

**LYRA EUCHARISTICA: HYMNS  
AND VERSES ON THE HOLY  
COMMUNION, ANCIENT AND  
MODERN; WITH OTHER POEMS**

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Lyra Eucharistica: Hymns and Verses on the Holy Communion, Ancient and Modern; With  
Other Poems by Orby Shipley

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**ORBY SHIPLEY**

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THE HOLY COMMUNION,  
ANCIENT AND MODERN ;  
*WITH OTHER POEMS.*

EDITED BY  
THE REV. ORBY SHIPLEY, M. A.



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## Preface.



THE following Collection of Hymns and Verses on the Holy Communion has been made with a twofold object.

It is well known, even to those who are but little acquainted with the subject of Hymnology, that there exists a large number of Hymns, ancient and mediæval, on the Holy Eucharist. A considerable number of these Hymns have, of late years, been made accessible to ordinary students in the collections of Daniel, Mone, and others abroad, and by Dr. Neale and other Liturgical scholars amongst ourselves. But, in the revived and increasing appreciation of ancient Hymns, those which relate to or bear upon the Holy Communion have, for the most part, been overlooked, or at least unheeded. For this disregard of old Eucharistic Hymns several reasons may be given. That it is caused, not by any lack of devotional sentiment, nor by any absence of poetic beauty in the Hymns themselves, will be admitted. But

an adequate reason may be found in the fact, that the English Office for Holy Communion is not considered sufficiently elastic to allow of Hymns, other than those which the Office itself already contains, being introduced into Divine Service before the Holy Gospel for the Day, in the place in which they were formerly sung.

Hence, although we are indebted, at the present day, to ancient Sources for many of the most beautiful of our Hymns, which are also the most popular; yet these Hymns, for the most part, were composed either for the greater Festivals of the Church, or for the Commemoration of some Holy Day or Season: they were not intended for use at Holy Communion. And since Hymns specially adapted for the Altar Office are seldom required, and still less often employed, it is only natural that such Hymns from the Latin and the Greek, as well as those of German and other origin, have been but rarely translated into English verse. The present is not the time to express regret for this neglect of Eucharistic Hymns, nor to venture on an opinion, that, whilst so much talent is devoted, and justly, to other musical portions of Divine Service, it might be well to consider the re-introduction of Hymns, to be sung congregationally, into the Office for Holy Communion. But, to show how little this class of Hymns has been hitherto employed, it may be mentioned that, in the Collection

which has deservedly secured by far the widest circulation of any Hymnal of the present day, under the title of *Hymns, Ancient and Modern*, out of 273 Hymns from all sources, there are only five printed in the body of the work on the subject of the Blessed Sacrament, of which two only are translated from ancient Hymns; although there are two more, and part of a third, amongst the Introits, all of which are from ancient Sources. In the still more recently published Volume of Hymns, edited by Dr. Kennedy, with the title of *Hymnologia Christiana*, which contains the largest number of Hymns, for the use of the Church, hitherto collected into a single Volume, viz. 1500 Psalms and Hymns, only one Psalm and twenty-three Hymns are intended for the Holy Communion, hardly more than a tithe of which may be referred to ancient Sources for their origin.

As my studies have been directed to the English Office for Holy Communion, its history, ritual, and devotions, the question of Eucharistic Hymns naturally forced itself on my attention; and I soon found how little we had yet gathered, in an English form, from that particular portion of the wide field of ancient Hymnology. It is true that several Hymns on the Blessed Sacrament have been translated into English verse, and some of them very frequently.\* But they are

\* Of the *Pange lingua* there have been at least, and may



chiefly versions, with more or less fidelity and force, by different persons, of the same majestic Hymns which, in their original Latin, have attained world-wide renown. The grandest and most beautiful of these Hymns are, in one form or another, familiar to English readers, but they are few; whilst many other Hymns and Sequences, which competent judges declare to be only second, and sometimes not at all inferior, to the inspirations of S. Thomas Aquinas, have been allowed to remain in the language in which, and, for the most part, in the position for which, they were originally composed.

Until lately, the great body of these Sacramental Hymns, even in their original form, has been unknown to all but to Liturgical students. Of late years, however, a large number have been discovered and collected, and have been rendered accessible in the Collections mentioned above. But there is good reason to believe that we are still unacquainted with the extent of the Church's heritage in Hymnological wealth, as further research is continually bringing to light Hymns previously unknown, or long ago forgotten. Many of these treasures, which have been obtained from many parts of Christendom, under the common title of *Sequentiæ Ineditæ*, have

have been many more than seventeen or eighteen different versions or translations, published of late years; of the *Adoro Te* about thirteen or fourteen.

appeared from time to time, and, it is hoped, will continue to appear, in the pages of the contemporary Periodical, *The Ecclesiologist*. But in these Collections, the Eucharistic Hymns remained in the language in which they were written; and only the favoured few, chiefly those of S. Thomas Aquinas, have found their way, in the vernacular, into Hymn-books or books of Poetry.

Perhaps one of the earliest attempts during the present revival of the taste for ancient Hymns, (although there have been several incidental efforts in previous Centuries,) to popularize Hymns on the Holy Eucharist was made in the year 1839, by the Author of *The Cathedral*, who, in the Volume of *Hymns translated from the Parisian Breviary*, translated four out of the five well-known Hymns composed by S. Thomas Aquinas. The same four Hymns, together with the *Lauda Sion*, were translated afresh, ten years later, by the Rev. E. Caswall, who to these added, in 1858, several other English renderings of Sacramental Hymns, which, with his wonted kindness, he has allowed to be reprinted, together with several other of his Hymns, in *Lyra Eucharistica*. Between these two dates several other versions and imitations of one or more of these Hymns were issued. In 1852, Dr. Neale, in *Mediæval Hymns and Sequences*, published two fresh translations of the *Adoro Te devote*, and the *Pange lingua*, and to these he added a Sacramental Hymn of the vij.

Century; and in a later Volume, *Hymns from the Eastern Church*, he has translated two more, of the vij. and viij. Centuries respectively—the three latter of which Hymns, by the great kindness of the Translator, appear in the present Collection.

In 1857 *Lauda Syon* was published, and this, with another publication by the same Author, was the first effort to escape from the accustomed groove, in which translators of Hymns on the Holy Communion had hitherto chiefly moved. And in addition to the five usual Sacramental Hymns, six other Hymns, some of considerable length, have been translated by J. D. Chambers, Esq., only one of which, it is believed, had previously appeared in English. At the time of its publication, *Lauda Syon* contained the largest number of Eucharistic Hymns that had been collected in one Volume. And it was only by the kindness of the Translator, who was so good as to allow his Hymns to be reprinted, that a Manual of Devotions for the Altar Office, *The Divine Liturgy*, published at the close of 1862, contained a still larger collection of this class of Hymns. But the latest effort to popularise Hymns on the Holy Communion, has been made by the "Committee of Clergy," which has lately issued some valuable Tracts and Books of Devotion. *Eucharistic Hymns* is the title of a little Book of sixteen pages, which contains valuable translations of seven Hymns—the greater number of which ap-