



Hymns of the Eastern Church

About *Hymns of the Eastern Church*

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HYMNS
OF
The Eastern Church



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HYMNS
OF
The Eastern Church.

TRANSLATED,
WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION,
BY
THE REV. J. M. NEALE, D.D.,
Warden of Sackville College.
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Sion's lyre, thou best content
That e'er Heav'n to mortals lent,
Though they as a trifle leave thee,
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee,
Though to them thou be a scorn
Who to nought but earth are born,
May my life no longer be
Than I am in love with thee!

WITHER



—
TO
THE SUPERIOR
AND

THE OTHER SISTERS
OF
The House of Mercy at Clewer.

WITH THANKFULNESS FOR THEIR PAST, AND
PRAYERS FOR THEIR FUTURE SUCCESS,
THESE HYMNS
ARE DEDICATED.





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PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

The following Translations have occupied a portion of my leisure time for the last twelve years: and some of them have already appeared in more than one ecclesiastical periodical. So has also great part of the Introduction.

It is a most remarkable fact, and one which shows how very little interest has been hitherto felt in the Eastern Church, that these are literally, I believe, the only English versions of any part of the treasures of Oriental Hymnology. There is scarcely a first or second-rate hymn of the Roman Breviary which has not been translated: of many we have six or eight versions. The eighteen quarto volumes of Greek Church-poetry can only at present be known to the English reader by my little book.



Yet surely, if in the future Hymnal of the English Church we are to build an eclectic superstructure on the foundation of the Sarum Book, the East ought to yield its full share of compositions. And hence, I cannot but marvel that the compilers of eclectic Hymnals, such as the (modern) Sarum, the *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, and others, have never turned to this source. Here was a noble field open to them; and to me it is incomprehensible that they should have so utterly neglected it.

There are difficulties in the task to which it is as well to revert. Though the superior terseness and brevity of the Latin Hymns renders a translation which shall represent these qualities a work of great labour, yet still the versifier has the help of the same meter; his version may be line for line; and there is a great analogy between the Collects and the Hymns, most helpful to the translator. Above all, we have examples enough of former translation by which we may take pattern.



But in attempting a Greek Canon, from the fact of its being in prose—(metrical Hymns, as the reader will learn, are unknown,)—one is all at sea. What measure shall we employ? why this more than that? Might we attempt the rhythmical prose of the original, and design it to be chanted? Again, the great length of the Canons renders them unsuitable for our churches, as *wholes*. Is it better simply to form centos of the more beautiful passages? or can separate Odes, each necessarily imperfect, be employed as separate Hymns? And above all, we have no pattern or example of any kind to direct our labour.



These questions, and many others, have as yet received no reply; but will, in time, no doubt, work out their answer. My own belief is, that the best way to employ Greek Hymnology for the uses of the English Church would be by centos.

The reader will find, in the following pages, examples of different methods of treatment. The following are short *Idiomela*, &c., which might serve as separate Hymns:—

- 5. *The day is past and over.* (Evening.)
- 20. *O the mystery, passing wonder.* (Maundy Thursday.)
- 28. *Christian! dost thou see them?* (A Sunday in Lent.)
- 35. *By fruit the ancient foe's device.* (Easter Tide.)
- 65. *Those eternal bowers.* (All Saints.)

- 84. *The choirs of ransomed Israel.* (Transfiguration)
- 124. *Are thy toils and woes increasing?* (Passion or Holy Week.)



Centos might perhaps be made from the *Canons* for:
Easter, p. 95.

•

- Low Sunday, p. 118.
- Christmas, p. 130.
- Lent, p. 78.
- Lent, p.
171.

[*Ist ed.*, p. xv: It has been with great thankfulness that I have seen such copious use made of my Mediaeval Hymns, and my Rhythm of S. Bernard, in so many modern Hymnals. Permission has usually been most courteously asked: though in some few cases, whole Hymns have been taken without the slightest request for leave, or subsequent acknowledgment. I would therefore request any compiler of a Hymnal who may wish to quote from the following pages, to be so kind as first to express that wish to the publisher, or to myself.]

I trust the reader will not forget the immense difficulty of an attempt so perfectly new as the present, where I have had no predecessors, and therefore could have no master. If I have opened the way for others to do better what I have done imperfectly, I shall have every reason to be thankful. I have kept most of the translations by me for at least the nine years recommended by Horace; and now offer them as a contribution to the hymnology of our own Church. And while fully sensible of their imperfections, I may yet (by way of excuse rather than of boast) say, almost in Bishop Hall's words—



“I first adventure: follow me who list,
And be the second Eastern Melodist.”

Sackville College,

Feast of the Epiphany, 1862.



PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

I had not ventured to hope that, whatever be the beauty of these Hymns in their original language, a Second Edition of the Translation should so soon have been called for. And it has been an additional pleasure to me to find that, notwithstanding the miserable inferiority of the version, the words of S. Cosmas, S. John Damascene, and S. Joseph of the Studium, have been already introduced into English congregations. One Hymnal which has been kindly sent to me, contains no less than eleven Greek Hymns. In the present Edition, all those versions which did not rhyme,—that is, which would be of no practical use, are omitted.

¹ Of the Canon for S. Thomas' Sunday more is given: and in some cases where, of alternate rhymes, the one-half was permitted to remain without consonance, the defect has been remedied, I hope, without much injury to the sense. It would be ungrateful if I did not express my gratitude for the way in which my little book has been received, notwithstanding its manifold imperfections.



Sackville College,

Nov. 16th, 1862.

¹ [Restored in the electronic edition.]



PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

It is of course a matter of deep thankfulness to me that the Eastern Church should now be more and more widely brought before ordinary congregations by means of some of the following versions. God grant that this may be one little help towards the great work of Reunion.

I have been more than once asked to what tunes any of the hymns contained in this little book may be sung. The following is a list of all the settings with which I am acquainted:—

- “Peace! It is I!” by the Rev. T. Helmore, M.A. Second Edition. Novello. 1863.
- “The Day of Resurrection:” by the Rev. T. Helmore, M.A. Novello. 1863.
- “The Day is past and over:” by the Rev. T. Helmore, M.A. Second Edition. Novello. 1865.
- “The Day is past and over:” by Arthur Henry Brown Organist of Brentwood. Second Edition. Masters.
- “Fierce was the wild billow:” by Edith Kerr. Novello.
- Fortitude: a Sacred Song. [*i.e.*, “Christian, dost thou see them?”] Music by M. E. H. S. Novello.
- Hymns of the Holy Eastern Church; set to music for four voices by Edmund Sedding. London, Masters. [This contains five.]
- Hymns of the Eastern Church. In competent score for four voices. Second Edition. London: Novello. Leicester: Crossley and Clarke. [This contains six. As it has no distinguishing title, it is referred to in the following page as H.E.C.]



In the Church Hymnal of the Rev. J. F. Young, which having appeared in Philadelphia is reprinting in London, eleven of these hymns occur: the Greek being given as well as the English.

Each of the above melodies will be found noticed at the end of the Hymn which has been set to it.



And so once more I commit this attempt to further the cause of English Hymnology to God’s blessing, and I cannot do it better than in the quaint old words of a forgotten poet:—

“I long have longed to do some little good,
 (According to the best I understood,)
 By Thy good grace assisting, which I do
 Most humbly beg for: O adjoin it to
 My longing ardent soul; and have respect
 To this my weak endeavour, and accept
 (In Thy great mercy) both of it and me,
 Ev’n as we dedicate ourselves to Thee.”

Sackville College,

April, 1866.



INTRODUCTION.

As a general rule, the first poetical attempts of the Eastern, like those of the Western, Church, were in classical measures. But as classical Greek died out from being a spoken language,—as new trains of thought were familiarized,—as new words were coined,—a versification became valueless, which was attached with no living bonds to the new energy, to the onward movement. Dean Trench has admirably expressed this truth in the introduction to his “Sacred Latin Poetry,” and showed how the “new wine must be put into new bottles.” Ecclesiastical terms *must* be used, which rebel against classical metre: in Greek, no less than in Latin, five words in eight would be shut out of the principal classical rhythms. Now, the Gospel was preached to the poor. Church hymns must be the life-expression of all hearts. The Church was forced to make a way for saying in poetry what her message bade her say.²



S. Gregory Nazianzen, the first Greek Church poet, used only the ordinary classical measures. S. Sophronius of Jerusalem employed (and in their way not unhappily), Anacreontics: and his hymns on various festivals have some elegance. But there is a certain degree of dilittante-ism, rather than of earnestness, in these compositions; and the most airy, tripping, frivolous measure that the Greek Muse possessed, never, by any possibility, could form the ordinary utterance of the Church. The Church compositions of S. Sophronius, though called μ , are in fact mere prose: as those grand prayers on the Epiphany.



How then was the problem to be solved as to the composition of Eastern Church Song? In Latin, somewhat before the time of S. Sophronius, A.D. 630, it was answered by that glorious introduction of rhyme. Why not in Greek also?



Now, it is no less true in Greek, than in Latin, that there was a tendency to rhyme from the very beginning. Open Homer: look for *caudate* rhymes:—

μ

² As an illustration of this remark, it is worth while noticing how very few examples of Hexameters occur in the New Testament. I believe that the following are all that are *tolerable*; that is, that can so be scanned without one or two false qualities:—

- S. Luke 21:18. $\mu \mu \dots$
- S. John 8:5. $\dots \dots \dots$
- S. John 8:16. $[] \mu \dots$
- S. John 17:20. \dots
- Titus 3:2. $\mu \mu \mu \dots$
- Heb. 12:13. $\mu \dots$

There are some which are very near a hexameter: as S. Matt. 23:6—

A tolerable pentameter occurs in Rom. 6:13—

$\mu \mu \dots$

and a remarkable iambic in the Lord's Prayer.

$\mu \dots$

μ , .

Il. 18:46

μ F μ .

Il. 21:523

μ μ ,
F

Odyss. 8:147



Leonines are still more common. The reader's attention is particularly requested to those that follow:—

- Il. 2:220. μ ,
 484. μ , , μ μ
 475. , μ μ .
 3:84. μ , .
 5:529. , , μ .
 6:242. μ μ .
 Od. 1:40. F .
 397. F F μ μ .
 4:121. μ .
 14:371. , μ .



And I might mark multitudes more: but these are enough by way of example. The question then occurs at once, Why did not the new life, instilled into the Greek as well as into the Latin language by Christianity, seize the grand capability of RHYME in the one case as well as in the other? How stately it would have been in anapaestics! how sweet in trochaics! Why was it neglected?

For this reason: the reader must remember that HARDLY ONE

³ OF THE RHYMES I HAVE BEEN POINTING OUT IN HOMER WOULD BE RHYMES TO A GREEK EAR. Read them accentually, and you find μ and μ are no more double rhymes to a Greek than *gloriously* and *furiously* are to us: μ and , no more than *glory* and *victory*. Accent, in the decline of the language, was trampling down quantity. Now accent is not favourable to such rhymes, though many poems have been thus composed in the newer Greek:



μ .

³ 1st ed.: NONE

But it was not sufficiently removed from every-day life,—too familiar,—had too little dignity. There was an innate vulgarity about it which rendered it impossible to the Church.

Now, let it be observed, accentuation even in Latin was not without its difficulty. In the new style, dissyllables, whatever their real quantity, were always read—and so we read them today—as trochees. Férox, vélox, scéptrum. Hence a verse in the early metrical hymns, such as—



“Castos fides somnos juvat,”

a dimeter iambic, would have been read in mediaeval times, Cástos fídes sómnos júvat, and so have virtually become a demeter trochaic.

Popular poetry soon devised its own metre, *political verse*, as it was called, because used for every-day domestic matters. This was none other than a favourite metre of Aristophanes,—*iambic tetrameter catalectic*, our own ballad rhythm:—

“A captain bold of Halifax,
who lived in country quarters.”

And this, sometimes with rhyme, sometimes without, is the favourite Romaic metre to the present day. For example:—

μ , , , ,
μ μ , ,
μ , μ .



The Church never attempted this sing-song stanza, and preferred falling back on an older form.

From the brief allusions we find to the subject in the New Testament, we should gather that “the hymns and spiritual songs” of the Apostles were written in metrical prose. Accustomed as many of the early Christians were to the Hebrew Scriptures, this is not unlikely; and proof seems strong that it was so. Compare these passages:—

Eph 5:14.

Wherefore *he saith*:



Undoubtedly the fragment of a hymn. Again:—

Rev 4:8.

μ μ ,

And nearly coeval with these we have the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the *Ter Sanctus*, and the *Joyful Light*. Also the Eastern phase, so to speak, of the *Te Deum*; the μ . And to this rhythmical prose the Church now turned.

Then, not to pursue the subject with a detail of which this Introduction will not admit, we find that by the beginning of the eighth century, verse, properly speaking (and that with scarcely an exception), had been discarded for ever from the hymns of the Eastern Church; those hymns, occupying a space beyond all comparison greater than they do in the Latin, being written in measured prose. And now to explain the system.



The stanza which is to form the model of the succeeding stanzas,—the strophe, in fact,—is called the *Hirmos*, from its drawing others after it. The stanzas which are to follow it are called *troparia*, from their turning to it.

Let Ps. 119:13, be the Hirmos;—

“I will talk of Thy commandments
and have respect unto Thy ways.”

Then verse 15 would be a troparion to it:—

“With my lips have been I telling:
of all the judgments of Thy mouth.”

So would 17:—

“O do well unto Thy servant:
that I may live, and keep Thy word.”

and Ps. 102:16:—



“When the LORD shall build up Sion:
and when His glory shall appear.”

Let verse 44 be a Hirmos:

“So shall I always keep Thy law:
yea, for ever and ever.”

and 45 will be a troparion to it:—

“And I will walk at liberty:
for I seek Thy commandments.”

These troparia are always divided for chanting by commas,—utterly irrespective of the sense. This separation into *commatisms* renders it very difficult to read them without practice. Take an example, with the corresponding effect in English:—

& 183; & 183; μ
, , , , μ μ ,
μ



“Israel in ancient times passing on foot with, unbedewed steps the Red Gulf, of the sea, turned to flight by, the cross-typifying arms, of Moses the might of Amalek, in the wilderness.”

The perfection of troparia is in a Canon, of which I shall say more presently. I need not trouble the reader with the minute distinction between *troparia* and *stichera*; as

a *troparion* follows a *Hirmos*, so a *sticheron* follows an *homoion*, and then becomes a *prosomoion*. There are also *idiomela*,—that is, stanzas which are their own models,—and an infinite variety of names expressive of the different kind of troparia.

A collection of any number of troparia, preceded by their *Hirmos*, sometimes merely quoted by its initial words, sometimes given at length, and with inverted commas, is an *Ode*.



Let the *Hirmos*, be as before—

“With my lips have I,” &c.
and the *Ode* might follow thus:—

Hirmos.

“With my lips have I been telling: of all the judgments of Thy mouth.
“Let us break their bonds asunder: and cast away their cords from us.
“I am weary of my groaning: and every night I wash my bed.
“For he lieth waiting secret: ly as a lion in his den.
“I am poured out like water: and all my bones are out of joint.”

Glory.

“I will talk of thy commandments: and have respect unto thy ways.”

Both now.

And let this be most carefully observed: an *Ode* is simply a *Sequence* under somewhat different laws. Just when the Greek system of ecclesiastical poetry was fully developed, S. Notker and the Monks of S. Gall hit out a similar one for the Latin Church: the *Sequence* or the *Prose*. It was not copied from the East, for we have S. Notker’s own account of the way in which he invented it. It prospered to a certain extent; that is, it became one, though the least important, branch of Ecclesiastical verses.



Now the perfection of Greek poetry is attained by the *Canons* at *Lauds*, of which I proceed to speak.

A *Canon* consists of *Nine Odes*,—each *Ode* containing any number of troparia from three to beyond twenty. The reason for the number nine is this: that there are nine Scriptural canticles, employed at *Lauds*, (), on the model of which those in every *Canon* are formed:

1. of Moses after the passage of the Red Sea
2. of Moses in Deuteronomy (chap. 33)
3. of Hannah
4. of Habakkuk
5. of Isaiah (26:9-20)
6. of Jonah

7. of the Three Children (verses 3-34 of our “Song” in the Bible Version)
8. *Benedicite*
(the “Prayer of Azarias“, verses 35-66)
9. Magnificat and Benedictus.



