattle-Street Church*, Boston, 1851, pp. 61, 62: more fully in "The first Organ in America", *New England Magazine*, Oct. 1902, pp. 212 ff.

Imitations into several New England parishes.¹³¹ In 1739 Colman got his church to vote for a collection of hymns to be selected from Watts, but found that even the attempt to use a new version of the Psalms so endangered the peace of the church that he decided to leave things as they were.¹³² Nevertheless the Brattle Street Church, after Colman's death, led the way in hymn singing among Boston churches, adopting in 1753 *Tate and Brady* with an appendix of hymns to be selected by a committee.¹³³ This appeared in 1754 as *Appendix, containing a number of Hymns, taken chiefly from Dr. Watts's Scriptural Collection*, and was enlarged from time to time to include 103 hymns.¹³⁴ *Tate and Brady* with this appendix, and sometimes with D. Bayley's *Essex Harmony* or his *Psalmsinger's Assistant*, bound in, appeared often in the next half century, and became the means of introducing hymns of Watts into a number of parishes.

The installation of Jonathan Mayhew over the West Church in 1747 was the first definite recognition of the Arian opinions and tendencies which had crossed over from English Presbyterianism; and by the last quarter of the century nearly all the Congregational pulpits in and near Boston were filled by Unitarians.¹³⁵

Mayhew found *Tate and Brady* in use at the West Church, and asked for no change during his life, though a choir took the place of the precentor about 1754.¹³⁶ No hymns were sung in the West Church till the appearance in 1783 of *A Collection of Hymns, more particularly designed for the use of the West Society in Boston*, (2nd ed. 1803;

¹³¹ *Proc. of Mass. Hist. Soc.*, 2nd series, vol. ix, pp. 365, 397.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 365.

¹³³ See preface to "Brattle Square Collection," 1825.

¹³⁴ The hymns numbered 77-100 in the *Appendix to Tate and Brady* published by S. Kneeland, Boston, 1760, were an addition to the Brattle Street Appendix made by Mather Byles for the Hollis Street Church.

¹³⁵ Cf. A. P. Peabody in *The Memorial History of Boston*, vol. iii, pp. 467 ff.

¹³⁶ Chas. Lowell, Discourse in the West Church, Boston, 1820, p. 26.

3rd, 1806). Its opening hymns were entitled "Toleration" and "Persecution", but it contained also hymns on "Jesus, worshipped by all the Creation", "The Atonement of Christ", and "Christ's Propitiation improv'd". William Bentley of the East Church, Salem, followed with *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for publick worship* (Salem, n. d., but 1788 or 1789).¹³⁷ Its only interest lies in the selection, at so early a date, of the *Salisbury Selection* of 1778 as the source of nearly all its hymns. Six years later Jeremy Belknap "performed a very important service for the non-Trinitarian churches"¹³⁸ by publishing *Sacred Poetry. Consisting of Psalms and Hymns, adapted to Christian devotion, public and private. Selected from the best authors, with variations and additions* (Boston, 1795). This important (it has been called "famous")¹³⁹ book has been described by Dr. Peabody¹⁴⁰ "as an index of the religious belief and feeling of the churches that welcomed its advent." If so, it would be easy to show that the churches held all the cardinal doctrines of Calvinism. But Belknap's own curious point of view is thus revealed in his preface:

"In this selection those Christians, who do not scruple to sing praise to their Redeemer and Sanctifier, will find materials for such a sublime enjoyment; whilst others whose tenderness of conscience may oblige them to confine their addresses, to the Father only will find no deficiency of matter suited to their idea of 'the chaste and awful spirit of devotion'."¹⁴¹

Belknap's book won great favor, and continued to satisfy a considerable proportion of the "non-Trinitarian churches" through and beyond the first quarter of the XIXth century.¹⁴² Freeman's *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for publick worship* (Boston, 1799: 2nd ed., 1813), for

¹³⁷ The writer's copy was "The Gift of the Rev. Mr. Bentley, 1789."

¹³⁸ Dr. Peabody in *Memorial History of Boston*, vol. iii, p. 473.

¹³⁹ By Dr. S. A. Eliot, in *Heralds of a Liberal Faith*, Boston, 1910, vol. i, p. 103.

¹⁴⁰ *ut supra*.

¹⁴¹ In Watts' familiar line "Save in the death of Christ my God," Belknap's only alteration was the substitution of "But" for "Save".

¹⁴² 2nd ed., 1797; 3rd, 1801; 4th, 1804; 5th, 1808; new. ed., 1812, often reprinted.

King's Chapel, was made from its American predecessors just referred to, the English books from the Liverpool Collection of 1763 to Enfield's of 1795, and *Tate and Brady*. In 1808, the year of Henry Ware's election as Hollis Professor at Harvard, the Brattle Street Church annexed to its collection *Hymns for Public Worship. Part ii*; whose exclusion of "most of the capital doctrines of the gospel" was at once challenged by *The Panoplist*.¹⁴³ From the Panoplist's point of view William Emerson's *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns* (Boston, 1808), was even more open to the same charge. His book was ineffective, but interesting for an attempt to refine and enrich "Columbian musick" by "prefixing to each psalm and hymn the name of a tune, well composed and judicially chosen" as "a valuable auxiliary to musical bands."

To Philadelphia Unitarianism came directly from England with Dr. Priestley; and in 1812 Ralph Eddowes and James Taylor, who had charge of the little congregation Priestley founded, published *A Selection of Sacred Poetry, consisting of Psalms and Hymns from Watts, Doddridge, Merrick, Scott, Cowper, Barbauld, Steele, and others*.¹⁴⁴ Eddowes had already published a tract on *The Inconsistency of several passages in Doctor Watts's Hymns with Scripture and with each other*.¹⁴⁵ But, the inexpediency of using "Watts entire" being thus demonstrated, Eddowes drew freely from him and other evangelical sources, and in his collection of 606 hymns aimed not unsuccessfully to avoid offence to the orthodox bodies that enveloped his little congregation.

Little account of the Philadelphia book was taken in New England, although the situation there was regarded as unsatisfactory. It was becoming a matter of reproach that numerous churches, though now enrolled on the "liberal"

¹⁴³ See the review in the number for Sept. 1808; the reply of "Brattle Street" and editorial comments thereon in the Nov. number.

¹⁴⁴ 2nd ed., 1818; 3rd, 1828; 4th, 1846.

