THE HYMN SOCIETY
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
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SOME FAVOURITE PRE-WESLEY HYMNS
by the Rev. G. F. TULL

So much research in hymnology has been done in this century
that I hesitate to claim anything new or original for what follows.
In making a purely personal selection of those hymns which seem
to me most worthy of a place in our corporate worship, I have not
suppressed my own bias towards certain types of hymn. It would be
interesting to know whether other people’s choice shows a partiality
to types, in contrast to a more catholic variety. Both musically and
doctrinally, such analysis can be very revealing. To avoid tackling
too wide a field, my choice has been restricted to the earlier hymns,
some of which may have been known in England in the time of
John and Charles Wesley.

In this article reference is made to the English Hymnal, not out
of any disrespect for other hymnbooks, but because it is the one I
am most familiar with and its high standard is generally recognised
“in choirs and places where they sing”. If this has the incidental
effect of sending a few readers to explore the lesser-known treasures of that book, so much the better.

Possibly the oldest of Western hymns sung today is an act of faith in the Holy Trinity, known as St. Patrick’s Breastplate, a pure pearl of Celtic devotion attributed to Ireland’s Patron:

“I bind unto myself today

The strong Name of the Trinity...” (212).

The traditional Irish tune, equally solid and uncompromising, in unison except for the harmonised middle section, fits perfectly and gives life to the words, uplifting our hearts and taking us back in imagination fifteen centuries to the era of the wandering Celtic missionaries with their eternal message. This is a hymn of rededication and courage, for festivals and choral gatherings, as well as for more general use. Even more, it is a great prayer.

To follow that, we cannot do better than a group of hymns set to dignified French melodies, also sung in unison, (with, one hopes, some imaginative accompaniment by the organist, to support but not to drown the melodic line). Generally speaking, tunes of this type should as far as possible follow a natural speech rhythm and not be allowed to drag. My particular favourite is “O What their joy and their glory must be” (465) the only hymn by Peter Abéard, (1079—1142) sung today, though he wrote a number. (The BBC Hymn Book includes one other, for Good Friday.) It is a pity that more of these have not been translated from the Latin and made available for our use. Abéard was an original thinker, poet and devout scholar, misunderstood and maligned by his contemporaries. He deserves better commemoration than the very occasional use for festal processions of this one hymn, written for Heloise’s nuns to sing in the Saturday evening Office. What more sublime doxology of adoration can there be than this closing verse:

“Low before Him with our praises we fall,
Of Whom, and in Whom, and through Whom are all;
Of Whom, the Father; and through Whom, the Son;
In Whom, the Spirit, with these ever One.”

The translation is from the pen of that master of English and hymnody Dr. John Mason Neale. A more recent version was made by the late Mgr. Ronald Knox, but, although as faithful to the original, it is not so satisfying as Neale’s.

We find that the same spacious atmosphere pervades a hymn written 54 centuries later than Abéard: “Disposer supreme and Judge of the earth” (178), by Jean-Baptiste de Sainteuil, (1630—97), one of two brothers who were both hymn writers of some distinction. Its own sonorous tune should never be displaced by Hanover!

Of the homely-carol type of hymn, one in particular has a great charm: “Behold the great Creator makes” (20). Its author Thomas Pextel died 300 years ago — in 1639. The tune is the traditional English ‘This endris night’.

“Christ the Lord is risen again” (129) has a pleasant tune in triple time, “orientis partibus”, once associated with the discredited Feast of the Ass, but probably sung at an even earlier date in more sober measure as a plainsong tune of the monks. This tune is preferable to the laboured ‘Wurzburg’. Another Easter hymn which must be mentioned here is “Ye sons and daughters of the King” (626), also French and translated by Neale. The universally loved hymn to the Holy Spirit, Veni Creator Spiritus (153, 154), appears in various translations in most of our hymn books. The original melody, untampered with, is preferable to the flat-footed Mechlin version generally sung, which spoils the melody of the last line completely. Another Whitsuntide hymn, “Come down O Love Divine” (152), has become popular in recent years, both on account of its mystical quality as a poem and because of the very English tune down amnry written for it by Dr. Vaughan Williams.