From this arrangement two consequences follow. The first, that, as the Second Canticle is never recited except in Lent, the Canons never have any second Ode. The second, that there is generally some reference, either direct or indirect, in each Ode, to the Canticle of the same number: in the first Ode, *e.g.*, to the Song of Moses at the Red Sea: in the third to that of Hannah. This gives rise, on the one hand, to a marvellous amount of ingenuity, in tracing the most far-fetched connexions,—in discovering the most remote types;—it brings out into the clearest light the wonderful analogies which underlie the surface of Scripture narration; and so far imbues each Ode with a depth of Scriptural meaning which it could scarcely otherwise reach. On the other, it has a stiffening and cramping effect; and sometimes, especially to the uninitiated, has somewhat of a ludicrous tendency. It would be curious to sum up the variety of objects of which, in a thousand *Sixth Odes*, we find Jonah’s Whale a type. On the whole, this custom has about the same disadvantages and advantages which Warton points out as resulting from the four rhymes of a Spenserian stanza;—the advantages,—picturesqueness, ingenuity, discovery of new beauties: the disadvantages,—art not concealed by art, tautology, imparity of similitudes, a caricature of typology, painful and affected elaboration.



The *Hirmos*, on which each Ode is based, is sometimes quoted at length at the commencement, in which case it is always distinguished by inverted commas; or the first few words are merely cited as a note to the singer, for whose benefit the Tone is also given.



The next noticeable matter is that these Odes are usually arranged after an acrostich, itself commonly in verse: sometimes alphabetical. The latter device was probably borrowed from the Psalms; as for example the 25, 112, 119. The arrangement is not to be considered as a useless formality or *pretty-ism*: it was of the greatest importance, when so many Canons had to be remembered by heart. We know to what curious devices the Western Church, in matters connected with the Calendar, had recourse as a *Memoria Technica*; and not a few of her short hymns were alphabetical, either by verses or by lines. I know no instance of any other kind of acrostich. Besides the line which forms the initials of Greek Canons, the name of the composer likewise finds a frequent place. And it is worth noticing that, whereas the authors of the world-famous hymns of the West, with a few exceptions (such as the *Vexilla Regis*, the *Dies Irae*, the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*), are unknown, the case in the East is reversed. The acrostich may, or may not, run through the *Theotokia*, of which I now proceed to speak.



Each Ode is ended by a troparion, dedicated to the celebration of S. Mary, and thence named *Theotokion*. Sometimes there is another, which commemorates her at the Cross; and then it is a *Stauro-theotokion*. In long Canons, a stanza, sometimes intercalated at the end of the third or sixth Odes, is called a *Cathisma*, because the congregation are then allowed to sit. There is also the *Oicos*, literally the



House,—which is the exact Italian *Stanza*,—about the length of three ordinary troparia. The *Catavasia* is a troparion in which both choirs come down together, and stand in the middle of the Church, singing it in common.

The acrostichs are usually in iambics,—sometimes none of the best: *e.g.*—

μ ,
 on the feast of S. Zacharias the Prophet:—and generally bringing in some paronomasia on the Saint's names; as—

μ , on that of S. Dorotheus.

Or again:—

μ μ , & 183;

and of S. Clement:

μ , μ μ μ .



But there are examples of acrostichs which take the form of an hexameter, as—

and

μ , μ

and

μ μ

I shall more than once have occasion to observe that, while the earlier Odes, which treat of such subjects as the Resurrection, Ascension, Nativity, are magnificent specimens of religious poetry, the later ones, composed in commemoration of martyrs, of whom nothing but the fact of their martyrdom is known, are often grievously dull and heavy. Herein the Eastern Church would have done well; to have had, for such as these, a Canon of the Common of Martyrs, instead of celebrating each differently; if the tautology which composes such Odes can indeed be called *different*.



I said, some short time since, that the Greek Ode and the Latin Notkerian Sequence were essentially the same. This being so, it is to introduce confusion into the very axioms of hymnology to call that kind of Sequence, as Mone does, by the name of Troparion. The Troparion does not answer to the Sequence, but to each stanza of the Sequence. The differences between Odes and Sequences may be briefly summed up as follows:—

1. The *Hirmos* in the former has a number of Troparia following it and based on it, whereas in the latter the *Troparia* run in couples; that is, one *Hirmos* has one follower, or *Troparion*, and there an end; then, another follows another, and so on. There are sometimes triplets, but these are not common.



2. The *Hirmos* in Greek Odes is always an already existing Troparion; whereas, in Latin, the writer generally composed that as much as any other part of the Sequence. But in certain Sequences this was not always the case. Godeschalkus sometimes took a verse from the Psalms.

3. Sometimes, indeed, a whole Sequence was made *super* some other Sequence, and then it became a vast Troparion, the different verses taking the place of the *commatims* in Greek Odes. In the February number of *The Ecclesiologist* for 1859, is given a list of Hirmos-Sequences, from the Brander MS. of S. Gall. But even in these cases, it is better not to call them Troparia, as they have so little real resemblance to Greek stanzas of that kind: I had rather see them called Homoia.

4. The rhythm in the Greek is far more exact. Not only the syllabic arrangement, but the accentuation is the same; whereas in Latin, the accentuation is often *counter*; that is, an iambic dimeter in the Hirmos is answered by a trochaic dimeter in the Troparion. For example, if the Hirmos were,—

“The LORD is great in Sion;
and high above all people,”

the requirements of a Sequence would be satisfied with the Troparion,

“Look upon my misery:
and forgive me all my sins.”

Such a licence would not for one moment be allowed in the Greek.

I next have to speak of the books in which Greek Hymnology is to be found. They consist principally of sixteen volumes.

. Twelve of the *Menaëa*:—which would answer, in Western Ritual, to the Breviary, minus the ferial offices. But, whereas in the West the only human compositions of the Breviary are the lections from the sermons of the Fathers, the hymns, and a few responses—the body of the Eastern Breviary is ecclesiastical poetry: poetry not, strictly speaking, written in verse, but in measured prose. This is the staple of those three thousand pages—under whatever name the stanzas may be presented—forming Canons and Odes; as, Troparia, Idiomela, Stichera, Stichoi, Contakia, Cathismata, Theotokia, Triodia, Staurotheotokia, Catavasias, —or whatever else. Nine-tenths of the Eastern Service-book is poetry.

. The *Paracletice*, or *Great Octoechus*: in eight parts.

This contains the Ferial Office for eight weeks. Each week has on Sunday—

A Canon of the Trinity.

A Canon of the Resurrection.

A Canon of the Cross and Resurrection.

A Canon of the Mother of God (one or more).

On Monday:

A Canon of Penitence.

A Canon of the Angels.

On Tuesday:

A Canon of Penitence.

A Canon of the Forerunner.

On Wednesday:
 A Canon of the Cross.
 A Canon of the Mother of God.
 On Thursday:
 A Canon of the Apostles.
 A Canon of S. Nicolas.
 On Friday:
 A Canon of the Passion.
 A Canon of the Mother of God (two).
 On Saturday:
 A Canon of Prophets and Martyrs.
 A Canon of the Dead.



In the first week, the whole of the Canons are sung to the first Tone: in the second, to the second, and so on. The Greek Tones answer to our Gregorian, thus:—

Latin.	Greek.
Tone I.	I.
II.	I. Plagal.
III.	II.
IV.	II. Plagal.
V.	III.
VI.	Varys (heavy.)
VII.	IV.
VIII.	IX. Plagal.



The *Paracletice* forms a quarto volume (double columns) of 350 pages: at least half is the work of Joseph of the Studium. The *Octoechus*, sometimes called the *Little Octoechus*, contains the Sunday services from the Paracletice: they are often printed separately.

. The *Triodion*: the Lent volume, which commences on the Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican (that before Septuagesima) and goes down to Easter. It is so called, because the leading Canons have, during that period, only three Odes.

. The *Pentecostarion*,—more properly the *Pentecostarion Charmosynon*,—the Office for Easter-tide. On a moderate computation, these volumes together comprise 5000 closely printed quarto pages, in double columns, of which at least 4000 are poetry.

The thought that, in conclusion, strikes one is this: the marvellous ignorance in which English ecclesiastical scholars are content to remain of this huge treasure of divinity—the gradual completion of nine centuries at least. I may safely calculate that not one out of twenty who peruse these pages will ever have read a Greek “*Canon*” through; yet what a glorious mass of theology do these offices present! If the following pages tend in any degree to induce the reader to study these books for himself, my labour could hardly have been spent to a better result.



EPOCHS OF GREEK ECCLESIASTICAL POETRY⁴

Like that of the Latin, the Poetry of the Greek Church may be divided into three epochs:—

I. That of *formation*, while it was gradually throwing off the bondage of classical metres, and inventing and perfecting its various styles; and this ends about A.D. 726.

II. That of *perfection*: which, as we shall see, nearly coincides with the period of the Iconoclastic Controversy, A.D. 726-820.

III. That of *decadence*: when the effeteness of an effeminate Court, and the dissolution of a decaying Empire, reduced ecclesiastical poetry, by slow degrees, to a stilted bombast, giving great words to little meaning, heaping up epithet on epithe, tricking out common-places in diction more and more gorgeous, till sense and simplicity are alike sought in vain. A.D. 820-1400.

⁴ 1st ed. only, p. B.

**FIRST EPOCH.**

A.D. 360—A.D. 726.

It is not my intention to dwell on the hymn writers of this period, such as S. Gregory Nazianzen and S. Sophronius, because their works have not been employed in the Divine Office, are merely an imitation of classical writers, and, however occasionally pretty, are not the stuff out of which Church-song is made. There is but one writer in this epoch who gives spring-promise of the approaching summer, and that is S. Anatolius.



S. Anatolius.

+ 458.

The first poet who emancipated himself from the tyranny of the old laws—hence to be compared to Venantius Fortunatus in the West—and who boldly struck out the new path of harmonious prose, was S. Anatolius of Constantinople. His commencements were not promising. He had been *apocrisiarius*, or legate, from the arch-heretic Dioscorus to the Emperor's Court: and at the death of S. Flavian, in consequence of the violence received in the "*Robbers' Meeting*" at Ephesus, A.D. 449, was, by the influence of his Pontiff, raised to the vacant throne of Constantinople. He soon, however, vindicated his orthodoxy; and in the Council of Chalcedon, he procured the enactment of the famous 28th Canon, by which, (in spite of all the efforts of Rome,) Constantinople was raised to the second place among Patriarchal Sees. Having governed his Church eight years in peace, he departed to his rest in A.D. 458. His compositions are not numerous, and are almost all short, but they are usually very spirited.



STICHERA FOR A SUNDAY OF THE FIRST TONE.

6,4,6,4

Anatolius, ~458

μ .

Fierce was the wild billow;
 Dark was the night;
 Oars laboured heavily;
 Foam glimmered white;
 Trembled the mariners;
 Peril was nigh;
 Then said the God of God,
 —"Peace! It is I!"

Ridge of the mountain-wave,
 Lower thy crest!
 Wail of Euroclydon,
 Be thou at rest!
 Sorrow can never be,—
 Darkness must fly,—
 Where saith the Light of Light,
 —"Peace! It is I!"



Jesu, Deliverer!
 Come Thou to me:
 Soothe Thou my voyaging
 Over Life's sea!

Thou, when the storm of Death
 Roars, sweeping by,
 Whisper, O Truth of Truth!
 —“Peace! It is I!”

[The above hymn has been set by my friend Mr. Helmore; also in H. E. C., of which it forms No. 1: also by Miss Kerr. The last melody is, to my mind, especially beautiful.]



EVENING HYMN.

μ .

This little hymn, which, I believe, is not used in the public service of the Church, is a great favourite in the Greek Isles. Its peculiar style and evident antiquity may well lead to the belief that it is the work of our present author. It is, to the scattered hamlets of Chios and Mitylene, what Bishop Ken's Evening Hymn is to the villages of our own land; and its melody singularly plaintive and soothing.

7,6,7,6,8,8

Anatolius, ~458

The day is past and over;
 All thanks, O LORD, to Thee!
 I pray Thee, that offenceless
 The hours of dark may be.
 O Jesu! keep me in Thy sight,
 And save me through the coming night!



The joys of day are over:
 I lift my heart to Thee;
 And call on Thee, that sinless
 The hours of sin may be.
 O Jesu! make their darkness light,
 And save me through the coming night!

The toils of day are over:
 I raise the hymn to Thee;
 And ask that free from peril
 The hours of fear may be.
 O Jesu! keep me in Thy sight,
 And guard me through the coming night!

Lighten mine eyes, O SAVIOUR,
 Or sleep in death shall I,
 And he, my wakeful tempter,
 Triumphantly shall cry:
 “He could not make their darkness light,

Nor guard them through the hours of night!”



Be Thou my soul’s preserver,
 O GOD! for Thou dost know
 How many are the perils
 Through which I have to go:
 Lover of men! O hear my call,
 And guard and save me from them all!

[set by Mr. Helmore: also by Mr. Arthur Brown. Both settings have reached a second Edition.]



S. Stephen’s Day

STICHERA AT VESPERS

7,6,7,6

Anatolius, ~458

The LORD and King of all things
 But yesterday was born:
 And Stephen’s glorious offering
 His birthtide shall adorn.
 No pearls of orient splendour,
 No jewels can he show;
 But with his own true heart’s-blood
 His shining vestments glow.

Come, ye that love the Martyrs,
 And pluck the flow’rs of song,
 And weave them in a garland
 For this our suppliant throng;
 And cry,—O thou that shinest
 In grace’s brightest ray,
 CHRIST’s valiant Protomartyr,
 For peace and favour pray!



Thou first of all Confessors,
 Thou of all Deacons crown,
 Of every following athlete
 The glory and renown:
 Make supplication, standing
 Before CHRIST’s Royal Throne,
 That He would give the kingdom,

And for our sins atone!



[In contrast with the above Stanzas, the reader may not be displeased to compare the celebrated sequence of Adam of S. Victor, *Heri mundus exultavit*; which has never yet, I believe, appeared in English.]

5

8,8,7,8,8,7
Adam of St. Victor

HERI MUNDUS EXULTAVIT

Yesterday, with exultation
Joined the world in celebration
 Of her promised Saviour's birth:
Yesterday the Angel nation
Poured the strains of jubilation
O'er the Monarch born on earth.



But today, o'er death victorious,
By his faith and actions glorious,
 By his miracles renowned,
Dared the Deacon Protomartyr
Earthly life for Heav'n to barter,
 Faithful midst the faithless found.

Forward, champion, in thy quarrel!
Certain of a certain laurel,
 Holy Stephen, persevere!
Perjured witnesses confounding,
Satan's Synagogue astounding
 By thy doctrine true and clear.

Lo! in Heav'n thy Witness liveth;
Bright and faithful proof He giveth
 Of His Martyr's full success:
Thou by name *a Crown* impliest;
Meetly then in pangs thou diest
 For the Crown of Righteousness!

For a crown that fadeth never,
Bear the torturer's brief endeavour,
 Victory waits to end the strife.

⁵ 1st ed. only, p. 8-10.



Death shall be thy birth's beginning,
 And life's losing be the winning
 Of a true and better life.

Whom the HOLY GHOST endueth,
 Whom celestial light imbueth,
 Stephen penetrates the skies:
 There GOD's fullest glory viewing,
 There his victor strength renewing,
 For his near reward he sighs.

See, as Jewish foes invade thee,
 See, how JESUS *stands* to aid thee:
 Stands, to guard His champion's death!
 Cry that opened Heav'n is shown thee:
 Cry that JESUS waits to own thee:
 Cry it with thy latest breath!

As the dying Martyr kneeleth,
 For his murderers he appealeth,
 And his prayer their pardon sealeth,
 For their madness grieving sore;
 Then to CHRIST he sleepeth sweetly,
 Who His pattern kept completely,
 And with CHRIST he reigneth meetly,
 Martyr first-fruits, evermore!



