

Rippon's Tunes.

IN order to estimate accurately the alleged position of any celebrity and the asserted importance of his works, it is absolutely necessary that we should possess some reliable information concerning the times in which he lived, and the environment in which he laboured. In the case of the subject of this article, this knowledge, although easily obtainable, is somewhat depressing. The latter decades of the 18th century, in which the Rev. John Rippon, D.D., attained the eminence to which he appears to have been justly entitled, exemplified the dead level of depression which often follows the departure of some great religious or denominational leader or movement. At that time no Congregationalist had been found to compensate for the passing of Watts and Doddridge, and no Methodist had appeared with the outstanding personality or organising ability of John Wesley; while the principal Baptist preachers were Abraham Booth and Andrew Fuller, of Kettering, Dr. Ryland, of Northampton, John Foster and Robert Hall (like Jay, of Bath, amongst the Congregationalists), having reputations then only in the making.

A somewhat similar state of affairs obtained in the province of hymnology. It has been asserted that authoritative denominational hymnals were practically unknown before Josiah Conder, in 1836, produced by request, *The Congregational Hymn Book*; unless we admit the *Collection of Hymns for the use of the People called Methodists*, issued by Wesley in 1780. But it appeared that the General Baptist Association, in 1791, "sanctioned" the preparation of a new *Collection of Hymns* to supersede the collection of 1782. Prior to this, in 1769, the Western Association had officially endorsed the *Bristol Hymn Book*, compiled by Drs. Ash and Evans, of Pershore and Bristol respectively. In addition to these there existed several private collections, while the Congregationalists were almost entirely depending upon Watts's hymns and paraphrases with the addition of "supplements" or individual contributions such as those of Doddridge (1755, 1766), etc.

Into this somewhat chilly atmosphere there entered a young man from the country, to wit, John Rippon, born at Tiverton, Devon, April 29, 1751. Educated at the Baptist College, Bristol, he became, in 1773, at the age of 22, the pastor of the Baptist Church in Carter Lane, Tooley Street, London, which was afterwards removed to New Park Street, and where he ministered until his death, December 17, 1836. In 1813 he became President of the Baptist Union, the first occupant of that position. His degree of Doctor of Divinity was bestowed upon him in 1792 by

the Baptist College of Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., in appreciation of his ministerial and literary labours. Amongst the latter, stress should be laid upon his work as compiler of the *Baptist Register*, a periodical which recorded the principal events in the history of its denomination both in Great Britain and America during the period of its publication, from 1790 to 1802, and is still of great value for reference purposes. As the projector and editor of this publication, says Skeats in his *History of the Free Churches*, Rippon "rendered effective service not merely to his own distinctive principles but to the work of the Christian Churches." There was a portrait of him, in old age, in the vestry of New Park Street Chapel. It is now one of the treasures of Spurgeon's Tabernacle.

But an undertaking of even greater importance than the one last mentioned, and one which, in some respects, marks the summit of Rippon's literary attainments, had been issued by him in 1787, under the title of "A collection of hymns from the best authors, intended as an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns." This work achieved an enormous popularity both within and beyond the bounds of the Baptist denomination. It went through 30 editions, of which the 10th appeared as early as 1800. This latter edition contained more than 60 additional hymns, while the 27th edition of 1827 had over 80.

Upon the expiration of the copyright of the first edition, in 1844, after Rippon's death, there was issued a new edition, entitled the "Comprehensive" edition, or *The Comprehensive Rippon*. This contained 1174 hymns, 400 of which were additional, the whole illustrating one hundred different metres. The popularity of the work was further demonstrated by the publication, owing to the laxity of the copyright laws of that period, of several rival editions bearing the original title.

The publication of the *Selection* had not only assisted in making Dr. Rippon "one of the most popular, distinguished and influential ministers of his time," enabling him also to perform "an important service to Baptist Hymnology," but, says the late Rev. W. R. Stevenson in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, it is asserted to have gained for "its Compiler 'an estate' through its immense sale." Another authority declares that this "most famous book" was much drawn upon by subsequent editors as a "source-book"; and, as a standard book of Baptist Hymnology, its "enormous sales" made Rippon a "comparatively wealthy" man.

The contents of the *Selection* included hymns by Watts, Doddridge, Beddome, Fawcett, Steele, Stennett and others, besides several by Rippon himself, these latter being somewhat difficult to determine, as, in accordance with an absurd practice, popular

at that time, Rippon never affixed his name to any of his productions, contenting himself, in the preface to his 10th edition, by admitting that a few of the hymns were from his pen.

There has also been claimed for Rippon "great editorial discretion and taste, even in alterations of and additions to existing texts." One of his principal additions, and one which has been almost universally adopted, is in Perronet's hymn :

"All hail! the power of Jesu's name."