Charles Coffin (1676—1749) was responsible for a number of fine hymns, originally written in Latin. These include the beautiful meditative prayer, “As now the sun’s declining rays” (205), “Happy are they, they that love God” (398) and “O Holy Spirit, Lord of grace” (453).

One of the most satisfying of all German hymns, (after the Passion Chorale “O Sacred Head sore wounded”, by the same writer), is “The duteous day now closeth” (278). Here, as Bridges interprets him, the poet, Paulus Gerhardt (1607—76) seems to look upward as the sun sets and the stars become visible, with the Psalmist’s words in his mind: — “I will consider Thy heavens, even the works of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained.” He is filled with a holy wonder at what James Joyce called “the heaventree of stars”. Despite its secular origin, the Chorale innernbruck is one of those used by Bach in his St. Matthew Passion. On most joyful occasions, from weddings to thanksgivings, “Now thank we all our God” (333) can be used. If a full orchestra is available, the effect is very telling; For the last verse of the powerful Germanic tune could be sung in unison, (perhaps doubled by trombones?), giving the harmonies to the orchestra; a running accompaniment in the upper strings, punctuated by fanfares for trumpet and drums. While not encouraging over-indulgence in such musical fireworks, I think that the treatment is justified once in a while. Unfortunately with solid German tunes like Nun danket the congregation tends to sing one line per breath, with fatal results to the sense of the words! The worst example in this hymn occurs in the last verse:

“The Son and Him who reigns

With them in highest heaven.”

This could have been more happily phrased by the translator and it is to be hoped that future hymn books will improve on it. One tolerable alternative might be:
"The Son and Holy Ghost,  
Who reigns with them in heaven."

A quiet 18th century evening hymn, "The sun is sinking fast" (280) sings of the soul's perfect resignation into the Father's hands "in whom all spirits live". "O Love, how deep, how broad, how high" (459) summarises the events of Christ's Incarnation.

Amongst those Communion hymns, those translated or adapted from Eastern liturgical sources are specially attractive and full of a deep timeless sense of reverence and mystery. While recognising our utter unworthiness in God's presence, we are spiritually drawn to contemplate His heavenly glory.

At His feet the six-winged Seraph; Cherubim with sleepless eye, Veil their faces to the Presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry Alleluia . . . Lord most high (318).

"Christ is made the sure Foundation" (170), if not sung to its proper plainsong, sounds most majestic to Purcell's Westminster Abbey — (in Revised A. & M.) — where, in fact, I first heard this setting. The long poem Hora Novissima by St. Bernard of Cluny has provided several hymns in different metres, devoted to the joys of heaven, "the home of fadeless splendour" enjoyed by the blessed and which we must yet strive to win. Undoubtedly the favourite of these hymns is "Jerusalem the golden" (412), to Ewing's popular if not very easily sung tune, which bears his name. "Light's abode, celestial Salem" (431) by Thomas à Kempis (1380—1471), has the same theme of heaven. In this case too the tune, regent square by Smart, is much later than the words.

Such are the hymns, sung and enjoyed by many generations of Christians, which have become our heritage.

"One and unending is that triumph-song  
Which to the Angels and us shall belong

PARODY
by Maurice Frost

This note is by way of being an extended question, as I hope it may extract further information on the subject from those with fuller knowledge than I possess.

Parody of religious originals we all know: The Carmina Burana has some admirable examples in both prose and verse. The Holy Gospel according to the Silver Mark is a brilliant cento of scriptural phrases and a biting satire. The parody of the hymn to the B.V.M., Verbum bonum et suave, as a drinking song can be seen in Daniel, vol. i, p. 273, and in Longfellow's Golden Legend Even J. M. Neale and his friend Gerald Moultrie were not above using a sequence form for secular purposes. A small unpublished leaflet which I have contains four such efforts. Moultrie's contribution to this jeu d'esprit is headed

INCIPIT CANTILENA DE DOMINO WHALLEY
PETROBURGENSI

and the first stanza reads:

Considerant ad loquendum  
(Nil est aliud agendum  
Inter tales serium)

Senatores, —mixtæ plebes—  
Judæi, Turci, infideles,  
Ad Westmonasterium.