STICHERA FOR CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

7,6,7,6

Anatolius, ~458

μ μ .

A great and mighty wonder!
 A full and holy cure!
 6

The Virgin bears the Infant,
 With Virgin-honour pure!

The Word becomes Incarnate,⁷
 And yet remains on high:
 And Cherubim sing anthems

⁶ 1st ed.: The festal makes secure:

⁷ Compare S. Thomas: Verbum supernum prodiens, *Nec Patris linguens dexteram*.



To shepherds from the sky.
 And we with them triumphant
 Repeat the hymn again:
 “To GOD on high be glory,
 And peace on earth to men!”
 While thus they sing your Monarch,
 Those bright angelic bands,
 Rejoice, ye vales and mountains!
 Ye oceans, clap your hands!
 Since all He comes to ransom,
 By all be He adored,
 The Infant born in Bethlehem,
 The Saviour and the LORD!
 And idol forms shall perish,
 And error shall decay,
 And CHRIST shall wield His sceptre,
 Our LORD and GOD for aye.

[In Mr. Young's book. Melody of *Christus der ist mein Leben*. Harmony by M. Vulpius, 1609.]



IDIOMELON FOR CHRISTMAS.

8

i

Anatolius, ~458

In Bethlehem is He born,
 Maker of all things, everlasting GOD!
 He opens Eden's gate,
 Monarch of Ages! Thence the fiery sword
 Gives glorious passage; thence
 That severing mid-wall overthrown, the Powers
 Of earth and Heav'n are one:
 Angels and men renew their ancient league,
 The pure rejoin the pure
 In happy union! Now the Virgin-womb,
 Like some cherubic throne,
 Containeth Him, the Uncontainable:
 Bears Him, Who while *they* bear

⁸ 1st ed. only, p. 13.

The Seraphs tremble: bears Him, as He comes
 To shower upon the world
The fulness of His everlasting love.



SECOND EPOCH.

A.D. 726—A.D. 820.

The second period of Greek Hymnology is very nearly, as I said, coincident with the Iconoclastic controversy. Its first writer, indeed, died shortly after the commencement of that stormy age, and took no share in its Councils or sufferings; while the last hymnographer who bore a part in its proceedings, S. Joseph of the Studium, belongs to the decline of his art. With these two exceptions, the ecclesiastical poets of this period were not only thrown into the midst of that great struggle, but, with scarcely one exception, took an active share in it.



A few words on that conflict of one hundred and sixteen years are absolutely necessary, if we would understand the progress and full development of Greek Hymnography. No controversy has been more grossly misapprehended; none, without the key of subsequent events, could have been so difficult to appreciate. Till Calvinism, and its daughter Rationalism, showed the ultimate development of Iconoclast principles, it must have been well nigh impossible to realize the depth of feeling on the side of the Church, or the greatness of the interests attacked by her opponents. We may, perhaps, doubt whether even the Saints of that day fully understood the character of the battle; whether they did not give up ease, honour, possessions, life itself, rather from an intuitive perception that their cause was the cause of the Catholic faith, than from a logical appreciation of the results to which the Image-destroyers were tending. Just as in the early part of the Nestorian controversy, many and many a simple soul must have felt intuitively that the title of *Theotocos* was to be defended, without seeing the full consequences to which its denial would subsequently lead. The supporters of Icons, by universal consent, numbered amongst their ranks all that was pious and venerable in the Eastern Church. The Iconoclasts seem to have been a legitimate outbreak of that secret creeping Manichaeism, which, under the various names of Turlupins, Bogomili, or Good-men, so long devastated CHRIST'S fold.



We must keep the landmarks of the controversy in sight. Commenced by Leo the Isaurian, in A.D. 726, the persecution was carried on by his despicable son, Constantine Copronymus, who also endeavoured to destroy monasticism. The great Council of Constantinople, attended by 338 prelates, in 752, which rejected the use of images, was the culminating success of the Iconoclasts. Lulling at the death of Constantine, the persecution again raged in the latter years of his successor Leo, and was only terminated by the death of that prince, and the succession of Constantine and Irene. The Second Council of Nicaea, Seventh Oecumenical (A.D. 787), attended by 377 Bishops, seemed to end the heresy; but it again broke out under the Iconoclast Emperor, Leo the Armenian (813), and after having been carried on under the usurper Michael, and his son Theophilus, ended with the death of the latter in 842. In the Hymnographers of this epoch, it may be noticed that the Second Council of Nicaea forms the culminating point of ecclesiastical poetry. Up to that date, there is a vigour





and freshness which the twenty-eight years of peace succeeding the Council corrupted, and that rapidly, with the fashionable language of an effete court, and deluged with Byzantine bombast.



S. Andrew of Crete.

A.D. 660 A.D. 732.

Andrew was born at Damascus, about the year 660, and embraced the monastic life at Jerusalem, from which city he sometimes takes his name. Hence he was sent on ecclesiastical business to Constantinople, where he became a Deacon of the Great Church, and Warden of the Orphanage. His first entrance on public life does no credit to his sanctity. During the reign of Philippicus Bardanes, (711-714) he was raised by that usurper to the Archiepiscopate of Crete; and shortly afterwards was one of the Pseudo-Synod of Constantinople, held under the Emperor's auspices in A.D. 712, which condemned the Sixth Oecumenical Council, and restored the Monothelite heresy. At a later period, however, he returned to the faith of the Church, and refuted the error into which he had fallen. Seventeen of his Homilies, rather laboured than eloquent, remain to us: that in which he rises highest is, not unnaturally, his sermon on S. Titus, Apostle of Crete. He died in the island of Hierissus, near Mitylene, about the year 732.



As a poet, his most ambitious composition is the Great Canon; which, partially used during other days of Lent, is sung right through on the Thursday of Mid-Lent week, called, indeed, from that hymn. His Triodia in Holy Week, and Canon on Mid-Pentecost, are fine; and he has a great variety of spirited Idiomela scattered through the *Triodion* and *Pentecostarion*.



STICHERA FOR GREAT THURSDAY.

8,7,8,7,8,7

Andrew of Crete (~660-732)

μ μ .

O the mystery, passing wonder,
 When, reclining at the board,
 "Eat," Thou saidst to Thy Disciples,
 "That True Bread with quickening stored:
 "Drink in faith the healing Chalice
 "From a dying GOD outpoured."

Then the glorious upper chamber
 A celestial tent was made,
 When the bloodless rite was offered,
 And the soul's true service paid,
 And the table of the feasters
 As an altar stood displayed.



CHRIST is now our mighty pascha,
 Eaten for our mystic bread:
 Take we of His broken Body,

Drink we of the Blood He shed,
As a lamb led out to slaughter,
And for this world offered.

To the Twelve spake Truth eternal,
To the Branches spake the Vine:
“Never more from this day
Shall I taste again this wine,
Till I drink it in the kingdom
Of My FATHER, and with Mine.”

Thou hast stretched those hands for silver
That had held the immortal Food;
With the lips that late had tasted
Of the Body and the Blood,
Thou hast given the kiss, O Judas;
Thou hast heard the woe bestowed.



CHRIST to all the world gives banquet
On that most celestial Meat:
Him, albeit with lips all earthly,
Yet with holy hearts we greet:
Him, the sacrificial Pascha,
Priest and Victim all complete.

[In Mr. Young's book, *Melody of Pange lingua*, harmonised by Dr. Schroeder. I may add that I purposely chose this Stanza to suit the melody of S. Thomas's great bymn.]



TROPARIA FOR PALM SUNDAY.

The following Stanzas are from the triodion sung at Compline on Palm Sunday:
which has the same name among the Greeks as among ourselves.

10,9,10,9

Andrew of Crete (~660-732)

μ .

Jesus, hastening for the world to suffer,
Enters in, Jerusalem, to thee:
With His Twelve He goeth forth to offer
That free sacrifice He came to be.

They that follow Him with true affection
Stand prepared to suffer for His Name:
Be we ready then for man's rejection,
For the mockery, the reproach, the shame.



Now, in sorrow, sorrow finds its healing:
 In the form wherein our father fell,
 CHRIST appears, those quick'ning Wounds revealing,
 Which shall save from sin and death and hell.

Now, Judaea, call thy Priesthood nigh thee!
 Now for Deicide prepare thy hands!
 Lo! thy Monarch, meek and gentle by thee!
 Lo! the Lamb and Shepherd in thee stands!

To thy Monarch, Salem, give glad greeting!
 Willingly He hastens to be slain
 For the multitude His entrance meeting
 With their false Hosanna's ceaseless strain.
 "Blest is He That comes," they cry,
 "On the Cross for man to die!"



**THE GREAT CANON,
 CALLED ALSO
 THE KING OF CANONS.**

It would be unpardonable not to give a portion of that which the Greeks regard as the King of Canons—the Great Canon of the Mid-Lent week. It is a collection of Scriptural examples, turned to the purpose of penitential Confession. It is impossible to deny the beauty of many stanzas, and the ingenuity of some tropological applications. But the immense length of the Canon, for it exceeds three hundred stanzas, and its necessary tautology, must render it wearisome, unless devotionally used under the peculiar circumstances for which it is appointed. The following is a part of the earlier portion.

6,6,8,6,10,10

Andrew of Crete (~660-732)

μ ;

Whence shall my tears begin?
 What first-fruits shall I bear
 Of earnest sorrow for my sin?
 Or how my woes declare?
 O Thou! the Merciful and Gracious One
 Forgive the foul transgressions I have done.



With Adam I have vied,
 Yea, passed him, in my fall;
 And I am naked now, by pride
 And lust made bare of all;

Of Thee, O GOD, and that Celestial Band,
And all the glory of the Promised Land.

No earthly Eve beguiled
My body into sin:
A spiritual temptress smiled,
Concupiscence within:

Unbridled Passion grasped the unhallowed sweet:
Most bitter—ever bitter—was the meat.

If Adam's righteous doom,
Because he dared transgress
Thy one decree, lost Eden's bloom
And Eden's loveliness:

What recompence, O LORD, must I expect,
Who all my life Thy quickening laws neglect?



By mine own act, like Cain,
A murderer was I made:
By mine own act my soul was slain,
When Thou wast disobeyed:

And lusts each day are quickened, warring still
Against Thy grace with many a deed of ill.

Thou formed'st me of clay,
O Heav'nly Potter! Thou
In fleshly vesture didst array,
With life and breath endow.

Thou Who didst make, didst ransom, and dost know
To Thy repentant creature pity show!



My guilt for vengeance cries;
But yet Thou pardonest all,
And whom Thou lov'st Thou dost chastise,
And mourn'st for them that fall:

Thou, as a Father, mark'st our tears and pain,
And welcomest the prodigal again.

I lie before Thy door,
O turn me not away!
Nor in mine old age give me o'er
To Satan for a prey!

But ere the end of life and term of grace,
Thou Merciful! my many sins efface!

The Priest beheld, and passed
The way he had to go:

A careless glance the Levite cast,
 And left me to my woe:
 But Thou, O JESU, Mary's Son, console,
 Draw nigh, and succour me, and make me whole!



Thou Spotless Lamb divine,
 Who takest sins away,
 Remove, remove, the load that mine
 Upon my conscience lay:
 And, of Thy tender mercy, grant Thou me
 To find remission of iniquity

[In Mr. Young's book: composed by Dr. Schroeder.]

STICHERA FOR THE SECOND WEEK OF THE GREAT FAST.

6,5,6,5

Andrew of Crete (~660-732)

Christian! dost thou *see* them
 On the holy ground,
 How the troops of Midian
 Prowl and prowl around?
 Christian! up and smite them,
 Counting gain but loss:
 Smite them by the merit
 Of the Holy Cross!



Christian! dost thou *feel* them,
 How they work within,
 Striving, tempting, luring,
 Goading into sin?
 Christian! never tremble!
 Never be down-cast!
 Smite them by the virtue
 Of the Lenten Fast!

Christian! dost thou *hear* them
 How they speak thee fair?
 "Always fast and vigil?
 Always watch and prayer?"
 Christian! say but boldly:
 "While I breathe, I pray:"
 Peace shall follow battle,

Night shall end in day.



“Well I know thy trouble,
 O my servant true;
 Thou art very weary,—
 I was weary too:
 But that toil shall make thee,
 Some day, all Mine own:
 But the end of sorrow
 Shall be near My Throne.”

[In H. E. C., where it is No. 2. Also, as *Fortitude, a Sacred Song*, by M. E. H. S. This is, of course, not intended to be used in Church; but, as a song, it is extremely pretty.]



MESO-PENTECOST.

9

10,6,6,10,8,10

Andrew of Crete (~660-732)

[The day which halves the distance between Easter and Pentecost, is a feast of no small dignity in the Oriental Church; and the Canon at lauds is the composition of our present poet. I will try a portion of it in rhymeless lyric meter, which, to my own mind, gives the truest representation of the original.]



Glory.
Both now.
Catavasia.

Exult, ye Gentiles! mourn, ye Hebrews! CHRIST,
 Giver of Life, hath burst
 The fetters of the Tomb:
 And raised the dead again, and healed the sick.
 This is our GOD, Who giveth health
 To every soul believing on His Name.



Marvel of marvels! Thou, O LORD, didst turn
 The water into wine,
 As once Thou spak'st the word
 To Egypt's river, and forthwith 'twas blood.
 All praise to Thee, O LORD, Who now
 By laying down Thy glory, man renew'st!
 O overflowing stream of truest life,
 Our Resurrection, LORD!
 Thou for our sakes didst toil,

⁹ 1st ed. only, p. 30-32.

Thou for our sakes—so Nature willed—didst thirst:
 And resting Thee by Sichar's well,
 Of the Samaritan didst seek to drink.

Thou blessest bread, Thou multipliest fish,
 Incomprehensible!
 Thou freely feed'st the crowd,
 And givest Wisdom's spring to thirsting men.
 Thou art our SAVIOUR, O our GOD!
 Giver of Life to them that trust in Thee!

Three co-eternal, co-enthroned, I laud:
 The unbegotten SIRE,
 And Co-existant SON,
 And SPIRIT, co-eternal with the Twain:
 Tri-hypostatic Essence! One
 In might and majesty and Godhead sole.

Mother of GOD! Thou only didst contain
 The Uncontainable;
 And brought'st the Infant forth,
 Ineffable in Thy Virginity.
 Hence without ceasing, O most pure,
 Vouchsafe to call down blessing on Thy flock!

Thou turned'st the sea to land, when Thou didst whelm
 Pharoah and all his host,
 His chariot and his horse:
 And ledd'st Thy people to the Holy Mount.
 Sing we, said they, to Thee our GOD,
 Mighty in War, this Ode of Victory!



S. Germanicus

A.D. 634—A.D. 734

S. Germanus of Constantinople was born in that city about 634. His father, Justinian, a patrician, had the ill-fortune to excite the jealousy of the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus, who put him to death, and obliged Germanus to enrol himself among the Clergy of the Great Church. Here he became distinguished for piety and learning, and in process of time was made Bishop of Cyzicus. In this capacity he assisted, with S. Andrew of Crete, in the Synod of Constantinople of which I have just spoken: and no doubt, he might be the more favourably disposed to Monothelitism because he had been so deeply injured by its great opponent, Pogonatus. However, he also, at a late period, expressly condemned that heresy. Translated to the throne of Constantinople in 715, he governed his Patriarchate for some time in tranquillity. At the beginning of the attack of Leo the Isaurian on Icons, his letters, in opposition to the Imperial mandate, were the first warnings which the Church received of the impending storm. Refusing to sign the decrees of the Synod which was convoked by that Emperor in A.D. 730, and stripping off his Patriarchal robes, with the words—"It is impossible for me, Sire, to innovate, without the sanction of the Oecumenical Council," he was driven from his See, not, it is said, without blows, and returned to his own house at Platanius, where he thenceforth led a quiet and private life. He died shortly afterwards, aged about one hundred years, and is regarded by the Greeks as one of their most glorious Confessors.



The poetical compositions of S. Germanus are few.

He has stanzas on S. Simeon Stylites, on the Prophet Elias, and on the Decollation of S. John Baptist. His most poetical work is perhaps his Canon on the Wonder-working Image in Edessa. But probably the following simpler stanzas, for Sunday in the Week of the First Tone, will better commend themselves to the English reader.



