

and clearly and in memorable form what the rest of us can only think in a vague way. This facility is often used by the ordinary rather inarticulate person when faced with the necessity of conveying something which they feel deeply but have no words of their own to use. How often does one hear a parishioner using a phrase from one of the popular hymns to express some emotion which has defeated him or her and in the great crises of life it is remarkable that it is often the words of a hymn rather than the words of Scripture that comes from the lips of even more than nominal church men and women.

In the end the value of CH 3 as a Manual of devotion will be assessed when the time comes to compile its successor and it will be seen how many of its contents are carried on to the new book. At the moment I think that CH 3 reflects very fairly the spiritual thoughts and aspirations of those of us who have been brought up on the Old Book and have found its successor a not unhappily balanced composition. The people who decide CH 3's merits will be those who have grown up with it knowing no other hymnary but subjected to all the influences that obtain in these last years of the 20th century and the first years of the next. They will know what they want to carry forward from it for they will know what they have found helpful, what has shown them God, what has developed their spiritual lives. He would be very bold who offered any conjecture on that subject but I have a feeling that a great many of the old traditional hymns - things like "Abide with me" which ends CH 3 - will get through because they are the spiritual expressions of the Christians of all the ages. They speak to needs that never change and make their appeal because they say what we cannot readily find words to express. But I am sure that there will also be a little group of hymns with their tunes to which CH 3 has introduced us which will accompany the old war-horses into the future. But it is only emerging very gradually which these potential classics might be.

A DIP IN THE ARCHIVES

George W Sprott speaking at the Annual Meeting, 25th May, 1876:-

"Some time ago, at an Irish Synod, there was a great outcry against sacramentalism, when the presiding Bishop said he would like to hear the views of those present on two extracts which he would read. The first was received with expressions of horror and cries of repudiation, the second met with the heartiest approbation. 'Gentlemen,' said the Bishop, 'the first extract which you repudiate with so much abhorrence is from the writings of one of our most illustrious reformers, the latter, which you so loudly applauded, is from the works of that Christ-denying heretic Socinus.' I think it quite possible that a similar experiment in Scotland might in various quarters have similar result."