¹⁴⁵ Included in *A Coll. of Pieces and Tracts* pub. by the First Unitarian Society, Phila., 1810.

side, persisted in using Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*, to which they had formerly become attached.¹⁴⁶ And not less so that of all the books aiming to supersede Watts or Psalm versions, the "only collection now in common use" was Belknap's, with "its unnatural combination of eager Arianism and half-willing Orthodoxy".¹⁴⁷ Two books were prepared with a view of meeting this situation. The earlier was Henry F. Sewall's *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns, for social and private worship* (N. Y. 1820; 2nd ed., 1827). This urbane expression of "a calm and rational faith" was favorably regarded by Boston periodicals,¹⁴⁸ but failed of adoption by New England churches. It retains, however, the distinction of introducing five originals of William Cullen Bryant. The other book had a nearly similar title, *A Selection of Hymns and Psalms, for social and private worship* (Andover, 1821; 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1824; 11th ed., Boston, 1832). It was compiled by J. P. Dabney, with an eye for practical considerations: being smaller, cheaper, better arranged, and with less tinkering of familiar texts, than Sewall's. It came into very considerable, though far from universal, use in the churches. We may perhaps regard these two books, and the new West Church *Collection* of 1823, as closing the earlier series of liberal or Unitarian hymn books; to be followed in turn by the remarkable series of a more "literary" type that distinguished the mid-century.

The books of this early period are characterized by their omissions rather than their inclusions, as being the work of men (except perhaps Freeman), who "had not made up their own minds" "on the subject of the nature and offices of Jesus."¹⁴⁹ Meantime they avoided the area "still controverted among Christians" (Sewall), and "what savors of party spirit and sectarian notions" (Emerson). This meant

¹⁴⁶ *The Christian Disciple*, vol. iii, 1821, p. 341.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 362.

¹⁴⁸ E. g. *The Christian Disciple* for 1821, pp. 76, 360-369.

¹⁴⁹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, in Sprague, *Annals of the American Unitarian Pulpit*, New York, 1865, p. 245.

practically to alter or omit the older hymns of evangelical implication and to multiply hymns confined to "the natural or universal aspects of religion." It resulted, except in the case of Belknap's anomalous book, in a marked coldness of tone as contrasted with Watts'. Belknap, Emerson, Ed-
dowes and Sewall avowedly aim to adapt their books to "Christians in general." Dabney is the only one who recognizes that his "cannot meet with very general acceptance."

3. THE PRESBYTERIANS.

The Presbyterian Church of the colonies was by its varied inheritance and its own practice a Psalm singing Church. It cannot, however, be claimed that an exclusively Scriptural Psalmody was made a church principle, since the Adopting Act of 1729 failed to include the Westminster *Directory for Worship* as a part of its written constitution. Neither was there any special Psalm book in prescribed or even general use. But the hold of the Scottish type of Psalmody was materially strengthened by the great volume of immigration from the North of Ireland. The Scotch-Irish brought with them *The Psalms of David in Meeter* bound in with their Bibles, and to their minds almost a part of it. They had been accustomed to a Scriptural Psalmody as of course: few of them knew any Psalm book but their own: and they were not of the temper that is personally concerned with the literary or musical development of Church Song.

Thus reinforced, the whole lump of Presbyterianism became more impervious than some other Churches were to the leaven of Watts' influence. Indeed, the Scotch-Irish gift for colonization tended to remove whole sections of the Church beyond contact with that influence. It carried large numbers away from the established centres of civilization, and segregated them in frontier settlements, where their own ways were unquestioned and their minds became incurious. And so it could happen, that, when in 1763 the reunited Synod of New York and Philadelphia was questioned as to whether churches were at liberty "to sing Dr. Watts's imitation of David's Psalms". the Synod was not

prepared to give a full answer, "As a great number of this body have never particularly considered Dr. Watts's imitation."¹⁵⁰

There was, on the other hand, within the Church an aggressive element, Scotch and Scotch-Irish, well informed as to Watts' work and influence, and fully prepared to resist it. And just beyond the Church's borders a number of small bodies was forming, who represented one or other form of Scottish dissent; unalterably set in principle on the strictest platform of Psalm singing, and in practice confined to "Rous' Version." Neither their principles nor interest called them to quench the embers of strife in the larger body or to refuse a refuge to the disaffected.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that Presbyterian hymn singing should be deferred, and that its introduction should involve controversy. There was indeed no general desire to sing hymns among Colonial Presbyterians. The progressives asked no more than liberty to choose their own Psalm book; and it was not till the beginning of the XIXth century that the Church declared itself in favor of singing hymns.

The first influence that modified the uniformity of the old Psalmody, among Presbyterians as among Congregationalists, was the quickened evangelical fervor aroused by the Great Awakening; which revival became indeed the occasion of splitting the Church itself in 1741 into "New Side" and "Old Side" synods.

This influence is nowhere more clearly brought out than in the *apologia* of the Trustees of the Church in New York for the change in their congregational Psalmody.¹⁵¹

The minority at once organized as a Scotch Presbyterian

¹⁵⁰ *Records of the Presbyterian Church*, ed. 1904, p. 331.

¹⁵¹ Ms. Journal, quoted in Briggs, *American Presbyterianism*, New York, 1885, pp. 280, 281.

"That during the times of the Revival of Religion in the years 1739, 1740 and 1741, when God said to this church, arise, shine for thy light is come, &c., there was a vast accession of people to this Light and to the brightness of this churches rising; in that period the poetick writings particularly the Hymns of the sweet singer of our Israel

Society, and complained to Presbytery, which body referred the matter to the (New Side) Synod of New York. Synod in 1752 appointed a committee to adjust the difficulties, with power to authorize the use of Watts' Imitations, and a larger committee in 1753. In 1754 Synod adopted the findings of this committee objecting to certain proceedings, but deciding that "since Dr. Watts's version is introduced in this church, and is well adapted for Christian worship, and received by many Presbyterian congregations, both in America and Great Britain, they cannot but judge it best for the well-being of the congregation under their present circumstances, that they should be continued."¹⁵² The disturbance in New York continuing, the Synod of 1755 directed "that the Scotch version be used equally with the other."¹⁵³ This direction was not obeyed. The Synod of 1756 rebuked the majority for their adherence to Watts, but also revoked their order of the previous year; thus leaving Watts' Imitations in sole possession of the field.¹⁵⁴ The offended minority withdrew from the New York church to form "The Scotch Church", which was taken under the care of the Associate Presbytery, representing one of the secessions from the Church of Scotland.

became of excellent service and for the divine relish which in the use of them had affected many minds. During that remarkable season, many of the people became desirous of introducing some one of the New Versions of the Psalms, into the stated publick worship of the congregation; and from their knowledge and experience of their suitableness to animate and raise their own devotion, hoping this might produce the same effect on others. After this matter had been some years under consideration and by the private use of the New Version, the old Version had become every day to the Taste of many more and more flat, dull, insipid and undevotional . . . and it had been judged that no objection could arise against introducing Doctor Watts version but from ignorance of the difference between the old version and that, or from some unreasonable prejudice, the ministers, elders, deacons and trustees with the approbation of the principal part of the congregation, . . . desired that, that version might be proposed to the congregation to be introduced in a months time unless sufficient reason to the contrary should be signified to Mr. Pemberton in the mean time."