A Sunday in the Week of the First Tone

8,8,8,8,8,8

Germanicus (634-734)

By fruit, the ancient Foe's device
 Drive Adam forth from Paradise:
 CHRIST, by the cross of shame and pain,
 Brought back the dying Thief again:
 "When in Thy kingdom, LORD," said he,
 "Thou shalt return, remember me!"

Thy Holy Passion we adore
 And Resurrection evermore:
 With heart and voice to Thee on high,
 As Adam and the Thief we cry:

“When in Thy kingdom Thou shalt be
 “Victor o’er all things, think of me!”



Thou, after three appointed days,
 Thy Body’s Temple didst upraise:
 And Adam’s children, one and all,
 With Adam, to New Life didst call:
 “When Thou,” they cry, “shalt Victor be
 “In that Thy kingdom, think of me!”

Early, O CHRIST, to find Thy Tomb,
 The weeping Ointment-bearers come:
 The Angel, clothed in white, hath said,
 “Why seek the LIVING with the dead?
 “The LORD of Life hath burst death’s chain,
 “Whom here ye mourn and seek in vain.”



The Apostles, on Thy Vision bent,
 To that appointed mountain went:
 And there they worship when they see,
 And there the message comes from Thee,
 That every race beneath the skies
 They should disciple and baptize.

We praise the FATHER, GOD on High,
 The Holy SON we magnify:
 Nor less our praises shall adore
 The HOLY GHOST, for evermore;
 This grace, Blest TRINITY, we crave;
 Thy suppliant servants hear and save.



S. John Damascene.

+ circ. A.D. 780

S. John Damascene has the double honour of being the last but one of the Fathers of the Eastern Church, and the greatest of her poets. It is surprising, however, how little is known of his life. That he was born of a good family at Damascus,—that he made great progress in philosophy,—that he administered some charge under the Caliph,—that he retired to the monastery of S. Sabas, in Palestine,—that he was the most learned and eloquent writer with whom the Iconoclasts had to contend,—that at a comparatively late period of life he was ordained Priest of the Church of Jerusalem, and that he died after 754, and before 787, seems to comprise all that has reached us of his biography. His enemies, from an unknown reason, called him *Mansur*:¹⁰ whether he were the same with John Arklas, also an ecclesiastical poet, is not so certain.



As a poet, he had a principal share in the Octoechus, of which I have already spoken. His three great canons are those on Easter, the Ascension, and S. Thomas's Sunday, the first and third of which I shall give either wholly or in part. Probably, however, many of the Idiomela and Stichera which are scattered about the office-books under the title of *John* and *John the Hermit*, are his. His eloquent defence of Icons has deservedly procured him the title of *The Doctor of Christian Art*.



CANON FOR EASTER DAY,

CALLED THE “GOLDEN CANON,” OR, THE “QUEEN OF CANONS.”

The circumstances under which the Canon is sung are thus eloquently described by a modern writer. The scene is at Athens.

“As midnight approached, the Archbishop, with his priests, accompanied by the King and Queen, left the Church, and stationed themselves on the platform, which was raised considerably from the ground, so that they were distinctly seen by the people. Every one now remained in breathless expectation, holding their unlighted tapers in readiness when the glad moment should arrive, while the priests still continued murmuring their melancholy chant in a low half-whisper. Suddenly a single report of a cannon announced that twelve o'clock had struck, and that Easter day had begun; then the old Archbishop elevating the cross, exclaimed in a loud exulting tone, ‘Christos anesti!’ ‘CHRIST IS RISEN!’ and instantly every single individual of all that host took up the cry, and the vast multitude broke through and dispelled for ever the intense and mournful silence which they had maintained so long, with one spontaneous shout of indescribable joy and triumph, ‘CHRIST IS RISEN!’ ‘CHRIST IS RISEN!’ At the same moment, the oppressive darkness was succeeded by a blaze



¹⁰ He was called *Ibn-Mansur*, from the name of his father.—Assemani, *Bib. Orient.* ii. 97. R. F. L.



of light from thousands of tapers, which, communicating one from another, seemed to send streams of fire in all directions, rendering the minutest objects distinctly visible, and casting the most vivid glow on the expressive faces full of exultation, of the rejoicing crowd; bands of music struck up their gayest strains; the roll of the drum through the town, and further on the pealing of the cannon announced far and near these 'glad tidings of great joy;' while from hill and plain, from the sea-shore and the far olive-grove, rocket after rocket ascending to the clear sky, answered back with their mute eloquence, that CHRIST is risen indeed, and told of other tongues that were repeating those blessed words, and other hearts that leap for joy; everywhere men clasped each other's hands, and congratulated one another, and embraced with countenances beaming with delight as though to each one separately some wonderful happiness had been proclaimed;—and so in truth it was;—and all the while, rising above the mingling of many sounds, each one of which was a sound of gladness, the aged priests were distinctly heard chanting forth a glorious old hymn of victory in tones so loud and clear, that they seemed to have regained their youth and strength to tell the world how 'CHRIST is risen from the dead, having trampled death beneath His feet, and henceforth they that are in the tombs have everlasting life.'”
That which follows is the “glorious old Hymn of Victory.”



ODE 1.

7,6,7,6

John Damascene, 780

μ .

'Tis the Day of Resurrection:
 Earth! tell it out abroad!
 The Passover of gladness!
 The Passover of God!
 From Death to Life Eternal,—
 From this world
 ¹¹ to the sky,
 Our CHRIST hath brought us over,
 With hymns of victory.



Our hearts be pure from evil,
 That we may see aright
 The LORD in rays eternal
 Of Resurrection-Light:
 And, listening to His accents,
 May hear, so calm and plain,
 His own—*All Hail!*—and hearing,
 May raise the victor strain!

¹¹ 1st ed.: From earth unto

Now let the Heav'ns be joyful!
 Let earth her song begin!
 Let the round world keep triumph,
 And all that is therein:
 Invisible and visible
 Their notes let all things blend,—
 For CHRIST the LORD hath risen,—
 Our joy that hath no end.

[Set by Mr. Helmore: a very spirited melody. Also in Mr. Young's book: composed by Dr. Schroeder.]



ODE III.

10,9,10,9
 John Damascene, 780
 μ μ .

Come, and let us drink of that New River,
 Not from barren Rock divinely poured,
 But the Fount of Life that is for ever
 From the Sepulchre of CHRIST the LORD.

All the world hath bright illumination,—
 Heav'n and Earth and things beneath the earth:
 'Tis the Festival of all Creation:
 CHRIST hath ris'n, Who gave Creation birth:

Yesterday with Thee in burial lying,
 Now today with Thee aris'n I rise;
 Yesterday the partner of Thy dying,
 With Thyself upraise me to the skies.

[In Mr. Young's book: composed by Dr. Schroeder.]



ODE IV.

10,10,10,10
 John Damascene, 780

Stand on thy watch-tower, Habakkuk the Seer,
 And show the Angel, radiant in his light:
 'Today,' saith he, 'Salvation shall appear,
 'Because the LORD hath ris'n, as GOD of Might.'

The male that opes the Virgin's womb is He;
 The Lamb of Whom His faithful people eat;
 Our truer Passover from blemish free;
 Our very GOD, Whose name is all complete.

This yearling Lamb, our Sacrifice most blest,
 Our glorious Crown, for all men freely dies:
 Behold our Pascha, beauteous from His rest,
 The healing Sun of Righteousness arise.



Before the ark, a type to pass away,
 David of old time danced: we, holier race,
 Seeing the Antitype come forth today,
 Hail, with a shout, CHRIST'S OWN Almighty grace.



ODE V.

8,7,8,7,8,7

John Damascene, 780

μ .

Let us rise in early morning,
 And, instead of ointments, bring
 Hymns of praises to our Master,
 And His Resurrection sing:
 We shall see the Sun of Justice
 Risen with healing on His wing.

Thy unbounded loving-kindness,
 They that groaned in Hades' chain,
 Prisoners, from afar beholding,
 Hasten to the light again
 And to that eternal Pascha
 Wove the dance and raised the strain.



Go ye forth, His Saints, to meet Him!
 Go with lamps in every hand!
 From the sepulchre He riseth:
 Ready for the Bridegroom stand:
 And the Pascha of salvation
 Hail, with His triumphant band.



ODE VI.

11,10,11,10
John Damascene, 780

Into the dim earth's lowest parts descending,
And bursting by Thy might the infernal chain
That bound the prisoners, Thou, at three days' ending,
As Jonah from the whale, hast risen again.

Thou brakest not the seal, Thy surety's token,
Arising from the Tomb Who left'st in Birth
The portals of Virginity unbroken,
Opening the gates of heaven to sons of earth.

Thou, Sacrifice ineffable and living,
Didst to the FATHER by Thyself atone
As GOD eternal: resurrection giving
To Adam, general parent, by Thine own.



ODE VII.

10,10,10,10,8,8
John Damascene, 780

μ .

Who from the fiery furnace saved the Three,
Suffers as mortal; that, His Passion o'er,
This mortal, triumphing o'er death, might be
Vested with immortality once more:
He Whom our fathers still confest
GOD over all, for ever blest.

The women with their ointment seek the Tomb:
And Whom they mourned as dead, with many a tear,
They worship now, joy dawning on their gloom,
As Living GOD, as mystic Passover;
Then to the LORD's Disciples gave
The tidings of the vanquished grave.



We keep the festal of the death of death;
Of hell overthrown: the first-fruits pure and bright,
Of life eternal; and with joyous breath
Praise Him that won the victory by His might:

Him Whom our fathers still confest
 GOD over all, for ever blest.

All hallowed festival, in splendour born!
 Night of salvation and of glory! Night
 Fore-heralding the Resurrection morn!
 When from the tomb the everlasting Light,
 A glorious frame once more his own,
 Upon the world in splendour shone.



ODE VIII.

8,7,8,7,8,8
 John Damascene, 780

Thou hallowed chosen morn of praise,
 That best and greatest shinest!
 Lady and Queen and Day of days,
 Of things divine, divinest!
 On thee our praises CHRIST adore
 For ever and for evermore.

Come, let us taste the Vine's new fruit
 For heavenly joy preparing:
 Today the branches with the Root
 In Resurrection sharing:
 Whom as True GOD our hymns adore
 For ever and for evermore.



Rise, Sion, rise, and looking forth,
 Behold thy children round thee!
 From East and West, and South and North,
 Thy scattered sons have found thee!
 And in thy bosom CHRIST adore
 For ever and for evermore.

O FATHER! O co-equal SON!
 O co-eternal Spirit!
 In Persons Three, in Substance One,
 And One in power and merit;
 In Thee baptized, we Thee adore
 For ever and for evermore!

[No. 1 in Mr. Sedding's book. A very appropriate melody.]



ODE IX.

10,11,10,11
John Damascene, 780

Thou New Jerusalem, arise and shine!
The glory of the Lord on thee hath risen!
Sion, exult! rejoice with joy divine,
Mother of GOD! Thy Son hath burst His prison!

O heavenly Voice! O word of purest love!
'Lo! I am with you alway to the end!
This is the anchor, steadfast from above,
The golden anchor, whence our hopes depend.

O CHRIST, our Pascha! greatest, holiest, best!
GOD's Word and Wisdom and effectual Might!
Thy fuller, lovelier presence manifest,
In that eternal realm, that knows no night!



THE STICHERA OF THE LAST KISS.

μ μ .

The following Stichera, which are generally (though without any great cause) attributed to S. John Damascene, form, perhaps, one of the most striking portions of the service of the Eastern Church. They are sung towards the conclusion of the Funeral Office, while the friends and relations are, in turn, kissing the corpse; the Priest does so last of all. Immediately afterwards, it is borne to the grave; the Priest casts the first earth on the coffin, with the words, "The earth is the LORD's and all that therein is: the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein." I have omitted four of the stanzas, as being almost a repetition of the rest.



9,8,9,8,9,8,9,8,7,7
John Damascene, 780

Take the last kiss,—the last for ever!
Yet render thanks amidst your gloom:
He, severed from his home and kindred,
Is passing onwards to the tomb:
For earthly labours, earthly pleasures,
And carnal joys, he cares no more:
Where are his kinsfolk and acquaintance?
They stand upon another shore.

Let us say, around him pressed,
Grant him, LORD, eternal rest!

The hour of woe and separation,
The hour of falling tears is this:
Him that so lately was among us
For the last time of all we kiss:
Up to the grave to be surrendered,
Sealed with the monumental stone,
A dweller in the house of darkness,
Amidst the dead to lie alone.
Let us say, around him pressed,
Grant him LORD, eternal rest!



Life, and life's evil conversation,
And all its dreams, are passed away:
The soul hath left her tabernacle:
Black and unsightly grows the clay.
The golden vessel here lies broken:
The tongue no voice of answer knows;
Hushed is sensation, stilled is motion;
Toward the tomb the dead man goes.
Let us cry with heart's endeavour,
Grant him rest that is for ever!



What is our life? A fading flower;
A vapour, passing soon away;
The dewdrops of the early morning:—
Come gaze upon the tombs today.
Where now is youth? Where now is beauty,
And grace of form, and sparkling eye?
All, like the summer grass, are withered;
All are abolished utterly!
While our eyes with grief grow dim,
Let us weep to CHRIST for him!

Woe for that bitter, bitter moment,
The fearful start, the parting groan,
The wrench of anguish, from the body
When the poor soul goes forth alone!
Hell and destruction are before her;
Earth in its truest worth she sees;
A flickering shade; a dream of error;
A vanity of vanities.
Sin in this world let us flee,
That in heaven our place may be.



Draw nigh, ye sons of Adam; viewing
 A likeness of yourselves in clay:
 Its beauty gone; its grace disfigured;
 Dissolving in the tomb's decay;
 The prey of worms and of corruption,
 In silent darkness mouldering on;
 Earth gathers round the coffin, hiding
 The brother, now for ever gone.
 Yet we cry, around him pressed,
 Grant him, LORD, eternal rest!

When, hurried forth by fearful angels,
 The soul forsakes her earthly frame,
 Then friends and kindred she forgetteth,
 And this world's cares have no more claim;
 Then passed are vanity and labour;
 She hears the Judge's voice alone;
 She sees the ineffable tribunal:
 Where we, too, cry with suppliant moan,
 For the sins that soul hath done,
 Grant Thy pardon, Holy One!



Now all the organs of the body,
 So full of energy before,
 Have lost perception, know not motion,
 Can suffer and can act no more.
 The eyes are dosed in death's dark shadow;
 The ear can never hear again;
 The feet are bound; the hands lie idle;
 The tongue is fast as with a chain.
 Great and mighty though he be,
 Every man is vanity.

Behold and weep me, friends and brethren!
 Voice, sense, and breath, and motion gone;
 But yesterday I dwelt among you;
 Then death's most fearful hour came on.
 Embrace me with the last embracement;
 Kiss me with this, the latest kiss;
 Never again shall I be with you;
 Never with you share woe or bliss.



I go toward the dread tribunal
 Where no man's person is preferred;
 Where lord and slave, where chief and soldier,
 Where rich and poor alike are heard:

One is the manner of their judgment:
 Their plea and their condition one:
 And they shall reap in woe or glory
 The earthly deeds that they have done.
 I pray you, brethren, I adjure you,
 Pour forth to CHRIST the ceaseless prayer,
 He would not doom me to Gehenna,
 But in His glory give me share!



IDIOMELA FOR ALL SAINTS.

6,5,6,5
 John Damascene, 780

Those eternal bowers
 Man hath never trod,
 Those unfading flowers
 Round the Throne of GOD:
 Who may hope to gain them
 After weary fight?
 Who at length attain them
 Clad in robes of white?
 He, who gladly barter
 All on earthly ground;
 He who, like the Martyrs,
 Says, 'I WILL be crowned.'
 He, whose one oblation
 Is a life of love;
 Clinging to the nation
 Of the Blest above.



Shame upon you, legions
 Of the Heavenly King,
 Denizens of regions
 Past imagining!
 What! with pipe and tabor
 Fool away the light,
 When He bids you labour,—
 When He tells you,—'Fight!'