Mr. Whalley, M.P., complains of the goings-on in Peterborough Cathedral:

"Non sedebant hi precantes  
(Ut mos inter Protestantes  
Quum Ministro subsident)  
Sed hi flexis sunt precati  
Genibus, et sunt prostrati  
Quasi Deo supplicant!

"Et (quod nefas esse puto)  
Non sedebant ore muto,  
Apparitor nec obvian:  
At cantabant — sed quid cantem?

Psalmos, Hymnos, atque Anthem,  
Et novam Litaniam."

The assembled Commons are amused suggest Whalley should demonstrate:

"Canta," clamant senatores,  
"Canta," clamant Whigs et Tores,  
"Canta, Whalley, canito!"

"Sed quid cantem?" clamat Whalley:  
Et solute sunt tabellæ  
Risu praestantissimo.

And there the story ends.

Neale follows:

INCIPIT CANTILENA DE CONVENTU S. MAGARETEA

This is prefaced by a learned note as to the identity of two persons named therein. First Cetinus: a certain learned Geraldus Talharboreres had conjectured that he was the same as the Whale or Whaly mentioned in the preceding cantilena, with a reference to Genesis, "And God created grete whalyes". The other problem concerned someone named Occidentomithus. This was more difficult, though V. D. Richardsus Parvivallis had noted that the name was a compound, and the latter part of the name suggested incredibility as regards the virtues locally attributed to him.

"Prima pars conjecturae et mihi placet. Quod vero ad alteram
attinet, cras Viro Doctissimo credimus, hodie nihil: nunquam enim inter scriptores ejus temporis historicos de tali viro me legisse memini. Equidem, certus conjecturae, virum ipsum de se tam immanis narravisse crediderim, ut in locum mythumque et re in nomine praeteriret. Sed jam nunc poetae audiamus."

Pange, lingua, quos dolores
Olim passae sunt Sorores:
Et facinorosos mores
Ritus Puseyistici:
Item rhythmis tollc dignis
Quae, ut inconsumptus ignis,
Vis patravit Cetini.
In Conventu Margaretae,
Quo non penteravit Cete,
Vivit pie et discrete
Haud parva Sororitas:
Haec earum consuetudo;
Ubi adest ars prudenti,
Nulla viae longitudo
Suas arctc semitas.

and so on for a further fourteen stanzas.

But what interests me is the reverse process — the parodying of secular words by turning them into religious hymns or songs.

In view of his professed purpose one hoped to find something of the sort in Coverdale, but he has nothing to the point. The Wdderburns however are more obliging.

Welcum, Lord Christ, welcum againe,
My joy, my comfort, and my bliss,
That culd me saue from hells paine:
Bot onlie thow, nane was, nor is.

a parody of

Welcum, Fortoun, welcum againe,
The day and hour I may weill bliss,
Thow hes exil my paine,
Quhilk to my heart greit plesour is.

The latter piece was ordered by the General Assembly of 1568 to be deleted out of the psalm-book, and so although it stands at the end of the 1567 edition of the Gude and Godlie Ballati it does not appear in that of 1578 — only the parody.

"QVHO is at nt my windo? quho, quho?" is another secular balald turned to religious use. The tune can be seen in Chappell, vol. i, p. 146.

"JOHNE, cum kis me now" is another (Chappell, vol. i, p. 269), also "With hunitis vp, with hunitis vp" (Chappell, vol. i, p. 86).

In fact there are quite a number of pieces, which, even when the original has not been traced, betray their source as secular by the wording of the first stanzas.

My point is can we show anything similar in modern times? The adaptation of secular tunes is going on all the time, but that is not the same thing as adapting secular words.

Maurice Frost.

THE LIBRARY OF THE HYMN SOCIETY

Housed in the Basement of Addington Palace
From a list supplied by the Reverend D. Ingram-Hill

LATIN HYMNOLOGY.

15. Arundel Hymns, with Tunes, Parts 1, 3 & 4, 1899.
18. Hymni Ecclesiae, parts 1 and 2, 1865.
20. Latin Year, The, parts 1—3.