¹⁵² *Records*, p. 260. ¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 267. ¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

The introduction of the "new version" into churches newly established involved less difficulty. That at Newburyport, organized by Whitefield's supporters in 1746, used Watts' Imitations from the beginning; and they were recommended by the Presbytery of Boston as "well adapted to the New Testament Church".¹⁵⁵ Newburyport and its Presbytery were independent, but the process of church extension under the New Side Synod of New York developed some similar situations. Samuel Davies, whom the Presbytery of New Castle ordained for missionary work in Virginia, introduced there not only *The Psalms imitated* but even the *Hymns* of Watts. Two of the former were sung at the installation of John Todd over a Hanover congregation on November 12, 1752, and printed in full in connection with Davies' Installation sermon.¹⁵⁶ In 1755 he wrote from Hanover that Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* were "the system of psalmody the Dissenters use in these parts", and in the same year made requisition upon the London Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge for "a good number" of the *Psalms and Hymns* for the use of his black people. He had found there are no books they learn so soon or take such pleasure in, as they have "a kind of ecstatic delight in psalmody".¹⁵⁷ Davies' use of the *Hymns* was independent and exceptional at that date; and in connection with the writing and publication of hymns of his own composition, makes him a pioneer of Hymnody in the American Presbyterian Church.

Even on the New Side the change in the Psalmody was hesitating and gradual. The Old Side churches furnished no occasion for the Synod of Philadelphia to adjudicate on Psalmody during the whole period of the schism. When in

¹⁵⁵ H. C. Hovey, *Origin and Annals of "The Old South" in Newburyport*, Boston, 1896, p. 53.

¹⁵⁶ *A Sermon preached at the Installation of the Revd. Mr. John Todd*, Glasgow, 1754, pp. 17, 113.

¹⁵⁷ *Letters from the Rev. Mr. Davies*, 2nd ed., London, 1757, p. 12; W. H. Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*, [first series], Philada., 1850, pp. 286, 289.

1763 the query already referred to as to the status of the Imitations in the reunited Church reached the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, it is plain that subsequent investigation convinced many that the Imitations could not be regarded as Psalm-versions. In the Synod of 1764 there was hot debate, and the situation was difficult between lingering Old Side scruples and the New Side precedent in the New York case. No conclusion could be reached till the Synod of 1765 compromised upon a hesitating allowance of the Imitations in these terms:

"The Synod judged it best, in present circumstances, only to declare that they look on the inspired Psalms in Scripture, to be proper matter to be sung in Divine worship, according to their original design and the practice of the Christian churches, yet will not forbid those to use the imitation of them whose judgment and inclination lead them to do so."¹⁵⁸

In the very year of this query, John Miller, by training a Congregationalist, was complained of to the Presbytery of Lewes, Delaware, for introducing Watts' Imitations into his Duck Creek charge. The Presbytery sustained him, but his other charge at Dover, continued to sing "Raus' Version" for many years.¹⁵⁹

At Philadelphia, in the Second Church, initiated by Whitefield's visit, and shepherded by Gilbert Tennent, no steps toward changing the Psalmody were ventured on till 1773. At the Whitefield Memorial Service, October 14, 1770, Watts' hymn, "A Funeral Thought", and Wesley's "Ah! lovely appearance of death", taken from Whitefield's hymn book, were sung by a company of young people,¹⁶⁰ but doubtless regarded as "anthems".¹⁶¹ On March 15, 1773, the congregation voted to introduce Watts' Imitations. So much protest was made that a second congregational meeting was held on March 22, which ratified the choice by

¹⁵⁸ *Records*, p. 345.

¹⁵⁹ S. Miller, *Life of Samuel Miller*, Phila, 1869, vol. i, p. 22.

¹⁶⁰ J. Sproat, *Discourse occasioned by the death of George Whitefield*, Phila. 1771.

¹⁶¹ The New Side Synod of N. Y. had recommended the disuse of anthems on the Lord's Day. *Records*, p. 260.

a vote of 38 for Watts, and 8 for Rous.¹⁶² The minority vainly petitioned the session to reinstate 'Rous' as the only way to restore order and peace, and appealed to the First Presbytery of Philadelphia, which refused to interfere, "As the aforesaid Psalms are used by a large Number of the Congregations within the Bounds of the Synod, and the Synod have allowed the use of them".¹⁶³ An appeal brought the matter once more before the reunited Synod. That body in 1774 declined to decide the case on its merits, on the belated plea that it had no time to consider the versions in question; but in view of earlier permissions to use the Imitations, refused "to make any order to forbid the congregation to continue the practice now begun".¹⁶⁴

Thus once more the matter of changing the Psalmody was left to the decision of the congregation concerned, and the way was officially left open both for the forbearance which Synod earnestly enjoined, and for the years of bitter parochial strife which its decision assured. Meantime, in the years preceding the Revolution, the change to Watts was effected in some parishes, and in many more the advocates of such change were steadily increasing in number. In many minds the wish for improvement in the substance of praise must have been accompanied also by a longing for its better rendering. The Presbyterian Psalmody of the time appears to have been as deplorable as that of New England before "regular" singing was introduced. The adherence to "Rous" carried with it generally an exclusive regard for the few "common tunes" to which that version had been sung in the old country. The ability to render them with musical correctness had long been lost, and the universal practice was to have the Psalms lined out by a precentor, who might or might not know the rudiments of music. John Adams, accustomed to the New England improvements, reports that even in New York in 1774, the Psalmody of the "Old Presbyterian Society" is "in the *old*

¹⁶² Ms. minutes.

¹⁶³ Ms. minutes, May 21, 1773.

¹⁶⁴ *Records*, p. 448.

way, as we call it—all the drawling, quavering, discord in the world".¹⁶⁵ Attending the chapel at Princeton, seven days later (August 27), he notes that the scholars sing as badly as the Presbyterians at New York".¹⁶⁶ It is altogether unlikely that much better conditions prevailed in towns and settlements less accessible to observant travellers.