While I do my duty,
 Struggling through the tide,

Whisper Thou of beauty
 On the other side!
 Tell who will the story
 Of our *now* distress:
 Oh the future glory!
 Oh the loveliness!

[No. 3 in H. E. C. A very sweet melody.]



S. THOMAS'S SUNDAY.

The four following Odes are the first four of our Saint's Canon for S. Thomas's Sunday, called also Renewal Sunday: with us Low Sunday. The first Stanzas are marked with inverted commas, as being *Hirmoi*.

ODE I.

7,6,7,6

John Damascene, 780

μ .

Catavasia "'Tis the day of Resurrection." (p. 38.)

"Come, ye faithful, raise the strain
 "Of triumphant gladness!
 "GOD hath brought His Israel
 "Into joy from sadness
 "Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
 "Jacob's sons and daughters;
 "Led them with unmoistened foot
 "Through the Red Sea waters."



'Tis the Spring, of souls today;
 CHRIST hath burst His prison;
 And from three days' sleep in death,
 —As a sun, hath risen.
 All the winter of our sins,
 Long and dark, is flying
 From His Light, to Whom we give
 Laud and praise undying.
 Now the Queen of Seasons, bright
 With the day of Splendour,
 With the royal Feast of feasts,
 Comes its joy to render;

Comes to glad Jerusalem,
 Who with true affection
 Welcomes, in unwearied strains,
 JESU'S Resurrection.



Neither might the gates of death,
 Nor the tomb's dark portal,
 Nor the watchers, nor the seal,
 Hold Thee as a mortal:
 But today amidst the Twelve
 Thou didst stand, bestowing
 That Thy peace, which evermore
 Passeth human knowing.

[No. 2 in Mr. Sedding's book. A genuine Easter melody.]



ODE III.

8,7,8,7,8,7

John Damascene, 780

μ, .

Catavasia. "Come, and let us drink of that New River." (p. 97.)

"On the rock of Thy commandments
 "Fix me firmly, lest I slide:
 "With the glory of Thy Presence
 "Cover me on every side;
 "Seeing none save Thee is holy,
 "GOD, for ever glorified!"

New immortal out of mortal,
 New existence out of old:
 This the CROSS of CHRIST accomplished,
 This the Prophets had foretold:
 So that we thus newly quickened,
 Might attain the heavenly fold.



Thou Who comprehendest all things,
 Comprehended by the tomb,
 Gav'st Thy body to the graveclothes
 And the silence and the gloom:
 Till through fast-closed doors Thou camest
 Thy Disciples to illumine.

Every nail-print, every buffet,
 Thou didst freely undergo,

As Thy Resurrection's witness
 To the Twelve Thou cam'st to show:
 So that what *they* saw in vision,
 Future years by faith might know.

[No. 3 in Mr. Sedding's book.]



ODE IV.

7,7,7,7,8,8

John Damascene, 780

μ μ .

Catavasia. "Stand on thy watch-tower, Habakkuk the Seer." (p. 98.)

"CHRIST, we turn our eyes to Thee,
 "And this mighty mystery!"
 "Habakkuk exclaimed of old,
 "In the HOLY SPIRIT bold:
 "Thou shalt come in time appointed,
 "For the help of Thine anointed!"

Taste of myrrh He deigned to know,
 Who redeemed the source of woe:
 Now He bids all sickness cease
 Through the honeycomb of peace:
 And to this world deigns to give
 That sweet food
¹² by which we live.



Patient LORD! with loving eye
 Thou invitest Thomas nigh,
 Showing Him that Wounded Side:
 While the world is certified,
 How the third day, from the grave,
 JESUS CHRIST arose to save.

Blest, O Didymus, the tongue
 Where that first confession hung:
 First the SAVIOUR to proclaim
 First the LORD of Life to name:
 Such the graces it supplied,
 —That dear touch of JESU's side!

¹² 1st ed.: fruit

**ODE V.**

10,9,10,9

John Damascene, 780

Catavasia. "Let us rise in early morning." (p. 100.)

"Reconciliation's plan devising,
 "Fellow-sharer of the FATHER's Throne,
 "Thee, O CHRIST, we, very early rising,
 "Tender lover of our spirits, own!"

When Thy Friends, with deep dismay confounded,
 Stood amazed, and knew not where to fly,
 All the darkness that their souls surrounded
 Thou didst scatter with Thy drawing nigh.

Touch how awful, how consolatory!
 When, O Thomas, thou didst stretch thine hand,
 And that Side, resplendent in its glory,
 Didst explore, because He gave command!



Unbelief of Thomas was the Mother
 Of Thy Church's most unshaken Creed:
 Thou, O SAVIOUR, wise above all other,
 Had'st, before the world was, thus decreed.



**S. Cosmas,
*Surnamed the Melodist.***

+ A.D. 760.

S. Cosmas of Jerusalem holds the second place amidst Greek Ecclesiastical poets. Left an orphan at an early age, he was adopted by the father of S. John Damascene; and the two foster-brothers were bound together by a friendship which lasted through life. They excited each other to Hymnology, and assisted, corrected, and polished each other's compositions. Cosmas, like his friend, became a monk of S. Sabas: and against his will was consecrated Bishop of Maiuma, near Gaza, by John, Patriarch of Jerusalem; the same who ordained S. John Damascene Priest. After administering his diocese with great holiness, he departed this life in a good old age, about 760, and is commemorated by the Eastern Church on the 14th of October.



“Where perfect sweetness dwells, is Cosmas gone;
But his sweet lays to cheer the Church live on,”
says the stichos prefixed to his life.

His compositions are tolerably numerous, and he seems to have taken a pleasure in competing with S. John Damascene, as in the Nativity, the Epiphany, the Transfiguration, where the Canons of both are given. To Cosmas, a considerable part of the Octoechus is owing. The best of his compositions, besides those already mentioned, seem to be his Canons on S. Gregory Nazianzen, and the Purification. He is the most learned of the Greek Church poets: and his fondness for types, boldness in their application, and love of aggregating them, make him the Oriental Adam of S. Victor. It is owing partly to a compressed fulness of meaning, very uncommon in the Greek poets of the Church, partly to the unusual harshness and contraction of his phrases, that he is the hardest of ecclesiastical bards to comprehend.



CANON FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

This is perhaps the finest, on the whole, of the Canons of Cosmas; and may fairly be preferred to the rival composition of S. John Damascene.

ODE I.

7,7,7,11,11,8

Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

CHRIST is born! Tell forth His fame!
CHRIST from Heaven! His love proclaim!
CHRIST on earth! Exalt His Name!
Sing to the LORD, O world, with exultation!
Break forth in glad thanksgiving, every nation!
For He hath triumphed gloriously!



Man, in GOD'S own Image made,
 Man, by Satan's wiles betrayed,
 Man, on whom corruption preyed,
 Shut out from hope of life and of salvation,
 Today CHRIST maketh him a new creation,
 For He hath triumphed gloriously!

For the Maker, when His foe,
 Wrought the creature death and woe,
 Bowed the Heav'ns, and came below,¹³
 And in the Virgin's womb His dwelling making
 Became true man, man's very nature taking
 For He hath triumphed gloriously!



He, the Wisdom, WORD, and Might,
 GOD, and SON, and Light of light,
 Undiscovered by the sight
 Of earthly monarch, or infernal spirit,
 Incarnate was, that we might Heav'n inherit;
 For He hath triumphed gloriously!

[In Mr. Young's book. The melody by Dr. Schroeder.]



ODE III.

9,8,9,8,7,5,7,5
 Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

Him, of the FATHER'S very Essence,
 Begotten, ere the world began,
 And, in the latter time, of Mary,
 Without a human sire, made Man:
 Unto Him, this glorious morn,
 Be the strain outpoured!
 Thou That liftest up our horn,
 Holy art Thou, LORD!

The earthly Adam, erewhile quickened
 By the blest breath of GOD on high,
 Now made the victim of corruption,
 By woman's guile betrayed to die,
 He, deceived by woman's part,

¹³ The reference is, of course, to Psalm 18:9:—"He bowed the Heavens also, and came down."

Supplication poured;
 Thou Who in my nature art,
 Holy art Thou, LORD!



Thou, JESUS CHRIST, wast consubstantial
 With this our perishable clay,
 And, by assuming earthly nature,
 Exaltedst it to heavenly day.
 Thou, That wast as mortal born,
 Being GOD adored,
 Thou That liftest up our horn,
 Holy art Thou, LORD!



Rejoice, O Bethlehem, the city
 Whence Judah's monarchs had their birth;
 Where He that sitteth on the Cherubs,
 The King of Israel, came on earth:
 Manifested this blest morn,
 As of old time never,
 He hath lifted up our horn,
 He shall reign for ever!



ODE IV.

7,6,7,6,7,6,7,6,7,7

Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

Rod of the Root of Jesse,
 Thou, Flower of Mary born,
 From that thick shady mountain ¹⁴
 Cam'st glorious forth this morn:
 Of her, the ever Virgin,
 Incarnate wast Thou made,
 The immaterial Essence,
 The GOD by all obeyed!
 Glory, LORD, Thy servants pay
 To Thy wondrous might today!



The Gentiles' expectation,
 Whom Jacob's words foretell,

¹⁴ The reference is to the Song of Habakkuk; [3:3], where the LXX. give—"God shall come from Teman, and the Holy from the thick and shady mountain of Paran."

Who Syria's pride shalt vanquish,
 Samaria's pride shalt quell;
 Thou from the Root of Judah
 Like some fair plant dost spring,
 To turn old Gentile error
 To Thee, its GOD and King!
 Glory, LORD, Thy servants pay
 To Thy wondrous might today!

In Balaam's ancient vision
 The Eastern seers were skilled,
 They marked the constellations,
 And joy their spirits filled:
 For Thou, bright Star of Jacob,
 Arising in Thy might,
 Didst call these Gentiles first-fruits
 To worship in Thy light.
 They in holy reverence bent,
 Gifts acceptable present.



As on a fleece descending
 The gentle dews distil,
 As drops the earth that water,
 The Virgin didst Thou fill.
 For Media, leagued with Sheba,
 Falls down and worships Thee:
 Tarshish and Ethiopia,
 The Isles and Araby.
¹⁵
 Glory, LORD, Thy servants pay
 To Thy wondrous might today!

[In Mr. Young's book. The melody by Dr. Schroeder.]



ODE V.

11,10,11,10,8,8
 Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

Father of Peace, and GOD of Consolation!
 The Angel of the Counsel dost Thou send

¹⁵ 1st ed. reverses the order of the previous two pairs of lines.

To herald peace, to manifest Salvation,
 Thy Light to pour, Thy knowledge to extend;
 Whence, with the morning's earliest rays,
 Lover of men! Thy Name we praise.

'Midst Caesar's subjects Thou, at his decreeing,
 Obey'dst and was enrolled: our mortal race,
 To sin and Satan slave, from bondage freeing,
 Our poverty in all points didst embrace:
 And by that Union didst combine
 The earthly with the All-Divine.



Lo! Mary, as the world's long day was waning,

¹⁶

 Incarnate Deity conceived and bore;
 Virgin in birth, and after birth
¹⁷, remaining

 And man to GOD is reconciled once more:
 Wherefore in faith her name we bless,
 And Mother of our GOD confess.



ODE VI.

10,10,10,10,10,10

Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

As Jonah, issuing from his three days' tomb,
 At length was cast, uninjured, on the earth;
 So, from the Virgin's unpolluted womb
 The Incarnate WORD, That dwelt there, had His Birth:
 For He, Who knew no taint of mortal stain,
 Willed that His Mother spotless should remain.

CHRIST comes, Incarnate GOD, amongst us now,
 Begotten of the FATHER ere the day:
 And He, to Whom the sinless legions bow,
 Lies cradled, 'midst unconscious beasts on hay:
 And, by His homely swaddling-bands girt in,
 Looses the many fetters of our sin.

¹⁶ 1st ed.: Behold! the Virgin, prophecy sustaining,

¹⁷ 1st ed.: Virgin still



Now the New Child of Adam's race draws nigh,
 To us, the faithful, given: This, this is He
 That shall the Father of Eternity,
 The Angel of the Mighty Counsel, be:
 This the eternal GOD, by Whose strong hands
 The fabric of the world supported stands.



ODE VII.

8,8,8,8,8,8
 Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

The Holy Children boldly stand
 Against the tyrant's fierce command:
 The kindled furnace they defy,—
 No doom can shake their constancy:
 They in the midmost flame confessed,
 "GOD of our Fathers! Thou art blest!"

The Shepherds keep their flocks by night;
 The Heav'n glows out with wondrous light;
 The glory of the LORD is there,
 The Angel-bands their King declare:
 The watchers of the night confessed,
 "GOD of our Fathers! Thou art blest!"



The Angel ceased; and suddenly
 Seraphic legions filled the sky:
 "Glory to GOD," they cry again:
 "Peace upon earth, good will to men:
 "CHRIST comes!"—And they that heard confessed,
 "GOD of our Fathers! Thou art blest!"

What said the Shepherds?—"Let us turn
 This new-born miracle to learn."
 To Bethlehem's gate their footsteps drew:
 The Mother with the Child they view:
 They knelt and worshipped, and confessed,
 "GOD of our Fathers! Thou art blest!"



ODE VIII.

10,10,10,10,8,9,8,9

Cosmas, the Melodist, 760

μ .

The dewy freshness that the furnace flings
 Works out a wondrous type of future things:
 Nor did the flame the Holy Three consume,
 Nor did the Godhead's fire thy frame entomb,
 Thou, on Whose bosom hung the WORD:
 Wherefore we cry with heart's endeavour,
 "Let all Creation bless the LORD,
 And magnify His Name for ever!"

Babel's proud daughter once led David's race
 From Sion, to their exile's woful place:
 Babel now bids her wise men, gifts in hand,
 Before King David's Royal Daughter stand,
 The Mother of the Incarnate Word:
 Wherefore we cry with heart's endeavour,
 "Let all Creation bless the LORD,
 And magnify His Name for ever!"



From music grief held back the exile's hand:
 How sing the LORD's song in an alien land?
 But Babel's exile here is done away,
 And Bethlehem's harmony this glorious day
 By Thee, Incarnate GOD, restored:
 Wherefore we cry with heart's endeavour,
 "Let all Creation bless the LORD,
 And magnify His Name for ever!"



Of old victorious Babel bore away,
 The spoils of Royal Sion and her prey:
 But Babel's treasure now, and Babel's kings,
 CHRIST, by the guiding star, to Sion brings.
 There have they knelt, and there adored:
 Wherefore we cry with heart's endeavour,
 "Let all Creation bless the LORD,
 And magnify His Name for ever!"



ODE IX.

10,10,10,10,7,7
 Cosmas, the Melodist, 760
 μ .

O wondrous mystery, full of passing grace!
 The grot becometh Heav'n: the Virgin's breast
 The bright Cherubic Throne: the stall that place,
 Where He, Who fills all space, vouchsafes to rest:
 CHRIST our GOD, to Whom we raise
 Hymns of thankfulness and praise!

The course propitious of the unknown Star
 The Wise-men followed on its heavenly way,—
 Until it led them, beckoning from afar,
 To where the CHRIST, the King of all things, lay:
 Him in Bethlehem they find,
 Born the SAVIOUR of mankind.



“Where is the Child,” they ask, “the new-born King,
 Whose herald-light is glittering in the sky,—
 To Whom our offerings and our praise we bring?”
 And Herod's heart is troubled utterly.
 Armed for war with GOD, in vain
 Would he see that Infant slain.



TRANSFIGURATION.

I shall, perhaps, render the following Canon more acceptable to most readers if, instead of translating the Odes in detail, I make a cento from the more remarkable Troparia.

They are principally from the first four Odes.

7,6,7,6
 Cosmas, the Melodist, 760
 .

The choirs of ransomed Israel,
 The Red Sea's passage o'er,
 Uprais'd the hymn of triumph
 Upon the further shore:
 And shouted, as the foeman
 Was whelmed beneath the sea,—
 ‘Sing we to Judah's Saviour,
 For glorified is He!’



