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## “THE VICTORIOUS LIFE”

It appears to have been early observed that the mills of the gods grind very slowly: and hasty spirits have been only partially reconciled to that fact by the farther observation that they do their work exceedingly well. Men are unable to understand why time should be consumed in divine works. Why should the almighty Maker of the heaven and earth take millions of years to create the world? Why should He bring the human race into being by a method which leaves it ever incomplete? Above all, in His recreation of a lost race, why should He proceed by process? Men are unwilling that either the world or they themselves should be saved by God's secular methods. They demand immediate, tangible results. They ask, Where is the promise of His coming? They ask to be themselves made glorified saints in the twinkling of an eye. God's ways are not their ways, and it is a great trial to them that God will not walk in their ways. They love the storm and the earthquake and the fire. They cannot see the divine in “a sound of gentle stillness,” and adjust themselves with difficulty to the lengthening perspective of God's gracious working. For the world they look every day for the cataclysm in which alone they can recognize God's salvation; and when it ever delays its coming they push it reluctantly forward but a little bit at a time. For themselves they cut the knot and boldly declare complete salvation to be within their reach at their option, or already grasped and enjoyed. It is true, observation scarcely justifies the assertion. But this difficulty is easily removed by adjusting the nature of complete salvation to fit their present attainments. These impatient souls tolerate more readily the idea of an imperfect perfection than the admission of lagging perfecting.

## NOTES AND NOTICES

### THE COMMON SERVICE BOOK AND HYMNAL OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

We do not understand that the word "common" as here used has just the signification that is familiar to us in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* and the Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship*. In these cases we understand by "common" something that is perhaps not very different from "public." In the case of the Lutheran *Common Service*, we understand rather a form of worship which represents a consensus of the pure 16th century Lutheran Liturgies and in which Lutheran General Bodies have agreed to unite; so far fulfilling Muhlenberg's wish that all Lutheran congregations in the United States might use "the same order of service, the same hymn book."

And this use of the word "common" measures the significance of the present volume. It represents nothing less than the service and the hymn book which three General Bodies of American Lutheranism have prepared jointly and have agreed to use in common. But the significance of the book is even greater. Its conception, its preparation, and its acceptance, have proved to be a great step toward Lutheran unity; and the *Common Service* is fairly entitled to a great place in the causes moving toward the pending foundation of a United Lutheran Church.

The "Common Service" has been for years in tentative or accepted use in various Lutheran bodies, and calls for no special discussion at the present time. The present publication may be regarded as a definite edition, embodying such minor adjustments and additions as seemed expedient to the joint committee representing the three General Bodies. Beyond that its special novelty is in the musical settings of the various offices. These represent a choral service, and are furnished in two types. Of these the first is largely based on melodies associated with the Anglican liturgy, and has been well prepared by the Rev. J. F. Ohl, Mus. Doc. The second contains the historic plain-song melodies which have been in use for a period long antedating the Reformation, and here again in their original unbarred form.

*The Hymnal* which here becomes a constituent part of *The Common Service Book*, having only a sub-title page, is now first published after long and careful preparation by the same joint committee, and demands more detailed consideration.

Luther and Lutheranism were from the first distinguished by their love of music and their free use of "hymns of human composure" as against the more restricted singing of metrical versions of Biblical "songs of inspiration" as introduced by Calvin into Reformed Churches. And Luther himself did much toward establishing that spiritually satisfying type of congregational hymn-tunes, which is easier to recognize than to define, and which has been called ever since "the German Chorale." The Lutheran immigrants to the American colonies were already provided with their hymn books, but the task of developing an English-speaking Lutheranism involved also the necessity of English Lutheran hymn books, and this task has, it may be frankly said, proved difficult from the days of Muhlenberg until now. Available translations of German hymns were poor indeed; even editors at home in the two tongues were scarce. Moreover the American climate, perhaps because developing a certain lightness and nervous sensitiveness, proved and has remained inhospitable to the German chorale. And even Lutherans, as the generations passed, tended to adopt the ways of their neighbors as well as their language, and the maintenance of peculiarly Lutheran traditions and standards in hymnology, as elsewhere, became problematic. In thinking of the line of American Lutheran hymn books of the 19th Century, one is disposed to say that the maintenance of such traditions and standards had been given up by the English-speaking church, and that its hymnody had little to distinguish it from that of even the less churchly of its neighbors, until the General Council began the process of recovery with its *Church Book* of 1868.

There are of course two points of view from which this situation may be viewed. It may be urged that just such a merger of denominational traditions and practices is desirable as tending toward the adoption of common standards and as thus contributing to the upbuilding of a more Catholic-hearted American Church. But it may also be urged that the simplest and most inevitable common denominator is indifferentism and an

easy-going sloppiness; that what need to be cherished and cultivated are the high things and perhaps the austere things that are the glory of our several denominational inheritances; and that only the denominations who keep these things pure and vital will have anything to contribute to the stock of a united Church.