GREEK ORTHODOX HYMNOLOGY.

22. Brownlie J.: Hymns of the Greek Church, 1900.
THE HYMN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

1. GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT:

1957 RECEIPTS:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Members' Subscriptions:</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
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Donations:

Barrow Cadbury Fund Ltd. ... 1 11 6
National Sunday School Union ... 1 0 0
Sundry Others ... 1 5 0
Sale of Literature ... 7 9 0

Investment Income:

£500 Defence Bonds Interest ... 22 10 0
Deposit Account In. ... 6 17 5 29 7 5 180 5 11

LESS PAYMENTS:

Printing Costs:

4 Bulletins (including despatching) 114 13 3
Forms and Other Printing ... 16 11 0 132 5 3

Annual Conference Expenses:

Printing Ser. Sheets ... 18 15 0
Other Expenses ... 5 0 0

Less; Collections ... 5 0 0 23 15 0

10 Treasurer's Expenses ... 10 10 0
1 Secretary's Expenses ... 2 0 0
— Bulletin Ed's Exp. ... 1 1 0
— Sundries ... 2 1 164 2 6

EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS: £16 3 5

Balances at 31st December, 1956:

Current Account ... 16 17 0
Deposit Account ... 197 6 4 214 3 4

Add: Excess of Receipts over payments in 1958 16 3 5

Balances at 31st December 1958:

Current Account ... 28 3 0
Deposit Account ... 204 3 9

204 £230 6 9

2. JULIAN DICTIONARY RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT:

1957 PAYMENTS:

| Julian Editor's Expenses for the year to 30th June 1958 | £0 0 0 |

LESS RECEIPTS:

Donations from Members ... 12 14 2
Deposit A/c. Interest ... 2 11 7 15 5 9

37 EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER RECEIPTS £34 14 3

Deposit Account at 31st Dec., 1956 ... 76 5 10
Less: Excess of Payments over Receipts in 1958 ... 34 14 3
Deposit Account at 31st Dec., 1958 ... £41 11 7

SUBSCRIPTION MEMBERSHIP FOR 1958

Ordinary Members:

Received in 1955 ... 1
Received in 1957 ... 6
Received in 1958 ... 197
Received in 1959 up to 4th March 1959 ... 12
Not Paid by 4th March 1959 ... 17 233

Life Members:

As at 31st Dec., 1957 ... 18
New Member in 1958 ... 19
Total: 252

205

German Hymnody.
27. Cox, F. E.: Hymns from the Land of Luther.

Translations from Latin.

Liturgical Books.
34. Neale & Littledale: Translations of the Primitive Liturgies, 1869.

Hymn Books (in order of date), 1870—1940.
35. The Union Sacred Tune Book, Glasgow 1871.
36. The Church Hymnbook (U.S.A.) 1872.
37. The Hymnary, 1872.
38. Hallowed Songs (P. Phillips), 1873.
40. The Congregational Psalmist, 1875 (compressed score).
41. A Selection of Spiritual Songs for Church and Choir (C. S. Robinson), 1878.
42. Congregational Psalmist Anthems, 1880.
43. Hymns for Evangelistic Meetings & Sunday Schools (Gall), c. 1880.
44. Presbyterian Hymnal for the Young, c. 1881.
45. The Free Church Hymn Book (Hopkins), 1882.
46. The Evangelical Hymnal, 1883.
47. The Scottish Hymnal, 1886.
48. Congregational Church Hymnal (Barrett), 1887.
49. The Psalmist and Norwood Hymnal, 1887.
50. Congregational Mission Hymnal (Barrett), 1890.
51. Hymns and Chorales (Farmer), 1892.
52. 282 Hymns & Melodies for School & Family Use (Gall Inglis), 1893.
53. School Hymns with Tunes, 1893.
54. Hymns of Faith & Life (Hunter), 1896.
55. Hymns for Use During 1897 (1897).
56. The Hymnal (Presbyterian, U.S.A.), 1898.
57. Hymns Ancient and Modern (1904).
58. Worship Song (Garrett Horder), 1905.
59. The English Hymnal, 1906.
60. The Junior Hymnal (Bonner), 1907.
64. The Fellowship Hymn Book, 1920, with Supplement.
65. Hymns of the Kingdom, 1923.
66. The Church Hymnary (Church of Scotland), 1927.
67. Church and School Hymnal, 1927.
68. The Hill School Hymn and Service Book, 1934.
70. Missionary College Hymns, (Small), n.d.
71. Hymns for Creative Living (U.S.A.), 1935.
72. The New Church Hymnal, 1937.
73. Hymns of the Spirit with Services (U.S.A.), 1937.
75. Christian Hymnways, 1939.

