

**LYRA DOMESTICA;
CHRISTIAN SONGS FOR
DOMESTIC EDIFICATION**

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Lyra Domestica; Christian Songs for Domestic Edification by C. J. P. Spitta & Richard Massie

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C. J. P. SPITTA & RICHARD MASSIE

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Ph. Spitta

Lyra Domestica:

CHRISTIAN SONGS FOR DOMESTIC EDIFICATION.

Translated from the
"Psaltery and Harp" of C. J. P. Spitta
By Richard Massie.



THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS.

1862.

100. n. H. t.

TO
HIS GRACE,
JOHN BIRD SUMNER,
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

THESE HYMNS ARE INSCRIBED
WITH THE DEEPEST FEELINGS OF RESPECT AND VENERATION,
AND WITH A GRATEFUL RECOLLECTION OF
HIS GRACE'S CONNECTION WITH THE DIOCESE OF CHESTER,
BY HIS GRACE'S FAITHFUL AND DEVOTED SERVANT,
THE TRANSLATOR.



PREFACE.



REMEMBER to have been much struck, some years ago, with a remark of James Montgomery, in the preface to the *Christian Psalmist*: "If he who pens these sentiments," says that truly Christian poet, "knows his own heart, though it has deceived him too often to be trusted without jealousy, he would rather be the anonymous author of a few hymns, which should thus become an imperishable inheritance to the people of God, than bequeath another epic poem to the world, which should rank his name with Homer, Virgil, and our greater Milton."

It might seem presumptuous in a mere translator to appropriate to himself the sentiments of this original and highly gifted author, to

whom we are indebted for some of the most beautiful hymns in the English language, but I can nevertheless say with truth, that by a somewhat similar feeling I was first induced to undertake the translation which I now offer to the Public. No doubt hymns of greater power and beauty might have been selected from the writings of some of the earlier German hymnologists, and especially from those of that sweet singer of Lutheran Germany, Paul Gerhardt; but yet I think it may be doubted, whether any of them would have been so suited to the modern tone of thought as those of Spitta, and so well calculated to promote the object for which they were avowedly written—the edification of the domestic circle. Indeed Miss Winkworth has already culled the choicest flowers from the earlier writers, and transplanted them with so much skill and success into our English soil, that it would be but a discouraging task to follow in her track.

Small as is this collection, it embraces a great variety of subjects, and a cursory glance at the Index will at once show how many important phases of Christian experience are delineated. To quote the words of a friendly critic: “There is hardly a branch of Christian doctrine and morality which they do not touch

upon, and on every point they come direct to the reason, feelings and imagination."

The versification is remarkably smooth and rhythmical, and the meaning clear and perspicuous. But what particularly distinguishes these hymns is the genuine piety and truly Christian and Catholic feeling which pervades them. Love of Christ and His word is the golden thread which runs through the whole. Is it too much to hope, that, by the Divine blessing, some spark at least of the heavenly feeling which animated the author may be imparted, through the means of this translation, to the heart of the English reader? My labour will not then have been in vain, — if that indeed can be called a labour, which has been the delightful recreation and sweetest solace of my leisure hours.

Addison remarks, in one of the papers of the *Spectator*, that "a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married, or a bachelor, with other particulars of a like nature that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author." There is much truth in this remark, and I should have been glad if it had been in my power to gratify this natural curiosity by communicating any interesting anecd-