Amongst His Twelve Apostles
 CHRIST spake the Words of Life,
 And showed a realm of beauty
 Beyond a world of strife:
 ‘When all My FATHER’s glory
 Shall shine expressed in Me,
 Then praise Him, then exalt Him,
 For magnified is He!’

Upon the Mount of Tabor
 The promise was made good;
 When, baring all the Godhead,
 In light itself He stood:
 And they, in awe beholding,
 The Apostolic Three,
 Sang out to GOD their Saviour,
 For magnified was He!



In days of old, on Sinai,
 The LORD of Sabaoth
 ¹⁸ came,
 In majesty of terror,
 In thunder-cloud and flame:
 On Tabor, with the glory
 Of sunniest light for vest,
 The excellence of beauty
 In JESUS was expressed.

All hours and days inclined there,
 And did Thee worship meet,
 The sun himself adored Thee,
 And bowed him at Thy feet:
 While Moses and Elias,
 Upon the Holy Mount,
 The co-eternal glory
 Of CHRIST our GOD recount.



O holy, wonderous Vision!
 But what, when this life past,
 The beauty of Mount Tabor
 Shall end in Heav’n at last?
 But what, when all the glory
 Of uncreated light

¹⁸ 1st ed.: LORD Jehovah

Shall be the promised guerdon
Of them that win the fight?

[No. 5 in Mr. Sedding's book.]



S. Tarasius

+ A.D. 806.

Tarasius, raised by Constantine and Irene from the post of Secretary of State, at one step, though a layman, to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, (A.D. 784) was the chief mover in the restoration of Icons and the Second Council of Nicaea. Strongly opposing the divorce of Constantine from Maria, he refused to celebrate that Emperor's nuptials with Theodora. But when they had been performed, he was with some difficulty persuaded to pardon the priest who had officiated at them. On this, S. Plato, and the monks of the all-influential Studium, forsook his communion; nor was the schism composed till the Patriarch yielded and retracted his pardon. He died February 25th, A.D. 806, on which day he is commemorated both by the East and West. His hymns are unimportant. The longest is the Canon on the Invention of S. John Baptist, May 25th. It is in no wise remarkable. Nor do I know any of his compositions which would be sufficiently interesting to the English reader, to make it worth versification here.



S. Theophanes

A.D. 759—A.D. 818.



S. Theophanes, who holds the third place among Greek Church-poets, was born in 759, his father being Governor of the Archipelago. Betrothed in childhood to a lady named Megalis, he persuaded her, on their wedding-day, to embrace the monastic life. He retired to the monastery of Syngriana, in the early part of the reign of Constantine and Irene. From the fiftieth year of his age he was nearly bedridden; but his devotion to the cause of Icons marked him out as one of the earliest victims of Leo the Armenian, who, after imprisoning him for two years, banished him to Samothrace. On the third day after his arrival in that inhospitable region, worn out with sufferings and sickness, he departed this life: A.D. 818. He is chiefly famous for his History, with which we have now nothing to do. With the one exception of S. Joseph of the Studium, Theophanes is the most prolific of Eastern Hymnographers; and in his writings we first see that which has been the bane and ruin of later Greek poetry, the composition of hymns, not from the spontaneous effusion of the heart, but because they were wanted to fill up a gap in the Office-book.



Because the great festivals and the chief Saints of the Church had their Canon and their Stichera, therefore, every martyr, every confessor, who happened to give his name to a day, must have his Canon and Stichera also, just for uniformity. How different the Latin use, where not even the Apostles have separate hymns received by the whole Church, but supply themselves from the *Common!* Hence the deluge of worthless compositions that occur in the Menaea: hence tautology, repeated till it becomes almost sickening; the merest commonplace, again and again decked in the tawdry shreds of tragic language, and twenty or thirty times presenting the same thought in slightly varying terms. Theophanes, indeed, must be distinguished from the host of inferior writers that about his time began to overwhelm the Church. Many of his subjects are of world-wide interest. The Eastern martyrs, whom he celebrates, are, for the most part, those who have won for themselves the greatest name in the annals of history. But still we find him thus honouring some, of whom all that can be said is, that they died for the Name of CHRIST. And though the poet brings more matter to his task than do others, many long stanzas, that keep pretty close to their subject, concerning a Saint of whom there is nothing especial to say, must become tedious.



IDIOMELA ON FRIDAY OF CHEESE-SUNDAY, THAT IS, OF QUINQUAGESIMA.

At this period of the year the weeks are named, not from the Sundays that precede, but from those that follow them. Quinquagesima is termed Tyrophagus, because up to that time, but not beyond, cheese is allowed. The Friday previous is

appropriated to the Commemoration of All Holy Ascetes; in order, as the Synaxarion says, that, by the remembrance of their conflict, we may be invigorated for the race that is set before us.

7,7

Theophanes (759-818)

Hither, and with one accord,
Sing the servants of the LORD:
Sing each great ascetic sire;—
Anthony shall lead the choir:
Let Euthymius next him stand
Then in order all the band.
Make we joyous celebration
Of their heavenly conversation;
Of their glory, how they rise,
Like another Paradise;
These the trees our GOD hath placed,
Trees, with fruit immortal graced;
Bringing forth, for CHRIST on high,
Flowers of Life that cannot die;
With the sweetness that they fling
Mortal spirits nourishing.

Filled with GOD, and ever blest,
For our pardon make request!

Egypt, hail, thou faithful strand!
Hail, thou holy Libyan land!
Nurturing for the realm on high
Such a glorious company!
They by many a toil intense,
Chastity and continence,
Perfect men to GOD upreared,
Stars to guide us have appeared;
They, by many a glorious sign,
Many a beam of Power Divine,
To the earth's remotest shore
Far and wide their radiance pour.

Holy Fathers, bright and blest,
For our pardon make request!

By what skill of mortal tongue
Shall your wondrous acts be sung?
All the conflicts of the soul,
All your struggles towards the goal;

And your virtues' prize immense,
 And your victories over sense,
 How perpetual watch ye kept
 Over passion, prayed and wept;
 Yea, like very angels came,
 Visible in earthly frame,
 And with Satan girt for fight
 Utterly o'erthrew his might.
 Famed for signs and wonders rare,
 Join to ours, great Saints, your prayer:
 Ask that we, ye ever blest,
 May attain the Land of Rest!



STICHERA AT THE FIRST VESPERS OF CHEESE-SUNDAY. (Quinquagesima.)

ADAM'S COMPLAINT.

The reader can hardly fail to be struck with the beautiful idea in the third stanza, where the foliage of Paradise is asked to make intercession for Adam's recall. The last stanza, Milton, as an universal scholar, doubtless had in his eye, in Eve's lamentation.

i

Theophanes (759-818)

“The LORD My Maker, forming me of clay,
 By His own Breath, the breath of life conveyed:
 O'er all the bright new world He gave me sway,
 A little lower than the Angels made.
 But Satan, using for his guile
 The crafty serpent's cruel wile,
 Deceived me by the Tree;
 And severed me from GOD and grace,
 And wrought me death, and all my race,
 As long as time shall be.
 O Lover of the sons of men!
 Forgive, and call me back again!



“In that same hour I lost the glorious stole
 Of innocence, that GOD's own Hands had made;
 And now, the tempter poisoning all my soul,

I sit, in fig leaves and in skins arrayed:
 I sit condemned, distressed, forsaken;
 Must till the ground whence I was taken
 By labour's daily sweat.
 But Thou, That shalt hereafter come,
 The Offspring of a Virgin-womb,
 Have pity on me yet!
 O turn on me those gracious eyes,
 And call me back to Paradise!



“O glorious Paradise! O lovely clime!
 O GOD-built mansion! joy of every Saint!
 Happy remembrance to all coming time!
 Whisper, with all thy leaves, in cadence faint,
 One prayer to Him Who made them all,
 One prayer for Adam in his fall!—
 That He, Who formed thy gates of yore,
 Would bid those gates unfold once more
 That I had closed by sin:
 And let me taste that holy Tree
 That giveth immortality
 To them that dwell therein:
 Or have I fallen so far from grace
 That mercy hath for me no place?”



Adam sat right against the Eastern gate,
 By many a storm of sad remembrance tossed;
 “O me! so ruined by the serpent's hate!
 O me! so glorious once, and now so lost!
 So mad that bitter lot to choose!
 Beguiled of all I had to lose!
 Must I then, gladness of my eyes,—
 Must I then leave thee, Paradise,
 And as an exile go?
 And must I never cease to grieve
 How once my GOD, at cool of eve,
 Came down to walk below?
 O Merciful! on Thee I call:
 O Pitiful! forgive my fall!”



Theodore of the Studium.

+ A.D. 826.

Theodore of the Studium, by his sufferings and his influence, did more, perhaps, in the cause of Icons than any other man. His uncle, S. Plato, and himself, had been cruelly persecuted by Constantine, for refusing to communicate with him after his illicit marriage with Theodora, at a time when, as we have seen, the firmness of even the Patriarch Tarasius gave way. Raised subsequently to be Hegumen of the great abbey of the Studium, the first at Constantinople, and probably the most influential that ever existed in the world, Theodore exhibited more doubtful conduct in the schism which regarded the readmission to communion of Joseph, the priest who had give the nuptial benediction to Constantine: but he suffered imprisonment on this account with the greatest firmness. When the Iconoclastic persecution again broke out under Leo the Armenian, Theodore was one of the first sufferers: he was exiled, imprisoned, scourged, and left for dead. Under Michael Curopalata he enjoyed greater liberty; but he died in banishment, Nov. 11th, A.D. 826. His Hymns are, in my judgment, superior to those of S. Theophanes,—and nearly, if not quite, equal to the works of S. Cosmas. In those (comparatively few) which he has left for the Festivals of Saints, he does not appear to advantage: it is in his Lent Canons in the Triodion, that his great excellency lies. The contrast there presented between the rigid, unbending, unyielding character of the man in his outward history, and the fervent gush of penitence and love which his inward life, as revealed by these compositions, manifests, is very striking;—it forms a remarkable parallel to the characters of S. Gregory VII., Innocent III., and other holy men of the Western Church, whom the world, judging from a superficial view of their characters, has branded with unbending haughtiness, and the merest formality in religion, while their most secret writings show them to have been clinging to the Cross in an ecstasy of love and sorrow.



CANON FOR APOCREOS.

Apocreos is our Sexagesima, and is so called, because meat is not eaten beyond it. The Synaxarion (which will explain the following poem) begins thus:
 “ON THIS DAY, WE COMMEMORATE THE SECOND AND IMPARTIAL COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Stichos.

When He, the Judge of all things, sits to
 doom,
 Oh grant that I may hear his joyful
 ‘Come!’

This commemoration the most Divine Fathers set after the “two parables” (*i.e.*, the Gospels of the two preceding Sundays, The Pharisee and Publican, and the Prodigal Son) “lest any one, learning from them the mercy of GOD, should live carelessly, and say, ‘God is merciful, and whenever I wish to relinquish sin, it will be in my



power to accomplish my purpose.' They therefore here commemorated that fearful day, that, by the consideration of death, and the expectation of the dreadful things that shall hereafter be, they might terrify men of negligent life, and bring them back again to virtue, and might teach them not simply to put confidence in God's mercy, considered by itself, but to remember also that the judge is just, and will render to every man according to his works." As the Eastern Church has no such season as Advent, this commemoration becomes more peculiarly appropriate.

The Canon that follows is unfortunate in provoking a comparison with the unapproachable majesty of the *Dies Irae*. Yet during the four hundred years by which it anticipated that sequence, it was undoubtedly the grandest judgment-hymn of the Church. Its faults are those of most of the class: it eddies round and round the subject, without making way,—its different portions have no very close connexion with each other,—and its length is accompanied by considerable tautology. Yet, in spite of these defects, it is impossible to deny that the great common-places of Death and judgment are very nobly set forth in this poem. On account of its length, I give the first three and last Odes only.

ODE I.

10,10,6,6

Theodore of the Studium, 826

μ .

That fearful Day, that Day of speechless dread,
When Thou shalt come to judge the quick and dead—
I shudder to foresee,
O GOD! what then shall be!

When Thou shalt come, angelic legions round,
With thousand thousands, and with trumpet sound,
CHRIST, grant me in the air
With saints to meet Thee there!

Weep, O my soul, ere that great hour and day,
When GOD shall shine in manifest array,
Thy sin, that thou may'st be
In that strict judgment free!

The terror!—hell-fire fierce and unsufficed:
The bitter worm: the gnashing teeth:—O CHRIST,
Forgive, remit, protect;
And set me with the elect!

That I may hear the blessed voice that calls
The righteous to the joy of heavenly halls.
And, King of Heaven, may reach
The realm that passeth speech!

Enter Thou not in judgment with each deed,
 Nor each intent and thought in strictness read:
 Forgive, and save me then,
 O Thou That lovest men!

Thee, One in Three blest Persons! LORD o'er all!
 Essence of essence, Power of power. we call!
 Save us, O FATHER, SON,
 And SPIRIT, ever one!

[In Mr. Young's book. Composed by Dr. Schroeder.]



ODE III.

10,10,6,6

Theodore of the Studium, 826

GOD comes;—and who shall stand before His fear?
 Who bide His Presence, when He draweth near?
 My soul, my soul, prepare
 To kneel before Him there!

Haste,—weep,—be reconciled to Him before
 The fearful judgment knocketh at the door
 Where, in the judge's eyes,
 All bare and naked lies.

Have mercy, LORD, have mercy, LORD, I cry,
 When with Thine angels Thou appear'st on high:
 And each shall doom inherit,
 According to his merit.



How can I bear Thy fearful anger, LORD?
 I, that have so often transgressed Thy word?
 But put my sins away,
 And spare me in that day!

O miserable soul, return, lament,
 Ere earthly converse end, and life be spent:
 Ere, time for sorrow o'er,
 The Bridegroom close the door!

Yea, I have sinned, as no man sinned beside:
 With more than human guilt my soul is dyed:
 But spare, and save me here,
 Before that day appear!

Three Persons in One Essence uncreate,
 On Whom, both Three and One, our praises wait,
 Give everlasting light,
 To them that sing Thy might!



ODE IV.

10,10,10,10,6,6

Theodore of the Studium, 826

μ .

The Day is near, the judgment is at hand,
 Awake, my soul, awake, and ready stand!
 Where chiefs shall go with them that filled the throne,
 Where rich and poor the same tribunal own:
 And every thought and deed
 Shall find its righteous meed.

There with the sheep the shepherd of the fold
 Shall stand together; there the young and old;
 Master and slave one doom shall undergo;
 Widow and maiden one tribunal know.
 Oh woe, oh woe, to them
 Whom lawless lives condemn!



That Judgment-seat, impartial in decree,
 Accepts no bribe, admits no subtilty:
 No orator persuasion may exert,
 No perjured witness wrong to right convert:
 But all things, hid in night,
 Shall then be dragged to light.

Let me not enter in the land of woe,
 Let me not realms of outer darkness know!
 Nor from the wedding-feast reject Thou me,
 For my soiled vest of immortality;
 Bound hand and foot, and cast
 In anguish that shall last!

When Thou, the nations ranged on either side,
 The righteous from the sinners shalt divide,
 Then give me to be found amongst Thy sheep,
 Then from the goats Thy trembling servant keep:
 That I may hear the voice
 That bids Thy Saints rejoice!



When righteous inquisition shall be made,
 And the books opened, and the thrones arrayed,
 My soul, what plea to shield thee canst thou know,
 Who hast no fruit of righteousness to show,
 No holy deeds to bring
 To CHRIST the LORD and King?,

I hear the rich man's wail and bitter cry,
 Out of the torments of eternity;
 I know, beholding that devouring flame,
 My guilt and condemnation are the same;
 And spare me, LORD, I say,
 In the great judgment Day!

The WORD and SPIRIT, with the FATHER ONE,
 One Light and emanation of One Sun,
 The WORD by generation, we adore,
 The SPIRIT by procession, evermore;
 And with creation raise
 The thankful hymn of praise.



ODE IX.

11,11,6,6,10,10
 Theodore of the Studium, 826

The LORD draws nigh, the righteous Throne's Assessor,
 The just to save, to punish the transgressor:
 Weep we, and mourn, and pray,
 Regardful of that day;
 When all the secrets of all hearts shall be
 Lit with the blaze of full eternity.