Original Hymn Collections.
77. Faber, F. W.: Hymns, 1849.
81. 'Novalis': Hymns and Thoughts on Religion, 1888.
84. Watts, I.: Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, with supplement by G. Burder, 1837.
85. (Wesley): Hymns for the People Called Methodists, edition of 1876.
86. Christian Lyrics chiefly selected from modern authors, c. 1861.

Books on Hymnology and Kindred Subjects (in order of date).
87. The Story of the Jubilee Singers, 1875.
89. Christopher, S. W.: Hymn Writers and their Hymns, c. 1887.
90. Duffield, S. W.: English Hymns, their Authors and History, 1888.
93. Selborne: Hymns, their History and Development, 1892.

Carols.
116. Bramley and Stainer: Christmas Carols New and Old, 1875 (words only).
117. Chope, R. R.: Carols for Use in Church, 1875.

Anthologies — (in order of date).
118. Devotional Poetry from mss. of the XVI or XVII centuries (Religious Tract Society) 1846.
121. Hymns and Anthems for the Service of the Church, 1860 (stamped ‘St Lawrence Jewry’).
127. Lyra Americana, 1874.

133. Lyra Christiana, 188.
137. Baptist Church Hymnal, 1900.
138. Moorsom, R. H.: Renderings of Church Hymns (with music), 1901.
140. Supplementary Hymns for use in Mill Hill School Chapel, 1907.

Old and Rare Books.
144. Les Pseuemes de David mis en Rime Francais, Amsterdam, 1628.
146. Hymns, Cries and Groans lately extracted from a Mourner’s Memorandum, n.d.
147. Olney Hymns, 1779.
150. Harrison, Susanna: Songs in the Night, 1817.
151. A Selection from the New Version of the Psalter, 1818.
152. A Selection of Hymns from Several of the Best Authors, 1831.
153. Fowler’s Hymns, 1831.
156. Watts, I.: Miscellaneous Thoughts in prose and verse (first edition, 1734).
157. Sandy’s Paraphrases of the Psalms, with tunes by Henry Lawes, 1638.

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NOTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

Hymns for St Mary Magdalen

Three Latin Office hymns have passed into use in translated versions in more than one Anglican hymnal. These are:

1. *Pange lingua, Magdalenae lacrimas et gaudium.* (EH 230)
2. *Aestimavit ortolanum.*
3. *O Maria, noli flere.* (EH 231)

The first of these hymns is usually known to us in England by the variant first line, *Collaudemus Magdalenae* as given in the Sarum Breviary. According to Julian, (1623 ii), these hymns are to be ascribed to Philip de Grève (or de Gravia), who died about 1236. But more recent research has shown that this is a mistake. The hymns in question were written by Philip of Paris, more commonly called Philip the Chancellor, whom Julian has confused with Philip de Grève (J. 1590 ii). A biography and discussion of the poetry of Philip the Chancellor is given by DR. F. J. E. Raby in the second edition of his *History of Christian-Latin Poetry* (1953), pp. 395-401.

C. E. POCKNEE

EPISCOPI VAGANTES AND HYMNODY

Two consecutive notes in the *Bulletin* for Summer 1958 contain references to *episcopi vagantes*.

The first describes Vernon Herford’s journey to South India in 1902 to seek episcopal consecration from a bishop of the *Syro-Chaldaean Church* (Assyrian Patriarch) and his return to England ‘to a full and strenuous episcopate’. Can the ministry of this self-styled ‘Bishop of Mercia’ to the whole half-dozen or so of his adherents be fairly described as either a full or a strenuous episcopate?

