

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>*Psalmody of the Japan Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, comp. Horace S. Ensign and Frederick A. Caine (Tokyo: The Japan Mission, 1905), Preface.

<sup>4</sup>*The Songs of Zion* (Tokyo: The Japan Mission, 1915), Preface.

In addition to the above, I found the following sources helpful:

Knowles, Eleanor, "The History of the Church in Japan," *The Improvement Era*, 73 (March 1970), 23-26.

Palmer, Spencer J., *The Church Encounters Asia* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970).

*Sanbika: Matsujitsu Seito Iesu Kirisuto Kyōkai*, translated by Tomigoro Takaki and Toshiko Yanagida (Tokyo: The Northern Far East Mission, 1960).

## The German Hymnal

### WALTER WHIPPLE

For well over a century the German-speaking Latter-day Saints have had their own hymnal. They are currently singing out of the ninth edition (excluding reprints), and many congregations make occasional use of the out-of-print Choirbook of the 1920's.

#### *The Early Text-Hymnals*

The first *Liederbuch*, published in Zurich in 1861, was a pocket-sized volume containing 119 poems, neatly arranged according to topics. Although Jabez Woodard [sic], the mission president, is listed as the publisher on the title page, no credits are given for the individual selections. Most of its hymns were borrowed from contemporary Protestant hymnals, 55 being shared with the *Hymnal of the Evangelical Reformed Church of the Canton Zurich*, 1853. Only three numbers are translations of indigenous LDS hymns: "The Time is Far Spent," "The Spirit of God," and "Praise to the Man."

The second edition, 1869, is basically the same as its predecessor, with the addition of 34 hymns and the deletion of 36. The authority of the earlier edition is not questioned: credits are given only for hymns which did not carry over from the first edition. Several Protestant hymnals are cited, as well as the names of Karl G. Maeser, Jakob Huber, and Eduart Martin. Significant additions are: "Hail to the Brightness of Zion's Glad Morning," "A Mighty Fortress," "How Firm a Foundation," "O Ye Mountains High," "O, My Father," "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow," and "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

The third edition of 1875 introduces 16 hymns, including: "Think Not, When You Gather to Zion," "The Morning Breaks," "Come We that Love the Lord," "Do What is Right," "Nay, Speak no Ill," "Now Let us Rejoice" (free translation), "O Say What is Truth," and "Guide us, O Thou Great Jehovah." Although, like its predecessors, this hymnal contains no tunes, 20 of its selections are provided with English sub-captions. It can be imagined that the German-speaking Saints may have had difficulty associating these newly-translated texts with a melody. Although the *LDS Psalmody*, the first official Latter-day Saint hymnal bearing tunes, did not appear in Salt Lake City until 14 years later, the English captions may have helped the missionaries to recall the tune to which the hymn was commonly sung.

#### *The First Musical Settings*

The fourth edition, Bern, 1881, includes six texts of mission president A. H. Cannon, the son of George Q. Cannon. Fortunately, these awkward pieces of poetry

have fallen by the wayside in subsequent editions. The significant innovation of this volume is the inclusion of 50 tunes in four-part harmony, some of which can be matched with more than one text. The foreword acknowledges the musical talent of John Hasler (a missionary?). Talented as he might have been, many of Hasler's harmonizations flagrantly violate the most rudimentary principles of part-writing. It is not difficult to imagine Hasler reconstructing these tunes by ear at the keyboard, and then writing down what he had played. With the exception of eight tunes familiar to Latter-day Saints, the tunes are adaptations of either 19th-century German Protestant hymns or Swiss and German folk songs. As much as one might deride these fifty harmonizations for their obvious technical flaws, it must be borne in mind that the *LDS Psalmsody*, which established a definitive harmonization, was not to appear for another eight years.

J. M. Sjødahl assumed the musical editorship of the 5th edition (Bern, 1890). Of its 153 hymns, 128 are supplied with melodies. Apparently, some of the tunes are original compositions of Sjødahl himself. Several of the traditional Protestant chorales (for example, "A Mighty Fortress") are given in simplified harmonizations, which, although not as imaginative as the originals, are nonetheless technically correct. Several hymns of this edition were derived from the *LDS Psalmsody* of the preceding year. However, the most significant accretion to this volume are five texts by L. F. Mönch: three on the subject of the gathering to Utah, a gospel song on the parable of the sower, and the stirring hymn of the Restoration, "Sehet ihr Völker, Licht bricht heran," which has been a favorite of German-speaking Saints for nearly a century.