There had been, however, at Philadelphia a beginning of "the art of psalmody", in which many Presbyterians were concerned, and as early as 1760 a school in which it was taught.¹⁶⁷ In 1761-2 James Lyon, a Nassau-Hall graduate of 1759 and afterwards a Presbyterian clergyman, published by subscription the most elaborate book of church music that had yet appeared in the colonies:— *Urania, a choice collection of Psalm-Tunes, Anthems, and Hymns, from the most approv'd authors, with some entirely new: in two, three, and four parts: the whole peculiarly adapted to the use of churches and private families: to which are prefixed the plainest, & most necessary rules of psalmody.* By James Lyon, A.B. Among the subscribers are many connected with Nassau-Hall, and prominent Presbyterian clergy and laymen in Philadelphia and elsewhere. It was followed by *The lawfulness, excellency and advantage of instrumental musick in the public worship of God, urg'd and enforc'd from Scripture and the examples of the far greater part of Christians in all ages. Address'd to all (particularly the Presbyterians and Baptists) who have hitherto been taught to look upon the use of instrumental musick in the worship of God as unlawful.* By a Presbyterian (Philadelphia, Wm. Dunlap, 1763). This Presbyterian plea for the organ is with a view of improving the congregational singing in the Philadelphia churches, of which the writer says that "the miserable Manner in which this Part of their Worship is dron'd out, seems rather to imitate the Braying

¹⁶⁵ *Works of John Adams*, vol. ii, Boston, 1850, p. 348.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

¹⁶⁷ O. G. Sonneck, *Francis Hopkinson and James Lyon*, Washington, 1905, p. 127.

of Asses, than the divine Melody so often recommended in Scripture".¹⁶⁸

But the list of subscribers prefixed to some early copies of *Urania* shows that "the art of psalmody" had attracted the attention of some influential men in the Second Church. And, from the young people's choir of 1770 already referred to, and the ensuing struggle to introduce Watts, we may infer that some beginning was soon attempted in the way of bettering church music there. But any such attempt there or elsewhere was effectually blocked by the Revolution.

In the decimated and impoverished congregations at the close of the war, Psalmody was maintained with difficulty. The complaint that the services had largely "lost even the appearance of devotion" may be explained by the religious apathy and irreverence which the Revolution left behind it. But the fact that "many" did "not join in singing the praises of God"¹⁶⁹ or give their attention to the singing in progress, is partly at least explained by the deplorable conditions to which the singing was reduced. If it was so bad musically before the war, it was certainly no better afterward. Samuel Blair at Neshaminy describes the congregations as "drolling out the tones of ill-measured dullness, or jarring with harsh discord."

¹⁶⁸ P. 19. There is a copy in The Pennsylvania Historical Society. The pamphlet appeared in April, and was so readily bought that Dunlap advertised a 2nd ed. on June 16. In the same month a burlesque 2nd ed. was advertised as published by Andrew Stuart, viz. *A Cudgell to drive the Devil out of every Christian place of Worship: Being a second edition (with necessary Improvements, which now render the sense entirely plain) of the Lawfulness, Excellency and Advantage, of Instrumental Music in the public Worship of God, but chiefly of Organs.* (Sonneck, *op. cit.*, pp. 131, 132. Hildeburn, No. 1883). "Presbyterian" states that St. Paul's Church, Philadelphia, was "the only English Congregation in the Province" having an organ at that time, though the two other Episcopal churches were then raising organ funds (pp. 28, 30).

¹⁶⁹ Preface to proposed Directory for Worship, in *A Draught of the Form of The Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.*, New York, S. & J. Loudon, 1887, p. 53.

From other points of view than the musical, there was apparent need of some reconstruction of Presbyterian Psalmody. The number of those using or wishing to use Watts' Imitations and even his hymns, was always growing; but, even so, the Imitations, as they stood, contained many objectionable allusions to the British sovereign and state. On the other hand, in almost every congregation in the Scotch and Irish settlements of the South and West there was at least a determined minority resisting change. Any suggestion, on the part of the more progressive element, of Watts' superiority, was enough to turn a congregation into a debating society. Any effort to introduce Watts into public worship was to disturb and often to convulse a parish, if not indeed a larger area.

It may have been with a hope of uniting the two parties that a proposal was made to the Synod of 1785, with a view of attaining "the nearest uniformity that is practicable," that "the Synod choose out, and order some of their number to take the assistance of all the versions in our power, and compose for us a version more suitable to our circumstances and taste than any we now have".¹⁷⁰ After some debate, the proposal was carried by a small majority. The committee reported progress in 1786, and was continued.¹⁷¹ No further report from them is recorded. The minutes of the Synod of 1787 contain the bare statement: "The Synod did allow and do allow, that Dr. Watts's imitation of David's Psalms, as revised by Mr. Barlow, be sung in the churches and families under their care."¹⁷² There is nothing in the record to connect this with any previous action; but John Black, who was present, stated in a sermon at Marsh-Creek in 1790,¹⁷³ that the action was taken upon the report of the committee theretofore appointed, to the effect, that having compared such versions as they could obtain, they did not apprehend

¹⁷⁰ *Records*, pp. 513, 514.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 522. ¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 535.

¹⁷³ *The duty of Christians, in singing the praise of God, explained. A Sermon. By John Black.* Carlisle, Kline & Reynolds, 1790, p. 46.

any so well calculated for christian worship, as that of Dr. Watts, as amended by Mr. Barlow of New England". He adds that *Barlow's Watts* "was then laid before Synod for their consideration, who, after mature deliberation, gave it their judicial sanction".

But the unexpected part of Mr. Black's testimony is what follows, to the effect that "the committee had also added a book of hymns to this version; but it was laid aside; not because Synod disapproved of the thing in itself, but because some parts of the collection seemed to them exceptionable". There is no reason to question his testimony as to the proposed book, and his interpretation of the mind of the Synod is confirmed by the fact that its committee to prepare a new *Directory for Worship* embodied Hymn singing in their draught of their Directory printed in that same year. That the Synod in 1787 was already prepared to examine a specific hymn book on its merits goes far to explain why Hymn singing slipped into the written constitution of the Church with so little debate or even notice. Even so, two questions remain to puzzle us. First: if any hymns were considered in 1787, why not Watts' *Hymns*, which were not "exceptionable", had become dear to many, and were beginning to find their way into churches, without authorization? Second: what was the "book of hymns" added by the committee? It would seem probable that it was the appendix of seventy hymns (mostly from Watts; a few of his own), which Barlow added to his revision of Watts' *Imitations* as presented to, and adopted by, the General Association of Connecticut. Nevertheless surviving copies of one of the first issues of *Barlow's Watts* containing the certificate of its authorization by Synod, and printed at Philadelphia in 1787 by Francis Bailey, have, bound in with the Psalms, and without a separate title, a collection of 139 hymns, whose presence in that connection has not been explained. The collection is of unusual excellence and variety for that time, being brightened by lyrics of both the Wesley brothers, Miss Steele and others later than Watts. In view of the fact that

such men of culture as Dr. Ewing, Dr. Robert Davidson, and Dr. Alison, were on the committee, it remains as an interesting possibility that this collection is the first tentative hymn book of American Presbyterianism.