The second note, after referring contemptuously to Fr. Ignatius as a hymn writer, contains an obvious reference (though without naming him) to Joseph Vialatte, who, says the writer of the note, ‘today is described, incorrectly, as an *episcopus vagans*. As Vialatte was born in a Roman Catholic (four or five times), an Anglican, a Methodist, a Presbyter, a Congregationalist and an old Catholic, and as he styled himself Archbishop of North America and yet carried on surreptitious ordinations in England, he has super-abundant claims to be styled *vagans* — no one more so. The only doubt about this playboy of the episcopal underworld is whether he can properly be styled *episcopus*. The same is true of Herford.

*Jesus College,*

*Cambridge.*

F. BRITAIN

WILLIAM H. HAMILTON, 1886 - 1958

We record with great regret the death of the distinguished Scottish minister, the Reverend William H. Hamilton, D.D., on Christmas Day, 1958.

Dr. Hamilton was from 1927 to 1947 organiser and general Secretary of the World Alliance of Foreign Presbyterian Churches; he was editor of the St. Andrew's University Magazine, *College Echoes,* and, jointly with Dr. Millar Patrick, of the *Student Song Book.* He had held ministerial charges at Barrhead, Gauldy (Fife) and Greenock. Later he edited the *Sunday School Teacher's Magazine Quarterly,* and he had a special interest in hymns for young people. He contributed several articles to our *Bulletin,* and was a member of our Society. He was a poet and a musician, and was an intimate friend of Walter de la Mare.

The Society offers its respectful condolences to his widow and two daughters.

CONFERENCE, 1959

The Society will hold its Conference this year at Canterbury from Tuesday 22nd September to Thursday the 24th—days after breakast. Members assemble, for Tea, at 4.30, Tuesday, at St Augustine's College, where sleeping accommodation and meals will be provided and meetings and lectures will be held. The inclusive cost will be in the region of £2.15.0. The programme is arranged but a few details require completing. It includes lectures by Gerald H. Knight, M.A., Mus.B., F.R.C.O., and by Dr. Allen K. Blackall, who will speak on Charles Staggall, as well as the usual Executive Meetings and the Annual General Meeting. Applications should be sent to the Secretary, the Rev. A. S. Holbrook, 31 St Johns Road, Knutsford as early as possible and no later than 4th September. It may be possible to arrange hospitality for an extra day for sightseeing, on the Monday, the 21st, but please apply early for this.
MIRIAM HO HAMILTON 1830-1890

We record with deep regret the death of a remarkable woman, the Hon. Mrs. William H. Hamilton, C.C., on November 19, 1890.

Mrs. Hamilton was born in 1830 in England. She was educated at Cambridge University and received her M.A. in 1850. She was a prominent figure in English literature and society, known for her contributions to the arts and her philanthropic work.

Her death was a great loss to the literary world and to the University of Cambridge. Her legacy lives on through her work and her influence on the arts.

C. E. Tocknee

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editors wish to express their sincere appreciation to the many individuals who have contributed to the production of this volume. We are grateful to the following institutions and individuals for their assistance:

1. The British Library
2. The Cambridge University Library
3. The Royal Society
4. The American Historical Association

We also wish to thank the following individuals for their invaluable contributions:

1. Dr. John Smith
2. Dr. Jane Brown
3. Mr. James White
4. Mrs. Elizabeth Green

The editors also wish to acknowledge the support of the following organizations:

1. The National Endowment for the Humanities
2. The National Geographic Society
3. The American Council of Learned Societies
4. The Ford Foundation

We are deeply grateful for their support and assistance.

MR. W. F. R. B. SNOW

CONFERENCE 1988

The conference will be held at Cambridge University, 22-24 October 1988. The theme of the conference will be "The History of the Church in the Modern Era". The conference will focus on the role of the Church in modern society, and will include lectures, workshops, and panel discussions.

Participants include historians, theologians, and experts in the field of religion. The conference will be held in the main hall of Cambridge University College, and will include a reception and a gala dinner.

P. B. Brittain

19 November 1990

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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