Clouds and thick darkness o'er the Mount assembling,
 Moses beheld the Eternal's glory, trembling;
 And yet he might but see
 GOD's feebler Majesty.



And I—I Needs must view His fullest Face:
 O Spare me, LORD! O take me to Thy grace!

David of old beheld, in speechless terror,
 The session of the Judge—the doom of error:
 And what have I to plead

For mercy in my need?
 Nothing save this: O grant me yet to be,
 Ere that day come, renewed and true to Thee!

Here, fires of deep damnation roar and glitter:
 The worm is deathless, and the cup is bitter:
 There, day that hath no morrow,
 And joy that hath no sorrow:
 And who so blest that he shall fly the abyss,
 Raised up to God's Right Hand, and speechless bliss!

My soul with many an act of sin is wounded:
 With mortal weakness is my frame surrounded:
 My life is well nigh o'er:
 The Judge is at the door:
 How wilt thou, miserable spirit, fare,
 What time He sends His summons through the air?



ORTHODOXY SUNDAY.

The first Sunday in Lent is kept in memory: primarily, of the final triumph of the Church over the Iconoclasts in 842; and, incidentally, of her victory over all other heresies. It has a kind of commination appropriate to itself alone. The following Canon is ascribed to S. Theodore of the Studium, though Baronius has thought that it cannot be his, because it implies that peace was restored to the Church, whereas that hymnographer died while the persecution still continued. Very possibly, however, it was written on the temporary victory of the Church, which did occur in the time of S. Theodore; and then, in 842, may have been lengthened and adapted to the then state of things, perhaps by Naucratus, the favourite disciple of S. Theodore. It is, perhaps, the most spirited of all the Canons, though many of its expressions savour too much of bitterness and personal feeling to be well defended, and the reader must constantly bear in mind that the poet feels the cause, not so much of Icons, as of the Incarnation itself, to be at stake. I have only given about one-third of the poem. The stanzas are these: Ode 1. Tropar. 1, 2; III. 6; IV. 1, 2, 3; V. 1, 3, 4, 5; VI. 1; IX. 2, 3, 4, 5.



7,6,7,6

Theodore of the Studium, 826

A song, a song of gladness!
 A song of thanks and praise!
 The horn of our salvation
 Hath GOD vouchsafed to raise!

A monarch true and faithful,
 And glorious in her might,
 To champion CHRIST'S OWN quarrel,
 And Orthodoxy's right!



Now manifest is glory;
 Now grace and virtue shine:
 Now joys the Church regaining
 Her ornaments divine:
 And girds them on in gladness,
 As fits a festal day,
 After long months of struggle,
 Long years of disarray.

Now cries the blood for vengeance,
 By persecutors poured,
 Of them that died defending
 The likeness of the LORD:
 The likeness as a mortal
 That He vouchsafed to take
 Long years ago, in Bethlem,
 Incarnate for our sake.



Awake, O Church, and triumph
 Exult, each realm and land!
 And open let the houses,
 The ascetic houses stand!
 And let the holy virgins
 With joy and song take in
 Their relics and their Icons,
 Who died this day to win!

Assemble ye together
 So joyous and so bold,
 The ascetic troops, and pen them
 Once more within the fold!
 If strength again he gather,¹⁹
 Again the foe shall fall:
 If counsel he shall counsel,

¹⁹ This is from the magnificent Emmanuel Ode sung at Great Compline on high festivals.

“Having become mighty, ye have been subdued.

“*For God is with us.*”

“And if ye shall again become mighty, again ye shall be subdued.

“*For God is with us.*”

“And if ye shall devise any device, the LORD shall scatter it,

“*For God is with us.*”

Our GOD shall scatter all.



The LORD, the LORD hath triumphed:
 Let all the world rejoice!
 Hushed is the turmoil, silent
 His servants' tearful voice:
 And the One Faith, the True Faith,
 Goes forth from East to West,
 Enfolding, in its beauty,
 The earth as with a vest.



They rise, the sleepless watchmen
 Upon the Church's wall;
 With yearning supplication
 On GOD the LORD they call:
 And He, though long time silent,
 Bowed down a gracious ear,
 His people's earnest crying
 And long complaint to hear.

Sing, sing for joy, each desert!
 Exult, each realm of earth!
 Ye mountains, drop down sweetness!
 Ye hillocks, leap for mirth!



For CHRIST the WORD, bestowing
 His blessed peace on men,
 In Faith's most holy union
 Hath knit His Church again.

The GOD of vengeance rises:
 And CHRIST attacks the foe,
 And makes His servants mighty
 The wicked to o'erthrow.
 And now Thy condescension
 In boldness may we hymn,
 And now in peace and safety
 Thy sacred Image limn.

O LORD of loving kindness,
 How wondrous are Thy ways!
 What tongue of man suffices
 Thy gentleness to praise?
 Because of Thy dear Image
 Men dared Thy Saints to kill,
 Yet didst Thou not consume them,
 But bear'st their insults still.



Thou Who has fixed unshaken
 Thy Church's mighty frame,
So that hell-gates shall never
 Prevail against the same;—
Bestow upon Thy people
 Thy peace, that we may bring
One voice, one hymn, one spirit,
 To glorify our King!



S. Methodius I

+ A.D. 836.

S. Methodius I., a native of Syracuse, embraced the monastic life at Constantinople. Sent as legate from Pope Paschal to Michael the Stammerer, he was imprisoned by that prince in a close cell, and there passed nine years, on account of his resolute defence of Icons. Having been scourged for the same cause, by the Emperor Theophilus, he made his escape from prison and when peace was restored to the Church was raised to the throne of Constantinople. His first care was to assemble a Synod for the restoration of Icons and it is, properly speaking, *that* Synod which the Greeks celebrate on Orthodoxy Sunday. With this Council the Iconoclast troubles ceased. S. Methodius died November 4th, 846. His compositions are very few, and are chiefly confined to Idiomela.



That which follows seems to me the prettiest. It is for a Sunday of the Fourth Tone.²⁰
7,7,6,6,3

Methodius I, 836

Are thy toils and woes increasing?
Are the Foe's attacks unceasing?
 Look with Faith unclouded,
 Gaze with eyes unshrouded,
 On the Cross!

Dost thou fear that strictest trial?
Tremblest thou at CHRIST's denial?
 Never rest without it,
 Clasp thine hands about it,
 —That dear Cross.



Diabolic legions press thee?
Thoughts and works of sin distress thee?
 It shall chase all terror,
 It shall right all error,
 That sweet Cross!

Draw'st thou nigh to Jordan's river?
Should'st thou tremble? Need'st thou quiver?
 No! if by it lying,—
 No! if on it dying,—
 On the Cross!

Say then,—“Master, while I cherish
That sweet hope, I cannot perish!

²⁰ This paragraph is in 1st. ed. only.

After this life's story,
Give Thou me the glory
For the Cross!"



S. Joseph of the Studium.

The *third period* of Greek Hymnology opens with its most voluminous writer, S. Joseph of the Studium. A Sicilian by birth, he left his native country on its occupation by the Mahometans in 830, and went to Thessalonica, where he embraced the monastic life. Thence he removed to Constantinople, but, in the second Iconoclastic persecution, he seems to have felt no vocation for confessorship, and went to Rome. Taken by pirates, he was for some years a slave in Crete, where he converted many to the Faith; and having obtained his liberty, and returned to the Imperial City, he stood high in the favour, first of S. Ignatius, then of Photius, whom he accompanied into exile. On the death of that great man he was recalled, and gave himself up entirely to Hymnology. A legend, connected with his death, is related of him. A citizen of Constantinople betook himself to the church of S. Theodore in the hope of obtaining some benefit from the intercessions of that martyr. He waited three days in vain; then, just as he was about to leave the church in despair, S. Theodore appeared. "I," said the vision, "and the other Saints, whom the poet Joseph has celebrated in his Canons, have been attending his soul to Paradise: hence my absence from my church." The Eastern Communion celebrates him on the 3rd of April. But of the innumerable compositions of this most laborious writer, it would be impossible to find many which, to Western taste, give the least sanction to the position which he holds in the East. The insufferable tediousness consequent on the necessity of filling eight Odes with the praises of a Saint of whom nothing, beyond the fact of his martyrdom, is known, and doing this sixty or seventy different times,—the verbiage, the bombast, the trappings with which Scriptural simplicity is *elevated* to the taste of a corrupt Court, are each and all scarcely to be paralleled. He is by far the most prolific of the hymn-writers.



SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON. (SEPTUAGESIMA.)

The Sunday before Septuagesima, and Septuagesima itself are, respectively, in the Greek Church, the Sunday of the Pharisee and Publican,—and the Sunday of the Prodigal Son,—those parables forming the Gospel for the day, and serving for the key-note to the offices. The following Troparia are from the Canon at Lauds on Septuagesima. (Ode VI. and Ode VIII. Trop. 2, 3.)

8,8,8,8,8,8

Joseph of the Studium

μ μ .

The abyss of many a former sin
Encloses me, and bars me in:
Like billows my transgressions roll:
Be Thou the Pilot of my soul;
And to Salvation's harbour bring,
Thou Saviour and Thou glorious King!



My Father's heritage abused,
 Wasted by lust, by sin misused;
 To shame and want and misery brought,
 The slave to many a fruitless thought,
 I cry to Thee, Who lovest men,
 O pity and receive again!

In hunger now,—no more possessed
 Of that my portion bright and blest,
 The exile and the alien see
 Who yet would fain return to Thee.
 And save me, LORD, who seek to raise
 To Thy dear love the hymn of praise!

With that blest thief my prayer I make,
Remember for Thy mercy's sake!
 With that poor publican I cry,
Be merciful, O GOD Most High!
 With that lost Prodigal I fain
 Back to my home would turn again!



Mourn, mourn, my soul, with earnest care,
 And raise to CHRIST the contrite prayer:—
 O Thou, Who freely wast made poor,
 My sorrows and my sins to cure,
 Me, poor of all good works, embrace,
 Enriching with Thy boundless grace!

[In Mr. Young's book. Melody of *Vater unser im Himmelreich*: harmonized by Ch. H. Pink. A striking melody.]



LET OUR CHOIR NEW ANTHEMS RAISE.

7,6,7,6

Joseph of the Studium

A Cento from the Canon for SS. Timothy and Maura; May 3rd.

Let our Choir new anthems raise:
 Wake the morn with gladness:
 GOD Himself to joy and praise
 Turns the Martyrs' sadness:
 This the day that won their crown,
 Opened Heav'n's bright portal;
 As they laid the mortal down,
 And put on th' immortal.



Never flinched they from the flame,
 From the torture, never;
 Vain the foeman's sharpest aim,
 Satan's best endeavour;
 For by faith they saw the Land
 Decked in all its glory,
 Where triumphant now they stand
 With the victor's story.

Faith they had that knew not shame,
 Love that could not languish;
 And eternal Hope o'ercame
 Momentary anguish.
 He Who trod the self-same road,
 Death and Hell defeated;
 Wherefore these their passions showed
 Calvary repeated.

Up and follow, Christian men!
 Press through toil and sorrow!
 Spurn the night of fear, and then,—
 On the glorious morrow!
 Who will venture on the strife?
 Who will first begin it?
 Who will seize the Land of Life?
 Warriors, up and win it?



AND WILT THOU PARDON, LORD.

The following Stanzas are a Cento from the Canon for the Monday of the First Tone, in the Paracletice.
 6,6,8,6

Joseph of the Studium

μ μ .

And wilt Thou pardon, LORD,
 A sinner such as I?

Although Thy book his crimes record
 Of such a crimson dye?

So deep are they engraved,—
 So terrible their fear,

The righteous scarcely shall be saved,
 And where shall I appear?



My soul, make all things known
 To Him Who all things sees:
 That so the LAMB may yet atone
 For thine iniquities.

O Thou Physician blest,
 Make clean my guilty soul!
 And me, by many a sin oppressed,
 Restore, and keep me whole!

I know not how to praise
 Thy mercy and Thy love:
 But deign Thy servant to upraise,
 And I shall learn above!

[In Mr. Young's book. Composed by Dr. Schroeder.]



STARS OF THE MORNING.

A Cento from the Canon of the "Bodiless Ones;" Tuesday in the Week of the Fourth Tone.

10,10,10,10

Joseph of the Studium

Stars of the morning, so gloriously bright,
 Filled with celestial resplendence and light;
 These that, where night never followeth day,
 Raise the Trishagion ever and aye:

These are Thy counsellors: these dost Thou own,
 GOD of Sabaoth! the nearest Thy throne;
 These are Thy ministers; these dost Thou send,
 Help of the helpless ones! man to defend.



These keep the guard, amidst Salem's dear bowers:
 Thrones, Principalities, Virtues, and Powers:
 Where with the Living Ones, mystical Four,
 Cherubin, Seraphin, bow and adore.

"Who like the LORD?"—thunders Michael, the Chief:
 Raphael, "the Cure of GOD," comforteth grief:
 And, as at Nazareth, prophet of peace,
 Gabriel, "the Light of GOD," bringeth release.

Then, when the earth was first poised in mid-space,—
 Then, when the planets first sped on their race,—
 Then, when were ended the six days' employ,—
 Then all the sons of GOD shouted for joy.



Still let them succour us; still let them fight,
 LORD of angelic hosts, battling for right!
 Till, where their anthems they ceaselessly pour,
 We with the Angels may bow and adore!

[No. 6 in H. E. C.]



CANON FOR ASCENSION DAY.

This is the crowning glory of the poet Joseph; he has here with a happy boldness entered into the lists with S. John Damascene, to whom, on this one occasion, he must be pronounced superior. I have preserved the alphabetic arrangement, and "Joseph's Ode" at the end. All the Catavasias are in iambs.

ODE I.

7,7,7,7,7,+i
 Joseph of the Studium
 μ .

Catavasia.

After three days Thou didst rise
 Visible to mortal eyes:
 First the Eleven worshipped Thee,—
 Then the rest in Galilee:
 Then a cloud in glory bore
 Thee to Thine own native shore.



Boldly David poured the strain:
 GOD ascends to Heav'n again:
 With the trumpet's pealing note
 Alleluias round Him float;
 As He now, by hard-won right,
 Seeks the Fount of purest Light!

Crime on crime, and grief on grief,
 Left the world without relief:
 Now that aged, languid race,
 GOD hath quickened by His grace:
 As Thy going up we see,
 Glory to Thy Glory be!

Darkness and awe, when Sinai's top he trod,
 Taught him of faltering tongue the Law of God:



The mist was scattered from his spirit's eye,
 He praised and hymned the Maker of the sky,
 When He That is and was and shall be, passed by.



ODE III.

8,6,8,6,8,8+i
 Joseph of the Studium

Catavasia.

“**E**xalt, exalt, the Heavenly Gates,
 Ye chiefs of mighty name!
 The Lord and King of all things waits,
 Enrobed in earthly frame.”
 So to the higher seats they cry,
 The humbler legions of the sky.

For Adam's sake, by Serpent-guile
 Distressed, deceived, o'erthrown,
 Thou left'st Thy native Home awhile,
 Thou left'st the FATHER'S Throne:
 Now he is decked afresh with grace,
 Thou seek'st once more the Heavenly place.



Glad festal keeps the earth today,
 Glad festal Heav'n is keeping;
 The Ascension-pomp, in bright array,
 Goes proudly sky-ward sweeping:
 The LORD the mighty deed hath done,
 And joined the severed into one.

Her fetters of the barren womb it rent,
 It crushed the malice of the insolent,
 The cry of her—the prophetess, who brought
 A contrite spirit, and a humble thought
 To Him, Who bids His Throne by earnest prayer be sought.



ODE IV.

8,7,8,7,8,7+i

Joseph of the Studium

Catavasia.

JESUS, LORD of Life Eternal,
 Taking those He loved the best,
 Stood upon the Mount of Olives,
 And His Own the last time blest:
 Then, though He had never left it,
 Sought again his FATHER's breast.