Here the verses commencing :

"Let every kindred, every tribe,"

and :

"Oh that with yonder sacred throng"

were practically written by Rippon, while his other emendations and suggestions form the basis of most modern versions of the hymn.

Whether the compilation of a tune-book, for use with the *Selection*, formed part of Rippon's original design, or whether the idea was suggested by the force of circumstances, it would be difficult to say, although the appearance of the tunes only four years after that of the hymns would seem to lend support to the first of the above-mentioned conjectures. At any rate, there appeared, in 1791, Rippon's memorable book, "A Selection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes from the Best Authors, in three and four parts; adapted principally to Dr. Watts's Hymns and Psalms, and to Dr. Rippon's selection of hymns; containing, in a greater variety than any other volume extant, the most approved compositions which are used in London, and in the different congregations throughout England; also, many original tunes never before printed; the whole forming a publication of above three hundred tunes, odes, etc., by John Rippon, D.D."

The above forms the title page of the 1815 edition, and from it we further learn that copies "may be had at the vestry of Dr. Rippon's meeting house in Carter Lane, Tooley Street, price 8s. 6d. half bound; 10s. 6d. fine, bound in calf. Extra paper and binding, 13s. Fine ruled paper may be added, 6d. every twelve leaves. Those Persons who purchase six Copies of Mr. R. may have a seventh Gratis." The last sentence shows "Mr. R." in the capacity of a keen man of business. The reference to "ruled paper" alludes to the practice, continued almost to the end of the last century, of binding with tune-books a quantity of music paper for the insertion in manuscript of tunes not found in the purchased collection. While the price at which the work was sold shows that the practice of choral singing was by no means general, and that the age of cheap music was yet to come.

Historically Rippon's tune-book makes two important claims upon our attention. In the first place it was practically the first to insert, systematically, marks of expression, such as *p. f* or *ff*, *pia.*, *for.*, *cresc.*, *dim.*, *etc.* : and such tempo indications as grave, lively, solemn, brisk, etc. Generally speaking, the expression marks are somewhat mechanical, and occasionally they are at variance with modern ideas, e.g. in Shrubsole's *Miles Lane*, in which the second and third iterations of the words "Crown Him" are marked *piano* instead of the usual *cresc.* or *forte*. Then, in the second place, the work was the most extensive which had as yet appeared with a companion hymn-book; and, as such, justifies Skeats's allusion to Rippon as a man of musical as well as literary and poetical attainments, "a poet of accurate taste, if not of vigorous thought." It has been claimed for Rippon's work that it was the first in which the tunes were given definite names, but the practice originated in Este's Psalter of 1592, and was systematically employed in the *Lock Hospital Tunes*, the compilation, in 1769, of Rev. Martin Madan, the founder of the last-named institution. On the other hand, the popularity of Rippon's tunes is abundantly demonstrated by the number of the editions through which the musical "Selection" passed. Of these the second appeared in 1806, others following in 1811, 1815, 1820, etc., these latter issues being known as Walker's *Companion*. A miniature edition of the tunes was also produced containing only "the Air and the Bass," and was declared to be "adapted to the Piano Forte," at a cost of "in calf 7s. 6d.," or "extra neat in calf 8s. 6d." Here it must be remembered that the playing of only "the Air and the Bass" was a common practice amongst incompetent performers of that period, and even as late as 1836, we have Dr. Crotch (1775-1847) sometime Professor of Music at Oxford, and the first Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, advising that in giving out a tune (or playing without voices on the organ) the harmony should be omitted, "and only the treble and bass played."

The reference to Walker's *Companion* reminds us that although Rippon's musical abilities were such as to lead him to the perpetration of an oratorio, *The Crucifixion*, published about 1837, he seems to have felt the need of professional assistance in the compilation of his tune-book. In this case his choice fell upon one Thomas Walker (1764-1827), an alto vocalist of the metropolis, who, in 1808, published a volume of "Anthems and set pieces for 2, 3, 4 and 5 Voices," several of which were included in later editions of Rippon's *Tunes*. Walker in his Preface, refers to his father's and his own friendship with Dr. Rippon—respect for the latter, he says, having induced him with cheerfulness to assist "in the execution of the work." To

what extent the harmonies of the tunes were arranged or edited by Walker it is almost impossible to say. Unfortunately his compositions, whether in hymn-tune or anthem form, are decidedly weak, even for that period. One, a "Benediction," concluding the work, the writer of this paper has adapted and inserted in an anthem collection published by Paxton & Co.