The approval of *Barlow's Watts* by the Synod of 1787 involved no change of attitude, except that it gave finality to a position which heretofore might seem to be held tentatively. Synod's action was taken in full view of the controversy then raging in the South and West between the partisans of "Rous" and those of Watts, in the presence indeed of representatives of both sides from the disturbed Presbytery of Abingdon.¹⁷⁴ The pleas of neither side moved Synod from its position:—it would not commit the Church to any type of Psalmody; it had already approved both "Rous" and Watts for use in worship, and approved both still; any question as to which should be preferred in any given case was a parochial issue, to be handled forbearingly no doubt, but not to be brought before Synod.¹⁷⁵

The issue between "Rous" and Watts was thenceforward, then, merely a parochial issue. But, in the years following, the aggregate of parishes affected by it was so great, and the consequences so serious, as to make these years of controversy something like a distinct era in the history of the Presbyterian Church.

In Virginia the issue was definitely framed in a fruitless appeal to the Presbytery of Hanover to discipline the Rev. Charles Cummings for abetting the use of Watts. But Mr. Cummings was forced out of his charges by the uneasiness of his people; and the atmosphere of party feeling is revealed by the inquiry from some in various congregations to Presbytery in 1784, as to whether they would be endangered by attending upon the Word preached by Mr. Cummings.¹⁷⁶ In Tennessee the Psalmody question played a principal part in the tumultuous disorders in the newly formed Presbytery of

¹⁷⁴ *Records*, p. 515.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 537.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. W. H. Foote, *Sketches of Virginia, second series*, 2nd ed., Philadelphia, 1856, pp. 124, 125.

Abingdon, which came before the Synod of 1787. In the North Carolina settlements every proposal to introduce Watts bred trouble. At New Providence the use of his Imitations for one Sunday by a pulpit supply (William C. Davis) started the suspicion that the pastor (James Wallis) had connived with him, and permanently disrupted the church, the minority forming a separate congregation.¹⁷⁷ At Poplar Tent, where, about 1785, Mr. Archibald, the pastor, determined to introduce Watts upon his own authority, some of the Rous party left and some stayed to interrupt the worship.¹⁷⁸ The result of the controversy in North Carolina was a permanent schism; those favoring a strict Psalmody withdrawing to form an Associate Presbytery.

The fiercest heat attained in the controversy, and the greatest devastation it left behind, were in its new settlements of Kentucky. Elsewhere the 'Rous' advocates might be regarded as acting on the defensive, but in Kentucky their cause found an aggressive champion in the person of the Rev. Adam Rankin, who came to Lexington in 1784. He sincerely thought he heard a divine call to purge the Church of the taint in its Congregational Song, and his enthusiasm for the exclusive use of Psalms not only possessed his mind but perverted it. When he found in 1785, at the Cane Run conference of the young churches, that his associates were not in sympathy with him nor anxious to agitate a vexed question, he at once entered upon a campaign of fierce and bitter polemic, in the role of a prophet hurling epithets upon his opposers. Censured by Presbytery for traducing his brethren and barring the singers of Watts from the Communion, and suspended for contumacy, he and his supporters withdrew to form what came to be called "the Rankinite Schism," composed of twelve congregations, whose fortunes we need not follow.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ W. H. Foote, *Sketches of North Carolina*, New York, 1846, p. 249.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

¹⁷⁹ For the "Rankin Schism" see R. Davidson, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky*, New York, 1847, chap. 3, and "Origin of the Rankinites" in *Evangelical Record*, Lexington, vol. ii, Sept. 1813.

The Rankin polemics and schism threw a blight upon Kentucky Presbyterianism from which few if any congregations escaped. The spirit of dissension was kept alive for years, and in many places Psalmody became the main issue and concern of religion. Internal feuds prevented attention to the inroads of vice and infidelity, and the high promise of Presbyterianism lapsed into spiritual and material decline.

In Pennsylvania, East and West, the ground was laid for the fire of controversy, but the change to the new Psalmody was made with less disturbance, because more gradually and with more of the spirit of mutual concession. In Philadelphia the change was effected in the Third Church unanimously in 1788.¹⁸⁰ In the West the Presbytery of Redstone, through its entire career, kept its records clear of any allusion to the Psalmody controversy. Watts' Imitations, and afterwards his *Hymns*, found their way into the churches through the homes, and frequently were used at first in rotation with "Rous".¹⁸¹ In some churches, even the use of the Imitations was postponed, as in the First Church of Carlisle, until well into the XIXth century.¹⁸²

The real issue in the "Rous"-Watts controversy was not between a literal or a freer Psalmody, but between an Old Testament Psalmody and an evangelical Hymnody. That issue once decided, it remained for the Church to embody its convictions and practice in the constitution then being framed. This was effected by Synodical adoption of *The Directory for the worship of God, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, on May 16, 1788. Unlike some other parts of the draught reported by the committee of 1787, its chapter "Of the Singing of Psalms" was adopted intact. The title of the chapter is still that of the corresponding chapter of the *Westminster Directory* of 1644.

¹⁸⁰ J. W. Scott, *An Historical Sketch of the Pine Street, or Third Pres. Church*, Philadelphia, 1837, p. 31.

¹⁸¹ Jos. Smith, *Old Redstone*, Philadelphia, 1854, p. 290.

¹⁸² C. P. Wing, *History of the First Pres. Ch. of Carlisle*, Carlisle, 1877, p. 167. Watts was not used till 1824.

but where the opening sentence of the original had declared "the duty of Christians to praise God publicly by singing of Psalms", the new Directory asserts that such duty is to be fulfilled "by singing psalms or hymns". The other changes deal with the propriety of cultivating a knowledge of music, of giving up the practice of lining, and of devoting more time to "this excellent part of divine service" than was usual.

The cultivation of music thus enjoined began at once in some churches, in others had already begun under the numerous "Instructors of Psalmody" raised up under the impulse imparted by Billings, especially Andrew Law of Connecticut. These teachers went from place to place, establishing "Psalmody classes". In the region around Philadelphia, the Presbyterian churches shared in a general¹⁸³ movement to improve sacred music, under the leadership of Andrew Adgate. He founded there in 1784 an "Institution for Promoting the Knowledge of Psalmody", afterwards the "Uranian Acadmy".¹⁸⁴ In 1787 he was preparing to establish "an Institution for Cultivating Church Music free to all."¹⁸⁵ Samuel Blair paid tribute to his benevolence, assiduity and success, and rejoiced in the great improvement he had effected, saying that "Public worship hath assumed, comparatively, a celestial grace; and the temples of religion, . . . now resound with vibrations of well-ordered and commanding melody."¹⁸⁶ Mr. Blair's wish that Adgate's "important services" may continue with the encouragement of all denominations¹⁸⁷ was thwarted by his falling a victim

¹⁸³ Saml. Blair, *Discourse* (1789), p. 25, note.