#### *The Choral Era*

Tabernacle Organist John J. McClellan was one of the editors of the sixth edition (Berlin, 1901) which was to remain in service for 36 years. This edition was radically different from its predecessors. Some 50 Protestant hymns were deleted, and 40 of various origins added. All 145 hymns of this edition are provided with tunes, many of which are quite elaborate. Several are in the form of longer, through-composed choir anthems. The musical settings are sophisticated and each is supplied with lavish dynamic markings, tempo indications, and breath marks. Fermatas are numerous as are solo, duet, trio and quartet passages. An editorial innovation of the sixth edition is the consistent inclusion of credits to the authors and composers.

The so-called 7th, 8th, and 9th editions of 1922, 1924, and 1928, respectively, are not really editions, but merely re-printings of the 1901 edition.

The *Chorliederbuch* (Book of Choir Songs) of 1925 cannot be excluded from a discussion of German Latter-day Saint hymnody. Its 102 selections encompass a variety of styles and sources. Choruses by Haydn, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Handel are included. Translations of indigenous works of LDS composers are abundant: Stephens, Daynes, Beesley, Smyth, and Careless. Willy Reske, the musical editor, contributed a quantity of his own works. The result was a tasteful, utilitarian volume, which, although out of print for some years now, is still being used by many German-speaking choirs. A number of its selections found their way into later editions of the hymnal. It is lamentable that this excellent volume is no longer in print, and that so many choir directors must make such liberal use of modern copying machines.

#### *Modern Hymnals*

By the time the *Gesangbuch* was published in 1937, there were diverse official

hymnals being used by the English-speaking Latter-day Saints. *Latter-day Saint Hymns* was used for sacrament meeting, *Deseret Sunday School Songs* for the Sunday School, and other special collections for Primary and MIA. The *Gesangbuch*, with its 199 selections, was intended to serve all functions. In this edition there was a great influx of the indigenous and borrowed Sunday School song and the moralistic gospel song. In no previous edition was the German hymnal so thoroughly Americanized as in this one. Again, more of the German Protestant hymns were culled out to make room for the potpourri from the translator's desk. This collection was reprinted in 1944 with the appendage of five unremarkable hymns dealing with specialized topics.

The *Gesangbuch* of 1954 dropped most of the Children's and MIA hymns of the previous edition. Additions to this hymnal are works of 20th century English-speaking Mormon authors and composers (translated from the 1950 *Hymns*) and fifteen Christmas hymns, scattered throughout the collection.

### *The Current German Hymnal*

The 1964 *Gesangbuch*, the product of a century-long metamorphosis, contains seven hymns from the original *Liederbuch* of 1861. Three are indigenous, four are of Protestant origin. Of its 240 entries, 182 are shared with *Hymns*, 1950. Basically this *Gesangbuch* reflects the fundamental shortcomings of its English counterpart. While many of its entries represent the finest in historical and modern hymnody, far too many remnants of the gospel song era are included. In fact, the worst in this category are non-indigenous. While they have been culled out of their original sources, they have remained with us. The problem seems to be the lack of a certain minimum standard (poetically, doctrinally, and musically) on the part of the editors. It is evident that in the case of the German hymnal, as is apparently the case with its English counterpart, a certain amount of popular demand has been catered to on the part of the editors. Perhaps the editors have tried to please rather than edify the Church membership. Herein we can see the perpetuation of a curious cycle: the people crave simple poems in iambic pentameter set to lilting melodies; because such hymns are selected more frequently (and in some areas almost exclusively) than their counterparts, the editors decide not to delete them; the people, in turn, feel that their taste is ratified when such hymns appear in a new edition. Both our English and German hymnals would profit, ultimately, by stronger editorship.

What began as a strictly Germanic hymnal in 1861, bearing strong resemblance to the Protestant hymnals of the day, has evolved into a highly eclectic collection. Particularly in the last three editions has the Americanization of LDS German hymnody been evident. Most of the strong, indigenous LDS hymns have fared rather well in the translation. The insipid, sentimental gospel songs are objectionable in German because they are weak in English. This writer does not wish to criticize the Americanization of the hymnal, for the availability of hymns in more than one language can only lend unity to the Church as a world-wide organization. However, we must not overlook the rich cultural heritage of the Germanic countries where congregational hymn singing finds its roots. As the Church continues to grow, it is hoped that more classical hymns from the various cultures can be adopted into our own hymnody, where appropriate. Also, the creation of new hymns in various mother languages should be encouraged. Perhaps the day will come when some of these hymns could be translated into English.