In the preface to the first 1791 edition of his tunes, Rippon declares the circulation of his hymnology *Selection* to have been "near 20,000 copies in a few years." The tune-book is in size a small oblong, about 9½ ins x 4½ ins. Walker contributes "a brief introduction to psalmody," really an inadequate and involved explanation of the rudiments of music; a table of musical terms in which appear such misprints as *Affettuoso* for *affetuoso*, *Gratioto* for *grazioso*, *spiretto* for *spirito*; and such misleading explanations as "sung rather slow" and "every note distinctly" for *andante*; "the slowest movement" for *adagio*; and "when the parts follow each other" for *fugue*. The "Lessons," accompanied by examples in musical notation, show a comparatively poor method of sight-reading, and teach the pernicious practice of "slurring" by inserting "grace notes" between the essential tones of a melody. The "peculiar" metres are explained by means of characteristic verses. The work is furnished with a metrical index of tunes, the latter numbering (in the 7th edition) 320, inclusive of several metrical anthems or "odes," a large number of tunes and anthems being in three parts—treble, alto and bass. The paper and engraving would be considered execrable to-day, but at that time was doubtless regarded as exemplary. The index contains several printers' errors.

Taking one of the latter editions, e.g., the seventh, as being somewhat more comprehensive than the first, we may divide the contents into four parts, namely, 1st, standard tunes; 2nd contemporary compositions; 3rd, adaptations; and 4th, anthems or "set pieces." In the first division we find amongst the tunes of Tudor times the perverted or "debased floriated" version of *Tallis's Canon*, which is here announced as "altered from Tallis"; an unauthentic version of the Old 100th, erroneously ascribed to Martin Luther (!); the *Old 113th*, from the Anglo-Genevan Psalter of 1588; and, from Ravenscroft's Psalter of 1621, such tunes as *Old 104th*, *Windsor*, *St. David's*, etc. Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), the last great master of the Elizabethan age, is represented by a triple-time version of his so-called *Angel's Hymn*, really an adaptation of a melody, "Song 9," which he wrote for George Wither's "Hymns and Songs of the Church" (1622). Another interesting tune of this period is *Babylon's Streams*, by Thomas Campion (1575-1619), a London physician. *London*, attributed to Croft,

is really from a Scotch Psalter of 1635. From strictly German sources, the Chorals of Bach being unknown in England at that time, Rippon has only a D.L.M. version of *Luther's Hymn*, and a perversion in triple time of *Winchester New*. The later 17th century is represented by Courtville's *St. James* (1696), and by *Burford* and *Walsall*, still attributed, without any definite proof, to that great English genius, Henry Purcell (1658-1695).

Of standard 18th Century tunes Rippon has included a considerable number, amongst them being *Wareham*, by W. Knapp (1698-1768); *Bedford*, by W. Wheal (1690-1727); *Bangor*, from William Tansur's collection, a tune which Carlyle erroneously states to have been sung by Cromwell's army before the battle of *Dunbar*; the well-known six-lined L.M., *Carey's* (1723); the *Easter Hymn*, here attributed to Henry Carey; the old English melody, *Adeste Fideles*; and, most important of all, Dr. Croft's three classics (1708)—*St. Anne's*—here presented in triple-time, *St. Matthew*, and *Hanover*, the latter attributed to Handel, a mistake often made in tune-books of that period. A corrupt version of *Hanover* set as a long metre tune, under the name of *Ailie Street*, was probably the work of Isaac Smith (1735-1800), the precentor at that place of worship, and the composer of *Abridge* and *Irish* as well as other tunes in Rippon's book. Drs. Greene, Hayes, and Randall are represented, but by tunes now obsolete.

Of the contemporary tunes only those of historical interest or present-day performance can be mentioned here. This would exclude all the tunes of Walker himself with the exception of *Hinton*, a setting, worth reviving, of Wesley's lines, "Lo; on a narrow neck of land," and *Stoel*, which is probably an adaptation from an air in Handel's opera *Siröe*, as its first line is identical with that of the tune *Innocents*, a miserable compilation, ostensibly starting from the same source. Benjamin Milgrove (1731-1810), sometime precentor at the then Countess of Huntingdon's chapel at Bath, and known as "the musical doll-man," because proprietor of a toy-shop in that ancient and beautiful city, has to his credit *Hart's*, also such tunes as *Mount Ephraim* and *Bermondsey* which deserve a hearing to-day. Other representative tunes favoured by Rippon were the Rev. J. Darwell's tune of that name (1783); *Tiverton*, by the Rev. F. J. Grigg (d. 1768); *Devizes*, by Isaac Tucker (1761-1825), the precentor of a Baptist Church near Westbury, Wilts.; *Hotham*, by Rev. Martin Madan, (1726-1790), the first tune composed to Wesley's, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul"; *Helmsley*, now generally attributed to Thomas Olivers (1725-99); *Charmouth* (now *Manchester*), by Dr. Robert Wainwright (1748-82), son of John Wainwright, the composer of *Stockport*, (Christians, awake!); *Miles Lane*, by William