¹⁸⁴ Sonneck, *op. cit.*, pp. 183, 184.

¹⁸⁵ Preface to his *Psalms and Hymns*.

¹⁸⁶ *A Discourse on Psalmody. Delivered by the Rev. Samuel Blair, in the Presbyterian Church in Neshaminy, at a public concert, given by Mr. Spicer, Master in sacred music: under the superintendency of Mr. Erwin, Pastor of that Church* (Philadelphia, John McColloch, 1789). This scarce pamphlet is the principal evidence of the Presbyterian participation in the Adgate movement, and was published "to enliven and diffuse the spirit of improvement in Psalmody" (preface).

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25, note.

to the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, while serving on the Committee of Alleviation.¹⁸⁸

This movement to improve singing was inevitably a movement toward the use of Watts or of other hymns. The monotony of metre and rude rhythms of "Rous' version" would not serve the purpose of the "masters in sacred music." That is why, in so many parish records, the giving up of lining and the adoption of Watts are recorded as a single entry.¹⁸⁹ Copies have survived of *Select Psalms and Hymns for the use of Mr. Adgate's Pupils: and proper for all singing-schools. Philadelphia: Printed at the Uranian Press, by Young and M'Culloch, Corner of Chestnut & Second Street. MDCCLXXXVII.* The forty hymns were chosen from Watts, Wesley, Steele and others, aiming at metrical variety. Adgate and his colleague, "Mr. Spicer", had also their own music books: the *Uranian Instructions* of 1787, *Rudiments of Music* (1788), *Selection of Sacred Harmony* (1788), *Philadelphia Harmony* (1788); all originally Adgate's, and sometimes, in later editions, carried forward by Spicer. *The Art of Singing*, and other works of Andrew Law, also played a considerable part in the improvement of Presbyterian singing.

No immediate steps were taken by the General Assembly in providing the hymns to be sung under the new *Directory*. In the minds of many, "Hymns" and "Watts" were synonymous. The use of the *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* was not formally authorized until 1802; but at least as early as 1788 editions of *Barlow's Watts*, bearing the clerk's certificate of Synod's authorization, appeared with the *Hymns* bound in. Evidently some churches did not await their authorization. Watts' *Hymns* may be called the first hymn book of American Presbyterianism, disregarding the proposed book of 1787. The second was an independent local venture, with two title pages: *A Version of the Book of Psalms, selected from the most approved versions. . . . Approved of by the*

¹⁸⁸ *Minutes of the Committee*, Philadelphia, 1848, pp. 45, 200.

¹⁸⁹ E. g. in the Third Church of Philadelphia, Sept 29, 1788.

Presbytery of Charleston. A Collection of Hymns for public and private worship. Approved of by the Presbytery of Charleston. (both) Charleston, Printed by J. McIver, No. 47, Bay, MDCCXCVI. This book was prepared by Dr. George Buist of Charleston, with the advice of Dr. Hugh Blair.¹⁹⁰ The hymns are from many sources, including the English Arian hymn books, and with a preference for the Scottish *Paraphrases*. The book was used by the Presbyterian churches in the city and neighborhood of Charleston until at least 1809.¹⁹¹

What must be regarded as the third Presbyterian hymn book was the small collection annexed by President Dwight to his revision of Watts' Imitations for the Connecticut Association, to take the place of Barlow's; inasmuch as these hymns were specifically allowed by the General Assembly of 1802, in connection with the revised Psalms, and at the same time as the allowance of Watts' *Hymns*.¹⁹² The Assembly had cooperated in securing Dwight's revision of the Imitations, as it had cooperated with other projects of the Connecticut Association; but apparently without sharing the prejudice aroused by Barlow and without much interest in the results of Dr. Dwight's labors. And in the end it appears to have been satisfied that churches under Connecticut influence, or which preferred Dwight to Barlow, should make use both of his revised Imitations and his collection of hymns.¹⁹³

The great body of the Church had no apparent desire for a hymn book of their own. As early as 1796 the Assembly was overtured to appoint a committee to compile one, but the proposal was allowed to lie on the table.¹⁹⁴ In 1817 the Presbytery of Philadelphia sent up to the Assembly for its

¹⁹⁰ Preface.

¹⁹¹ *Sermons by the Reverend George Buist, D.D.*, New York, 1809, vol. i, pp. 311, 312, note.

¹⁹² *Minutes 1789-1820*, p. 249.

¹⁹³ On this subject see the writer's "The American Revisions of Watts's Psalms", already cited, pp. 25-26.

¹⁹⁴ *Minutes, ut supra*, p. 116.

approbation "a copy of a collection of Hymns, intended for the use of society meetings; the Presbytery having declined to express their opinion of the book, thinking it proper that it should be submitted to the Assembly".¹⁹⁵ This was presumably *Hymns for social worship, collected from various authors* (Philadelphia, W. W. Woodward, 1817), the work of James P. Wilson, pastor of the First Church of Philadelphia. It contained 181 hymns, and in intent and contents ranges with the "Supplements to Watts". After reference to a committee, the consideration of the book was indefinitely postponed.¹⁹⁶ No further attempt was made to prepare a hymn book for the special use of the Church till the proceedings that culminated in the *Psalms and Hymns* of 1831.

In recognizing Hymn singing in its constitution the Church was far from the intention of cutting itself off from Psalm singing. It approved, rather, Dr. Watts' System of Praise as a whole, with its two departments of Psalms and Hymns. Nor did the desire for an evangelical Hymnody among the people imply dissatisfaction with Watts' Imitations. Probably no parish introduced his *Hymns* apart from the Psalms: some had them bound up with Barlow's Revision from the first: many remained satisfied with the revised Psalms alone. The use of *Barlow's Watts* became so widespread as to make it the characteristic Praise Book of Presbyterianism, and the addition to it of the *Hymns* became a more and more common practice till toward the end of the first quarter of the XIXth century, when it may be regarded as practically universal. Hindered as it was by the Scottish predilection for an Old Testament Psalmody, the Presbyterian Church was slower than some others in attaining the full measure of Dr. Watts' System of Praise, but perhaps in no Church did his ascendancy become more complete. It was a result so belated that, when viewed in connection with the progress of English Hymnody as a whole, it seems like a step backward. A full century had passed since the first

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 641. ¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 667.

appearance of Watts' *Hymns*. The area of Hymnody had been widened permanently under the Evangelical Revival, and its contents greatly enriched not only by fresh hymns but by new types of hymns. During the first quarter of the XIXth century the only apparent contact of the Presbyterian Church with this newer Hymnody was through the proffer of Dr. Wilson's little book of 1817;¹⁹⁷ its only dealing with it was to "postpone indefinitely".

