

**THE RELIGIOUS  
POETRY OF  
ALEXANDER MACK, JR**

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The religious poetry of Alexander Mack, jr by Alexander Mack & Samuel B. Heckman

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*The* RELIGIOUS POETRY *of*  
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SAMUEL B. HECKMAN

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfilment of the Require-  
ments for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## Foreword

To rescue from oblivion, to preserve and put into a book the writings of a good man so that others may enjoy and be blessed by them is always a most commendable thing to do. The present volume presents an example of that kind of unselfish work. Not for pecuniary gain but for the love has the author labored, and he has done well.

The literary work of Alexander Mack, Jr., has not been accessible, heretofore, to the general reader. Only those who had time and opportunity to search great libraries and private collections knew of the existence of the writings of the son of the first bishop of the Church of the Brethren in America. Mack was a modest man and like unto Moses one of the meekest men. For many years he signed his name Sander Mack giving as a reason that Alexander had too much the sound of greatness and that he much preferred a more modest name. Mack never made an effort to preserve his writings but they were taken care of by friends and now we have them brought together in book form.

The author of the book spent much time in collecting and translating the poems and essays of Mack. He has done his part conscientiously and well and is to be heartily commended for his labor of love. His only remuneration will come to him in the consciousness that he did well the task to which he set himself. His work will meet with the immediate approval and

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**FOREWORD**

high appreciation of all interested in the early literature of the church in America, and it should meet with a hearty and welcome reception. It is hoped that a copy will find a place in the home of every member of the church,

D. L. MILLER.



## Preface

The poetry of Alexander Mack deserves to have been known and read by the members of his church long before the present time. He was decidedly the most literary character of his church during the first century of its existence. He should be recognized by his church as a religious writer as well as a wise counsellor and pious leader in church affairs.

I trust that the attempt I have made to collect and translate Elder Mack's poems will serve toward a better understanding of the man's spirit and attitude toward his church and the community, and a better appreciation of his literary abilities and attainments.

The work of collecting and editing the poems of Alexander Mack, and of preparing the Introduction was completed previous to June, 1906. The delay in publication has been due to a number of causes, among which was the hope and strong desire to add to the present rather meager knowledge of the Mack family through investigations in the mother country. Such investigations have been impossible so far, but they still remain a hope with the author.

Those who read the poems only in the translation will undoubtedly lose some of the thought, and much of the beauty of expression and rhythm of the original. No attempt has been made in the translation to preserve the meter or the rhyme. Sometimes it has

been possible to translate stanza by stanza and preserve in part the poetical form, but often the prose form seemed much better and this was adopted. To give the thought of the author has been the constant aim. Great care has been exercised, also, to reproduce the German text in its exact original form, even in the preservation of mistakes and misprints. This seemed manifestly fair both to the author and to the reader.

I wish to acknowledge my special obligation to Dr. Martin G. Brumbaugh, of Philadelphia, who made this work possible by giving me generous access to his private library wherein the manuscripts and the published poems of Mack are found, and for his willing help in many ways. I acknowledge my deep obligation, also, to Professor Marion D. Learned, of the University of Pennsylvania, under whose direction the work was done, for his patient and constant encouragement and for his valuable suggestions and criticisms.

I wish, moreover, to express my thanks to Dr. Jacob W. Hartmann, of the College of the City of New York, for his generous suggestions in the translation and the text criticisms, and also to Mr. Emil Keppler, of the College of the City of New York, for suggestions in the translations.

SAMUEL B. HECKMAN.

*New York, December, 1910.*

## Introduction

Alexander Mack is seldom mentioned and is little known in connection with early Pennsylvania history, yet his life's influence was wide and varied and his writings were by no means inconsiderable. There cannot be claimed for Mack rank among America's greater poets but when colonial Pennsylvania's religious writers are considered he deserves recognition.

Alexander Mack was born in Germany, he passed his early life, on account of religious persecutions, in Holland, and as a youth of seventeen, he came with his father and family to America, settling at Germantown, Pennsylvania. Here he spent his life in patient and devoted service to his church and to the community. He was the bosom friend of Christopher Sower, the second, and a co-worker with this man in many of his varied enterprises, contributing considerably to the Sower press. He was the minister and elder of his church in Germantown for many years and a recognized leader in shaping the policy of the church at large.

To understand this man's life and his writings, it is necessary to know something of the religious sect