Shrubsole (1760-1806); *Eaton*, by Zerubbabel Wyvill, (1763-1837); *St. Stephen's*, here appearing anonymously, by Rev. W. Jones (1726-1800); and *Shirland* and *Calvary* by Samuel Stanley (1767-1822), sometime precentor of Carr's Lane, Birmingham. Oliver's paraphrase, "The God of Abraham praise" is set to *Leoni*, but unfortunately arranged in three parts and described as a "Jewish Air." Amongst the anonymous tunes are *Weston Flavel*, *Ashley*, and *Truro*, often credited to Dr. Burney (1726-1814) the great musical historian; also many other tunes, some of which, in all probability, owe at least their melody to Dr. Rippon.

Considering the period during which the earlier editions of Rippon's tunes were published, the number of adaptations is comparatively small. From Handel, in addition to Walker's *Stoel*, already mentioned, we have "Verdi prati" from the opera *Alcina*, here named *Trowbridge*, and arranged as 8.7.D.: "See, the conquering hero comes," from *Judas Maccabaeus*, arranged as a 7s., under the inappropriate title of *Georgia*; "He shall feed His flock" (*Messiah*) entitled *Manning*, and tortured into a L.M.; and "I know that my Redeemer liveth" (*Messiah*) reduced to C.M. under the more appropriate title of *Messiah*. The mediocre melody known as *Mariners*, from *Tattersall's Psalms* (1794), here makes an early bid for undeserved popularity; while Dr. Harington's setting of "Drink to me only with thine eyes" is termed *Prospect*, and set as a D.C.M. to "There is a land of pure delight." Two adaptations from Dr. Arne's opera *Artaxerxes* include that worn-out jig, *Arlington*; from his oratorio, *Abel*, we have *Uxbridge*, a three-part arrangement or derangement of Arne's graceful melody. "The Hymn of Eve"; and from the song, "Water parted from the sea", we are offered a three-part arrangement entitled *Scotland*, a 7s., with three verses to one tune. With the exception of the tune *Messiah*, which is still popular in America, these adaptations have fallen into deserved desuetude.

The "odes" or "set pieces" are mostly metrical anthems by Madan, Arnold, Walker and others, written in the style of that period, but now obsolete, with, perhaps, the exception of Harwood's "Vital spark." Byrd's "Non Nobis Domine" is announced as "a favourite Canon," and has the lowest part transposed an octave lower so as to render the work available for S.A.B. The final chorus in Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* is adapted to form a finale to an Easter ode.

To estimate Rippon's work rightly is not an easy task, and to judge it by modern standards would be an anachronistic blunder. Its weaknesses comprise the inclusion, in common with many modern hymnals, of many tunes by no means the best

of their respective styles or periods; the compiler's historical shortcomings, as shown in his limited selection of the Old English Reformation or Church Tunes, in his assignment of *Hanover* to Handel, and in his seeming disinclination to trace the origin or composer of many tunes which appear anonymously, e.g., Stanley's *Shirland*; also his ecclesiastical inconsistency in adapting operatic airs and amorous ditties to sacred words, although such a proceeding was popular at the period. The work further suffers from the lack of any definite system of arranging the tunes, (e.g., metrical or alphabetical) beyond the endeavour to insert two tunes on each page. Far too many tunes are in three parts; while the harmonies of all are often commonplace, and occasionally ungrammatical, the modulations being extremely limited.

But when compared with other works of similar date and purpose, Rippon's book reveals many points of superiority and a few of unquestionable excellence. For instance, apart from being at the time of its publication the most extensive of its kind, in this work no tune appears more than once; many of the selected tunes have endured "unto this present"; here we have the first systematic effort towards the insertion of expression and tempo marks, and one of the earliest practical attempts to assign a definite tune to a given hymn. To some, this latter procedure savours of editorial tyranny; but it has apparently held the English psalmodic field for more than a century, and its popularity renders it a blessing or an infliction according to the point of view from which it is regarded. Skeats was, therefore, correct in alluding to Rippon as "the first person to compile, on an extensive scale, a book of tunes with a comprehensive hymn book suitable for the devotional exercises of religious worship." As such he should be included amongst

"The immortal names
That were not born to die."

ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD.

The Christian Outlook Upon Democracy

(Concluded from page 35)

State; and the Church will be expected to yield herself up as the paid servant of the temporal power, the handmaid of the State, duly thankful for her perquisites.

GWILYM O. GRIFFITH.