

LEGENDS, LYRICS AND HYMNS

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Legends, lyrics and hymns by Thomas J. Potter

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THOMAS J. POTTER

**LEGENDS, LYRICS
AND HYMNS**

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AND

HYMNS.

BY

REV. THOMAS J. POTTER,

author of "The Rector's Daughter," "The Two Victorias,"
etc., etc.

DUBLIN:

JAMES DUFFY, 7, WELLINGTON-QUAY,

AND

22, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

1862.

To

THE HOLY RELIGIOUS,

WHOSE LIVES AND TALENTS ARE DEDICATED TO THE
MERITORIOUS AND ALL-IMPORTANT WORK
OF TRAINING UP THE CHILDREN OF GOD IN THE WAY IN
WHICH THEY OUGHT TO WALK,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME OF VERSES

Is Inscribed

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF AFFECTION AND RESPECT.

PREFACE.

THIS little book of verses is presented to the public as the third volume of a series, designed principally for the innocent amusement and instruction of Catholic youth, and of which "The Two Victories," and "The Rector's Daughter," form the first numbers.

As the issuing of a volume of poems as one of a series, whose object is so professedly humble, may, perhaps, at first sight, appear somewhat ambitious or misplaced, I deem it necessary to offer a word of explanation as to the motives which have influenced me in taking this step: "During the last few years I have occasionally occupied my leisure moments in writing simple poems, sometimes for college purposes, and sometimes as contributions to the various Catholic periodicals of the day. I have frequently been urged to publish these poems in a collected form; and influenced quite as much by the solicitations of, it may be, partial friends, as by my own inclinations, I have at length done so.

I have selected from my published poems such as I deemed suited to the object of this little volume. To these I have added a number of new ones, "England and Rome,"

“The Prayer of St. Patrick,” “The Legend of St. Edward and the Irish Cripple,” “Eveline,” and several others, which are now published for the first time. The hymns which appear at the end of the volume are translations from the Roman Vesperal. These translations were undertaken several years ago for the “Catholic Psalmist,” from which work they are now selected. In attempting them, two conditions were put upon me—viz., that the hymns should be rendered as literally as possible, and that the original metre should be preserved as exactly as the difference of the two languages would allow, in order that the airs assigned to the Latin originals in the “Psalmist,” might be equally available for the hymns in their English dress, and thus render them useful for novenas and other like functions. In endeavouring to carry out these ideas, I need scarcely say how many minor elegancies of diction, or turns of thought, had to be sacrificed; but, on the other hand, there is not one of the English hymns which cannot be sung to the air to which the corresponding Latin original is set; and the utility of this arrangement is sufficiently proved by the fact, that the translations are frequently thus employed by those who find both devotion and pleasure in the use of English hymns, while the satisfaction with which they are used is certainly not lessened in the mind of a pious and sincere Catholic, by the reflection that they are translated, as closely as it is possible to render one language into another, from the authorized songs of the Church.

Without having the presumption either to expect or believe that this little volume will find much favour with the learned or the critic—if by any chance it may fall into

the hands of such—I nevertheless have reason to expect that there are many to whom it will be welcome, and who will smile kindly upon its advent. As it is intended for this latter class, I think I may venture to say, without any undue pretence of despising their opinion, that I am comparatively indifferent as to its reception by the former. If it succeed in amusing and entertaining those for whom it is intended, it will have attained its end, and its author will have no further anxiety concerning it.

In regard to the poems themselves, of course it scarcely becomes me to speak. If I claim any merit for them, it is merely that of extreme simplicity, both of thought and of treatment. No doubt it would be a great deal better if every one who reads poetry would read Milton or Shakespeare; but there are many readers who find but little entertainment in these works, from the very fact that they are too high—too sublime for them. To such simple people—people, who while they do not, or cannot find entertainment in the works of the great masters in the divine art, still desire and look for poetry of a simple character—I venture humbly to offer this little volume. In every one of the original poems which it contains, I have merely proposed to myself to tell a simple story, or to give expression to a simple idea, in the very simplest manner; but I feel certain that the poems will be none the less acceptable to the great majority of the readers for whom they are intended on this account. For the same reasons I have not employed any of those uncommon metres, or fanciful far-fetched turns of thought, which have occupied so prominent a place in much modern poetry.

It only remains for me to beg from the Catholic public,

and especially from the guardians of youth, for whom, as I have said, these volumes are especially intended, some small share of that kind favour which has been so plentifully bestowed, and to a degree far beyond my expectations, upon "The Two Victories," and "The Rector's Daughter;" and this, not only in these countries, but also upon the Continent, translations of those works having already been issued by the first Catholic publishing houses in France and Belgium.

With these explanatory remarks, I submit my little book, with great diffidence, to the Catholic public. If I shall be judged to have failed, I trust that the object which I had in view will be my apology for the attempt, as it will surely be my own greatest encouragement and support. I again repeat, that I claim as little for my book as it is possible to claim for any work which is worth publishing at all; but if I, at least, did not hope that my book were worth publishing (and always, of course, considered in relation to the end for which it is intended), it would be great presumption on my part thus to intrude it upon my readers.

T. J. P.

THE DEFINITION
OF
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION;
OR,
ENGLAND AND ROME.