There is a good deal to be said for this latter view. It is at all events, the view of the compilers of this hymnal. They have conceived their work on the model of the Church Year, around which the hymnody of the old Latin Church revolved, and which was the model of Lutheran worship more strictly perhaps than it afterwards became that of Anglican worship. They have aimed to conserve in the hymnody also, as in the structure and elements of the Common Worship, an adequate representation of the old Church's liturgical treasures. There are 578 numbers in this hymnal. Of these some 9 are from Greek sources, and 45 are versions of Latin hymns; more than a tenth of the whole, representing the hymnody of the old Church; with which are of course to be associated the ancient liturgical materials and the plain-song melodies of the Common Service itself. All this is quite in the spirit and manner of historic Lutheranism, and plants the feet of its worship just where Luther would have them stand.

The editors have next sought to conserve, or often to restore, the best of the Lutheran chorales, giving them mostly their rhythmic form, and these have been set as far as may be to the best obtainable English versions of the hymns with which the chorales were originally associated. There are about 120 versions of German hymns (not all Lutheran) in the collection, with 3 from Swedish and Danish Lutheran sources; nearly a fifth of the whole number. Of Gerhardt there are 15; of Luther 7; of Schmolck, Spitta and Zinzendorf 5 each; and of Tersteegen 3. Some 15 American Lutherans contribute originals or translations. Miss Winkworth is naturally the preferred translator, with 49 numbers; John Wesley has 11; while Miss Borthwick has only 6; Miss Cox and John C. Mattes 5 each; Richard Massie 4.

We have thus accounted for 158 hymns as in one way or another characteristic or suggestive of Lutheranism. There remain 420 numbers (more than seven-tenths of the whole),

the great majority of which represent the current hymnody of the other English-speaking denominations by which Lutheranism is surrounded, and which constitute a sufficiently Catholic and in many ways excellent selection from it. All of the 32 hymns which figure in the present writer's *The Best Church Hymns* as in most general use are found here. The general atmosphere of the book is theologically conservative, and churchly in the liturgical sense, as indeed it must be if Lutheranism is to be maintained. But in Lutheran as in other churches churchly and "evangelical" schools of thought are learning to tolerate each other, and there is here a sufficient representation of the "evangelical" type of thought and practice short of rivalism and its "gospel songs." The "Moody and Sankey" type is absent by general consent. Indeed the 24 hymns of Isaac Watts and the 20 of Charles Wesley exceed those of any other author, except John Mason Neale, whose 24 belong mostly among the translations. After these come Montgomery and Horatius Bonar with 14 each; Bishop How with 10; Bishop Wordsworth, Ellerton, Miss Havergal, John Newton and H. W. Baker, with 9 each. The evangelical Kelly and the Roman Catholic Coswall have 8 each, all but one of the latter's being however only translations. Lyte has 7; Godfrey Thring 6; Ray Palmer and Doddridge 5 each.

This large body of English and American hymns has been carefully set to tunes, of which the standard is less severe than in Miss Krauth's well-known setting of *The Church Book*, and, we should say, not very different from that sought to be maintained in *The Hymnal* of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. More of them are set to tunes of German origin here than there, and some melodies necessary in a Presbyterian book by reason of associations are not included here. On the other hand many of the settings are the same here and there. Indeed a common usage in this matter is gradually establishing itself in churches aiming at refined but effective congregational song.

In reviewing a hymnal so carefully prepared, its omissions are almost as interesting as its inclusions. Among omitted hymns in most frequent use in non-Lutheran churches the present reviewer has noticed,—“The shadows of the evening hours,” “At the Name of Jesus,” “Spirit of God descend upon

my heart," "Stand up, stand up for Jesus," "Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult," "O Jesus, I have promised," "Hark! hark! my soul," "Beneath the cross of Jesus," "Fight the good fight," "O Paradise, O Paradise," and "Lead, kindly Light." Most of these would be indispensable to a Presbyterian hymnal at this date; but one can readily understand that in a Lutheran book they duplicate something else similar in tone or content, or can be spared for other reasons in the given conflict between materials and space.

A very striking omission is that of what we may call the non-churchly and often humanitarian type of hymn which the religious poetry of Whittier did so much to exemplify and to inaugurate, and which is just now in some sections of the Church at the topmost wave of popularity. Of Whittier there is none at all; or even of Samuel Longfellow, or Johnson, or Gladden, or Hosmer, or Oliver Wendell Holmes. The new hymnody of humanitarian service has little recognition beyond North's "Where cross the crowded ways of life"; and we have to conclude that these newest schools of American hymnody, and the ones at the moment in the ascendant, have been carefully examined, discussed, and finally rejected by the committee preparing the hymnal as not giving adequate expression to the Lutheran traditions of churchliness or the Lutheran conception of hymnody. In this they are well within their rights, and for this they will have no criticism from the outside. There is much of this newest hymnody that no Presbyterian can sing, and if there is none of it that a Lutheran cares to sing—well, why should he? The present reviewer does not find anything in the new Lutheran hymnal that leaves the spirit of criticism dominant in his mind. It is an excellent book; made with brains and not with a pair of scissors and pot of paste. Everything has been carefully thought out and carefully wrought. The hymnologist is sure to note that the work has been done with competent scholarship and taste. One who has the interests of congregational song at heart will be likely to remark that in this book another great American Church is adequately equipped—and he might well add that the publishers have done their part and made a handsome and distinctive book.

*Philadelphia.*

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