4. THE BAPTISTS.

If the earliest New England Baptists practised Psalm singing at all, they probably, like their neighbors, lined the Psalms out of the *Bay Psalm Book*. But the Baptist immigrants had come out of the heated atmosphere of the "controversy concerning singing", and many of them during the years when persecution had favored the habit of not singing, lest attention be attracted to the meetings.

The First Church of Boston introduced singing before 1728, and lined the Psalms until 1759;¹⁹⁸ the Newport church during the short pastorate of John Comer, beginning in 1726.¹⁹⁹ In the First Church of Providence there was no singing till the coming of President Manning in 1771. Even then its introduction was only accomplished by allowing the women to vote for it, and caused a division.²⁰⁰

In the Middle Colonies and to some extent in the Southern, the introduction of singing into Baptist churches was effected through the influence of a body of Welsh Baptists settled on the Welsh Tract in Delaware.²⁰¹ They adopted in 1716 an English Confession of Faith of 1689, but with

¹⁹⁷ Even Dr. Wilson did not know that his 176th hymn, "Jesus! lover of my soul", was by one of the Wesleys.

¹⁹⁸ N. E. Wood, *History of the First Baptist Church of Boston*, Philadelphia, 1899, pp. 220, 243.

¹⁹⁹ A. H. Newman, *History of the Baptist Churches in the United States*, ed. Philada., 1898, p. 115.

²⁰⁰ R. A. Guild, *History of Brown University*, Boston, 1867, pp. 207-210.

²⁰¹ Morgan Edwards, *Materials toward a history of the Baptists in Delaware State*, in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History*, vol. ix, p. 52.

the addition of two articles from a confession published by Benjamin Keach and his son Elias in 1697, one being on the duty "Of Singing Psalms, &c".²⁰² The increase of immigration soon made Philadelphia a Baptist centre, and in 1742 the Philadelphia Association ordered the printing of a new edition of the Confession of 1689 as their own,²⁰³ with the insertion of two articles, one on the singing of Psalms,²⁰⁴ the other on laying on of hands upon baptized believers. These articles, thus incorporated in their doctrinal statement, proved to be identical with those of Keach adopted by the church on the Welsh Tract in 1716.²⁰⁵

The *Bay Psalm Book* was probably in use in and around Philadelphia as well as in New England. In Boston the First Church changed to *Tate and Brady* in 1740, "so long as no objections should be offered against it".²⁰⁶ the Baldwin Place Church sang *Tate and Brady* till about 1770.²⁰⁷ And it may be that some Baptist demand in and around Philadelphia helped to encourage Franklin to reprint that version in 1733.

In America as in England Baptists were not greatly concerned to preserve a strict Psalmody, owing partly to the desire for sacramental hymns. When the "controversy concerning singing" was disposed of, the introduction of hymns hardly raised an issue.

There is no doubt that the Baptist impulse toward Hymn singing was largely derived from Watts, and that in many churches his were the first hymns sung. Franklin's reprints

²⁰² W. J. McGlothlin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, Philadelphia [1911], p. 294.

²⁰³ *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1707-1807*, Philada., 1851, p. 46.

²⁰⁴ "Singing psalms met with some opposition, especially at Cohansey:" Morgan Edwards, *ut supra*.

²⁰⁵ *A Confession of Faith . . . Adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, Sept. 25, 1742. . . To which are added, Two Articles viz. Of Imposition of Hands, and Singing of Psalms in Publick Worship*: Philadelphia, B. Franklin, 1743; often reprinted.

²⁰⁶ N. E. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

²⁰⁷ D. C. Eddy, *Memorial Sermon*, Boston, 1865, p. 30.

of the *Psalms imitated* in 1741 and of the *Hymns* in 1742 were probably used in some of them about Philadelphia. In Boston, *Tate and Brady* was replaced by Watts' *Psalms and Hymns* soon after 1770 in the Baldwin Place Church,²⁰⁸ and in 1771 in the First Church.²⁰⁹ Their adoption became very widespread, and they rooted themselves deep in the hearts of a great body of Baptists. But several considerations tended to impede to some extent the ascendancy of Watts in American Baptist Hymnody.

There was, first, *the tendency to establish a denominational Hymnody*, especially to supply hymns suitable to "believer's baptism". Morgan Edwards has preserved the hymn that had been used at the "Baptisterion" on the banks of the Schuylkill, just beyond Philadelphia.²¹⁰ The earliest American Baptist hymn book, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs, collected from the works of several authors* (Newport, 1766), opens with sixteen hymns on Baptism. And so, in 1808, after the appearance of many books, the anonymous *The Boston Collection of sacred and devotional Hymns* "was compiled principally with a view to accommodate the Baptist Churches of Boston and its vicinity, who have long desired such a collection, for the purpose of singing at the administration of" Baptism.

From the first, however, the desire of many went beyond baptismal hymns. They wanted Baptist hymn books, that should make available the new store of hymns, Baptist and other, written since Watts' time and made current in English collections; and many were moved to contribute hymns of their own composition. The independent and individualistic spirit combined with denominational insistence, that has always characterized Baptists, developed and has maintained a striking proclivity toward the multiplication of hymn books. The great array of these tends to obscure the actual extent of the use of Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*.

²⁰⁸ D. C. Eddy, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

²⁰⁹ N. E. Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

²¹⁰ *Materials towards a history of the Baptists in Pennsylvania*, vol. 1, Philada. J. Cruikshank, 1770, pp. 131, 132.

The Newport book was followed by two at Philadelphia: *A choice Collection of Hymns, in which are some never before printed. Philadelphia: Printed in the year 1782*,²¹¹ and *A choice Collection of Hymns, from various authors, adapted to publick worship: designed for the edification of the pious of all denominations; but more particularly for the use of the Baptist Church in Philadelphia* (Enoch Story, 1784). Both of these appear to have been prepared for his following of "Universal Baptists" by Elhanan Winchester, after his exclusion from the pulpit of the First Baptist Church. The latter is said to have been used in the Church of the German Baptist Brethren (Dunkers), already formed at Germantown.²¹² It certainly furnished much of the materials of the Brethren's first English hymn book, *The Christians Duty, exhibited, in a series of Hymns . . . Recommended to the serious of all Denominations. By the Fraternity of Baptist's. The first edition. Germantown, printed by Peter Leibert, 1791*.²¹³

In 1788 the Philadelphia Association determined to have an official book for the associated churches.²¹⁴ It appeared as *A Selection of Psalms and Hymns, done under the appointment of the Philadelphian Association. By Samuel Jones, D.D. and Burgis Allison, A.M.* (Philadelphia, R. Aitken & Son, 1790; 2nd ed., 1801; 4th, 1819). The Psalms were all from Watts: most of the hymns from Rippon's *Selection* (London, 1786) and one "printed in London, 1774"; apparently Conyers'. The book was highly regarded within and beyond the Association. *Hymns on different spiritual subjects* (Norwich, 1792) by Benjamin Cleveland,²¹⁵ as also the later *Hymns and Spiritual Songs on various subjects. By the Rev. Ebenezer Jayne* (Morristown,

²¹¹ Not in Hildeburn's *Issues of the Pennsylvania Press*. The writer's copy is recorded by Evans.