Knit is now our flesh to Godhead,
 Knit in everlasting bands:
 Call the world to highest festal:
 Floods and oceans, clap your hands:
 Angels, raise the song of triumph!
 Make response, ye distant lands!

21



Loosing Death with all its terrors
 Thou ascended'st up on high;
 And to mortals, now Immortal,
 Gavest immortality.
 As Thine own Disciples saw Thee
 Mounting victor to the sky!

Monarch of monarchs, Sole of Sole, to Thee,
 WORD, Glorious in Thy FATHER's Majesty,
 And sending Thy co-equal SPIRIT bright
 To teach, to comfort, and to guide aright,
 Thine own Apostles sang: All glory to Thy might!

**ODE V.**

10,10,10,10+i
 Joseph of the Studium

²¹ 1st ed. line order:
 Know, O world, this highest festal:
 Floods, ...
 Angels, ...
 Make response, ...
 For our flesh is knit to Godhead,
 Knit in, ...

Catavasia.

Now that Death by death hath found his ending,
 Thou dost call to Thee Thy loved Eleven;
 And from holy Olivet ascending
 On a cloud art carried up to Heaven.

O that wondrous Birth! that wondrous Rising!
 That more wondrous mounting to the sky!
 So Elias, earthly things despising,
 In a fiery chariot went on high.

Parted from Him, still they watched His going:
 ‘Why stand gazing thus?’ the Angel said:
 ‘This same Jesus, all His glory showing,
 Shall return to judge the quick and dead.’



Quickened and cleansed, receive remission new
 In the descending SPIRIT’S fiery dew,
 Sons of the Church, and light-formed generation!
 For lo! the law goes forth from Sion’S nation,
 The cloven tongues of flame the PARACLETE’S salvation!

**ODE VI.**

8,6,8,6+10,10,10,10,10

Joseph of the Studium

μ ,

Catavasia.

Oicos.

Rain down, ye heav’ns, eternal bliss!
 The Cherub-cloud today
 Bears JESUS where His Father is,
 Along the starry way!

Sundered of old were Heaven and Earth:
 But Thou, Incarnate King!
 Hast made them one by that Thy Birth,
 And this Thy triumphing.

‘Thy victor-raiment, wherefore red?’

What mean the marks of pain
That print Thy form?'—the Angels said,
The ascending Monarch's train.



Very Oblation, by the scourges torn!

Nailed to the bitter Cross, O Virgin-born!
As once the Prophet from the monster's maw,
So now Thy love, accomplishing the Law,
Adam from utter death to perfect Life would draw.

Vanities earthly

²² in earth will we lay,

Ashes with ashes, the dust with the clay:
Lift up the heart, and the eye, and the love,
Lift up thyself, to the regions above:
Since the Immortal hath entered of late,
Mortals may pass at the heavenly gate.
Stand we on Olivet: mark Him ascend,
Whose is the glory and might without end;
There, with His own ones, the Giver of Good
Blessing them once more, a little while stood.
“Nothing can part us,—nor distance, nor foes,
Lo! I am for you, and who can oppose?”



ODE VII.



6,6,8,6,8,8,8

Joseph of the Studium

, .

Catavasia.

Wafting Him up on high,

The glorious cloud receives
The LORD of Immortality,
And earth the Victor leaves:
The Heavenly People raise the strain,
The Apostles pour the hymn again;—
GOD of our Fathers, Thou art blest

Ye faithful, tell your joys!

All hearts with gladness bound!

²² 1st ed.: Things of the earth

GOD is gone up with a merry noise,—
 The LORD with the trumpet's sound!
 To Him we cry, by woes once tried,
 Now glorious at the FATHER's side,—
 GOD of our Fathers, Thou art blest!



Zealous for GOD of yore,
 With zeal still Moses burns:
 “Come, Heavenly Spirits, and adore
 The Victor Who returns;
 Rise, Angel legions, rise and sing
 The ancient hymn to greet the King,—
 GOD of our Fathers, Thou art blest!”

Joined with the trumpet-peal, the din and shout,
 Cornet flute, sackbut, dulcimer rang out,
 And bade adore the golden deity:
 The SPIRIT's gentler voice gives praise to Thee,
O co-eternal One—O consubstantial Three!



ODE VIII.

9,8,9,8,7,5,7,5

Joseph of the Studium

Hirmos. “HIM OF THE FATHER.” (p. 133.)

Catavasia.

Of twofold natures, CHRIST, the Giver
 Of immortality and love,
 Ascendeth to the FATHER's glory,
 Ascendeth to the Throne above:
 Wherefore He, this glorious morn,
 Be by all adored:
 Thou That liftest up our horn,
 Holy art Thou, LORD!



Slaves are set free, and captives ransomed:
 The Nature that He made at first
 He now presenteth to the FATHER,
 The chains of her damnation burst:
 This the cause that He was born,
 Adam's race restored:

Thou That liftest up our horn,
Holy art Thou, LORD!

Emptied awhile of all His brightness,
He entered thus the glorious fight;
O'erthrew the foe, mankind exalted
Far above every Pow'r and Might:
Therefore bare He pains and scorn,
Calvary's heart-blood poured:—
Thou That liftest up our horn,
Holy art Thou, LORD!



Praising the LORD they stood, the Martyr Three,
Untouched amidst the fire, and wholly free:
With them associate, let the world's wide frame
To Him Whose healing dew restrained the flame,
Send up the hymn of praise, and magnify His Name!



ODE IX.

10,9,10,9+i
Joseph of the Studium

Catavasia.
Exaposteilarion.

Holy gift, surpassing comprehension!
Wondrous mystery of each fiery tongue!
CHRIST made good His Promise in Ascension:
O'er the Twelve the cloven flames have hung!

Spake the LORD, or ere He left the Eleven;
“Here in Salem wait the Gift I send:
Till the PARACLETE come down from Heaven:
Everlasting Guide and Guard and Friend.”



O that shame, now ended in that glory!
Pain untold, now lost in joy unknown!
Tell it out with praise, the whole glad story,
Human nature at the FATHER'S Throne!

Declare, ye Angel Bands that dwell on high,

Hymns of the Eastern Church

How saw ye Him, the Victor, drawing nigh?
 What strange new visions burst upon your sight?
 One in the form of Man, That claims by right
 The very throne of GOD, the unapproached Light!

Eternal! After Thine own will

Thou born in time would'st be:
 After the self-same counsel still
 Was Thine Epiphany:
 Thou in our flesh didst yield Thy breath,
 Immortal GOD, for man:
 Thou by Thy death didst conquer Death,
 Through Thine Almighty plan:
 Thou, rising Victor to the sky,
 Fill'st Heav'n and earth above:
 And send'st the Promise from on high,
 The SPIRIT of Thy love!





Theoctistus of the Studium.

+ circ. A.D. 890.

He is said to have been the friend of S. Joseph; but is only known to us by the "Suppliant Canon to JESUS," to be found at the end of the *Paracletice*. The following is a Cento formed from it.

7,6,7,6,8,8,7,7

Theoctistus of the Studium, 890

JESU, Name all names above,
 JESU, best and dearest,
 JESU, Fount of perfect love,
 Holiest, tenderest, nearest;
 JESU, source of grace completest,
 JESU purest, JESU sweetest,
 JESU, Well of power Divine,
 Make me, keep me, seal me Thine!



JESU, open me the gate
 That of old he entered,
 Who, in that most lost estate,
 Wholly on Thee ventured;
 Thou, Whose Wounds are ever pleading,
 And Thy Passion interceding,
 From my misery let me rise
 To a Home in Paradise!

Thou didst call the Prodigal:
 Thou didst pardon Mary:
 Thou Whose words can never fall,
 Love can never vary:
 LORD, to heal my lost condition,
 Give—for Thou canst give—contrition,
 Thou canst pardon all mine ill
 If Thou wilt: O say, "I will!"



Woe, that I have turned aside
 After fleshly pleasure!
 Woe, that I have never tried
 For the Heavenly Treasure!
 Treasure, safe in Home supernal;
 Incorruptible, eternal!
 Treasure no less price hath won
 Than the Passion of The SON!

JESU, crowned with Thorns for me,

Scourged for my transgression,
 Witnessing, through agony,
 That Thy good confession!
 JESU, clad in purple raiment,
 For my evils making payment;
 Let not all Thy woe and pain,
 Let not Calvary, be in vain!



When I reach Death's bitter sea
 And its waves roll higher,
 Help the more forsaking me
 As the storm draws nigher:
 JESU, leave me not to languish,
 Helpless, hopeless, full of anguish!
 Tell me,—“Verily I say,
 Thou shalt be with Me today!”



Metrophanes of Smyrna.

+circ. A.D. 910.

He was Bishop of that See towards the close of the ninth century, and is principally famous for his Canons in honour of the Blessed TRINITY,—eight in number, one to each Tone. They are sung at Matins on Sundays: and if the writer has not always been able to fuse his learning and orthodoxy into poetry, nor yet to escape the tautology of his brother bards, these compositions are stately and striking. Metrophanes was a vigorous supporter of S. Ignatius; and the partisan of Rome in her contest with Photius.

It would be impossible, without wearying the reader, to translate the whole of one of the Triadic Canons; but a Cento from one of them may not be unacceptable.



O UNITY OF THREEFOLD LIGHT.

From the Canon for Sunday of the Second Tone.

8,6,8,6

Metrophanes of Smyrna, 910

O Unity of Threefold Light,
 Send out Thy loveliest ray,
 And scatter our transgressions' night,
 And turn it into day;
 Make us those temples pure and fair,
 Thy glory loveth well,
 The spotless tabernacles, where
 Thou may'st vouchsafe to dwell!

The glorious hosts of peerless might
 That ever see Thy Face,
 Thou mak'st the mirrors of Thy Light,
 The vessels of Thy grace:
 Thou, when their wondrous strain they weave,
 Hast pleasure in the lay:
 Deign thus our praises to receive,
 Albeit from lips of clay!



And yet Thyself they cannot know,
 Nor pierce the veil of light
 That hides Thee from the Thrones below,
 As in profoundest night:
 How then can mortal accents frame
 Due tribute to the King?
 Thou, only, while we praise Thy Name,

Forgive us as we sing!

—
Beyond Metrophanes, it will not be necessary to carry our translations. The following names may, however, be mentioned.



Euthymius

+ A.D. 910.

Euthymius, usually known as Syngelus, (the same as *Syncellus*, the confidential Deacon of the Patriarch of Constantinople,) who died about 916, is the author of a Penitential Canon to S. Mary, which is highly esteemed in the East. It would scarcely, however, be possible to make even a Cento from it which would be acceptable to the English reader.



Leo VI.

+ A.D. 917.

Our next name is that of a Royal Poet, Leo VI., the Philosopher, who reigned from 886 to 917, and left behind him the *Idiomela*, or detached stanzas, on the Resurrection, sung at Lauds. They are better than might have been expected from an imperial author, and the troubler of the Eastern Church by a *fourth* marriage. The same thing may be said of the Exaposteilaria of his son, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, whose life lasted till 959.



John Mauropus

+ A.D. 1060.

John Mauropus, Metropolitan of Euchaïta, sometimes called the last of the Greek Fathers, left a number of hymns, printed at Eton in 1610; and if not boasting much poetical fire, at least graced with a gentle and Isocratean eloquence. As they have not been employed by the Church, they claim no further notice here.

With this Metropolitan, Greek Hymnology well-nigh ceased: at least the only other name that need be mentioned is that of Philotheus, Patriarch of Constantinople, who died in 1376. This man, the warm supporter of the dogma of the *Uncreated Light*, was the composer of several stanzas for Orthodoxy Sunday, and the Canon for July 16th, on the Holy Fathers: both in the very worst taste.



APPENDIX



S. Stephen the Sabaite

A.D. 725—A.D. 794.

S. Stephen, called the Sabaïte, from the monastery of S. Sabas, was the nephew of S. John Damascene, who placed him in that house. He was then ten years of age: he passed fifty-nine years in that retreat; and was the earliest of the hymnographers who lived to see the final restoration of Icons. He has left but few poetical compositions. The two best are those on the Martyrs of the monastery of S. Sabas—(March 20th)—on which a monk of that house would be likely to write *con amore*; and on the Circumcision. His style seems formed on that of S. Cosmas, rather than on that of his own uncle. He is not deficient in elegance and richness of typology, but exhibits something of sameness, and is occasionally guilty of very hard metaphors, as when he speaks of “the circumcision of the tempest of our souls.” He is commemorated on the 13th of July.



IDIOMELA IN THE WEEK OF THE FIRST OBLIQUE TONE.

These Stanzas, which strike me as very sweet, are not in all the editions of the Octoechus.

²³

8,5,8,3

Stephen the Sabaite (725-794)

μ .

Art thou weary, art thou languid,
 Art thou sore distress?
 “Come to me”—saith One—“and coming,
 Be at rest!”

Hath He marks to lead me to Him,
 If He be my Guide?
 “In His Feet and Hands are Wound-prints,
 And His Side.”



Is there Diadem, as Monarch,
 That His Brow adorns?
 “Yea, a Crown, in very surety,
 But of Thorns!”

If I find Him, if I follow,
 What His guerdon here?

²³ [1st ed. adds: I copy from a dateless Constantinopolitan book.]

“Many a sorrow, many a labour,
Many a tear.”

If I still hold closely to Him,
What hath He at last?

“Sorrow vanquished, labour ended,
Jordan past!”

If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?

“Not till earth, and not till Heaven
Pass away!”



Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is He sure to bless?

“Angels, Martyrs, Prophets, Virgins,
Answer, Yes!”

[No. 4. in Mr. Sedding's book; also No. 4. in H. E. C. Both very sweet melodies;—but that in H. E. C., which gives a different version of the 4th line throughout, is, to my mind, singularly touching.]



THE PILGRIMS OF JESUS.

7,6,7,6

Joseph of the Studium

O happy band of pilgrims,
If onward ye will tread
With JESUS as your Fellow
To JESUS as your Head!

O happy, if ye labour
As JESUS did for men:
O happy, if ye hunger
As JESUS hungered then!

The Cross that JESUS carried
He carried as your due:
The Crown that JESUS weareth
He weareth it for you.



The Faith by which ye see Him,
The Hope, in which ye yearn,
The Love that through all troubles
To Him alone will turn,—

What are they, but vaunt-couriers

To lead you to His Sight?
 What are they, save the effluence
 Of Uncreated Light?

The trials that beset you,
 The sorrows ye endure,
 The manifold temptations
 That Death alone can cure,—

What are they, but His jewels
 Of right celestial worth?
 What are they but the ladder,
 Set up to Heav'n on earth?



O happy band of pilgrims,
 Look upward to the skies:—
 Where such a light affliction
 Shall win you such a prize!



THE RETURN HOME.

6,6,6,6,8,8

Joseph of the Studium

1st ed. adds: A Cento from the Canon of S. John Climacos.

Safe home, safe home in port!
 —Rent cordage, shattered deck,
 Torn sails, provisions short,
 And only not a wreck:

But oh! the joy upon the shore
 To tell our voyage-perils o'er!

The prize, the prize secure!
 The athlete nearly fell;
 Bare all he *could* endure,
 And bare not always well:

But he may smile at troubles gone
 Who sets the victor-garland on!



No more the foe can harm
 No more of leaguered camp,
 And cry of night-alarm,
 And need of ready lamp:

And yet how nearly he had failed,—
 How nearly had that foe prevailed!

The lamb is in the fold
 In perfect safety penned:
 The lion once had hold,
 And thought to make an end:
 But One came by with Wounded Side,
 And for the sheep the Shepherd died.

The exile is at Home!
 —O nights and days of tears,
 O longings not to roam,
 O sins, and doubts, and fears,—
 What matter now (when so men say)
 The King has wiped those tears away?

O happy, happy Bride!
 Thy widowed hours are past,
 The Bridegroom at thy side,
 Thou all His own at last!

The sorrows Of thy former cup
 In full fruition swallowed up!

[No. 5 in H. E. C. This, of all the melodies written for, or adapted to, these hymns, is my own especial favourite. One feels that the anonymous writer of such a plaintive, yet soothing, melody, must have been one—to quote Archbishop Trench's words with regard to the author of *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*,—acquainted with great sorrows, but also with great consolations.]



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