²¹² Ms. note in the writer's copy.

²¹³ 2nd ed., 1801; 3rd, 1813; 4th, 1825; *Supplement*, 1816; 2nd ed., 1825.

²¹⁴ *Minutes*, p. 239.

²¹⁵ Cf. H. S. Burrage, *Baptist Hymn Writers and their Hymns*, Portland, Me., n. d., pp. 223, 641.

1809), were offerings of original contributions, of which Cleveland's hymn, "Oh, could I find from day to day", alone survived.

It is likely that many of the Baptist hymn books were not intended to replace Watts in church worship: a number bore on their title-pages the assurance that they were only supplements to his *Psalms and Hymns*. Of these the most popular, here as in England, was Rippon's *Selection*. Two reprints of it appeared in 1792, at New York and Elizabeth, and were followed by others. William Parkinson, of the First Church in New York, published in 1809 *A Selection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs . . . as an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns*, which, he says in his preface "in most congregations of Christians are constantly used". William Collier's *A new Selection of Hymns* (Boston, 1812), was also a supplement to Watts. That such books were actually used in connection with Watts appears from the publication of Daniel Dodge's *A Selection of Hymns and Psalms* (Wilmington, 1808), an effort to combine the best from Watts and Rippon for the convenience of those who found it burdensome to carry both books to church, but could not agree to dispense with either; "some being passionately fond of one and some of the other".

A second consideration tending to impede the ascendancy of Watts was *the preference of a considerable proportion of Baptist people for songs of a lower literary grade*. The strength of the Church was among the uncultured; its extension was by means of evangelistic methods. "The mass of the Baptists were indifferent or hostile to ministerial education." They craved highly emotional preaching and songs of the same type in free rhythms that could be sung to popular melodies with choruses.

This showed itself as early as 1784²¹⁶ in the *Divine Hymns, or Spiritual Songs* of Joshua Smith, a New Hampshire layman, and others, which gave currency to the hymn on "Christ the apple-tree", and made odd additions to other

²¹⁶ Brinley catalogue, lot 6038.

hymns. This book in varying forms²¹⁷ was very popular: its 1803 edition was the first hymn book used in the First Church of Portland, Maine.²¹⁸ "Spiritual songs" appeared in most Baptist hymn books, and were sung also without book. "This kind of composition," says Mr. Parkinson in 1809, "has, for several years past been greatly abused—Songs have been circulated, not only in Ms. but also in print, which have been so barbarous in language, so unequal in numbers, and so defective in rhyme, as to excite disgust in all persons even of tolerable understanding in these things; what is infinitely worse, so extremely unsound in doctrine, that no discerning Christian can sing or hear them without pain." Believing that "many of them, notwithstanding, contain valuable ideas," Mr. Parkinson aimed to "lessen the use of several hymn books now in common circulation" by furnishing "those who choose to make use of them with a greater variety and more correct edition of what are called *Spiritual Songs* than they now possess."²¹⁹ We may judge existing conditions by the character of some of the 170 songs appended to Parkinson's *Selection* with a view of ameliorating them. Of the first, each verse carries the refrain:—

"Then be entreated now to stop,
For unless you warning take,
Ere you are aware you'll drop
Into the burning lake."

The fifth is entitled "Miss Hataway's Experience" and includes her conversation with "an uncle from whom she had large expectations".

Parkinson's *Selection* had reached a third edition in 1817, and Southern Baptists had called for three editions of Jesse Mercer's *The Cluster of Spiritual Songs, Divine Hymns and Social Poems: being chiefly a collection*.

By this time the new zeal for missions was developing a demand for an educated ministry, and drawing a sharp line

²¹⁷ For some of the known editions, see W. DeL. Love, *Samson Occum*, Boston, n. d., p. 180, note.

²¹⁸ Burrage, *op. cit.*, p. 643.

²¹⁹ Preface to Parkinson's *Selection*, 1809.

of cleavage between its advocates and the "anti-effort" Baptists. In the Hymnody the line was not so sharply drawn, but as a rule the less educated congregations, especially in the South, carried forward the use of "Spiritual Songs". An especial favorite was Starke Dupuy's *Hymns and Spiritual Songs, selected and original*, Louisville, c. 1818 (22nd ed., 1841; revised by J. M. Peck, 1843), emotional and often illiterate. Even in New England David Benedict's *The Pawtucket Collection of Conference Hymns* (1817) reached an eighth edition (1843). In Virginia Andrew Broadus published in 1828 his *Dover Selection of Spiritual Songs* by recommendation of the Dover Association, but in his better *Virginia Selection* of 1836 the "spiritual song" element is apologized for as an allowance made for "popular liking". William Dossey's *The Choice; in two parts* (3rd ed., 1830) was largely used in the South, and included over a hundred of his own hymns.

There were, on the other hand, many Baptist churches which had yielded very partially or not at all to "popular liking", and had never given up the use of Watts' *Psalms and Hymns*. But their pastors had required hymns to supplement Watts, and the people complained of the inconvenience of using more than one book and the difficulty of finding the hymns as given out. This led to something like a concerted effort to conserve the better type of Baptist Hymnody. James M. Winchell, who had developed congregational song in his First Church of Boston,²²⁰ published there in 1818 *An arrangement of the Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs of . . . Watts, to which are added, indexes . . . to facilitate the use of the whole . . .*, with which was bound up *A Selection of more than three hundred Hymns, from the most approved authors* (1819). "Winchell's Watts" attained, and for many years held, in New England a use so wide that it has been described as "universal".²²¹ In

²²⁰ Cf. R. H. Neale, *Address at 200th Anniversary of First Baptist Church*, Boston, 1865, p. 38.

²²¹ Neale, *ut supra*.

1820 the same office was performed for the churches centering at Philadelphia by *The Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts, arranged by Dr. Rippon; with Dr. Rippon's Selection in one volume*. An improved edition appeared in 1827, and was commended to the churches by a large number of ministers as the best hymn book "in use among Christians".²²² In the copies of this edition a portrait of Dr. Watts was not unfitly prefixed.

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[*To be concluded.*]

²²² Cf. "recommendations" preserved in Sommers and Dagg's ed., Phila., D. Clark, 1838.