



EARLY LITURGIES



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*Translated from the Greek and Latin by William
Macdonald, George Ross Merry and James Donaldson
From Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 7,
edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D.*

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George Ross Merry and James Donaldson, from Ante-Nicene
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ABOUT THIS SERIES

The *Holy Nativity Patristic Library* presents the foundational texts of the early Christian Fathers in carefully typeset pocket editions. Each volume is drawn from the public-domain English translations of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* and the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* — the thirty-eight-volume collection edited by Philip Schaff and his collaborators between 1886 and 1900, which remains the most comprehensive English-language gathering of the patristic writings ever assembled.

We have undertaken to issue these works one at a time, as portable single-author editions, so that they may travel where the original folio volumes cannot — in a coat pocket, on a long flight, beside a hospital bed. Each volume preserves the Schaff translation and the translator's introduction. The foot-

note apparatus is retained where it serves the text; we have set aside those notes that pertain only to the nineteenth-century volume context, and any commentary at variance with the Orthodox confession of the Fathers themselves. We add a scripture index for the text in hand.

The texts are typeset in IM Fell English, a face cut by John Fell in seventeenth-century Oxford and freely available again through the work of Igino Marini. The Greek is set in Philokalia, designed for the Athonite tradition.

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EARLY LITURGIES

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE TO EARLY LITURGIES

By A. Cleveland Coxe, Editor

It is in curious contrast with the work of Brett and others like-minded that we have in these Edinburgh translations a reflection from the minds of divines who are unused to liturgies, and who have no interest in their elucidation. For the mere reader this is not an advantage; but the student who goes to the originals will find that it affords at times no inconsiderable help. These translations are “inartificially drawn,” as the lawyers say. They are so much Greek and Latin rendered grammatically by competent scholars, who have no theories to sustain, and

who are equally devoid of *technique* and of a disposition to exhibit it for the support of preconceptions. Not infrequently one gets a new view of certain stereotyped expressions from the way in which they are here handled. The liturgiologist finds his researches freshened by etymologies he had hardly thought of, here literally rendered. Of course, these are mere specimens, and no one can use them for argument, except by comparison with the Greek, or the Latin of Renaudot, or the originals in Syriac or Coptic; but they will prove very useful in many ways. The whole science is in its infancy; and we have no specimen of a primitive liturgy unless it be the Clementine, so called. The specimens here given are like cloth of gold (Ps. xlv. 13), moth-eaten and patched, and spangled over with tinsel; and the true artist has only the one object in view,—to restore it, that is, to the king's daughter, as it was aforetime.

The following is the announcement of the Messrs. Clark in the Edinburgh edition: "The Liturgy of St. James has been translated by William Macdonald, M.A.; that of the Evangelist Mark by George Ross Merry, B.A.; and that of the Holy Apostles by Dr. Donaldson."

It will be observed that the translations are given in the Edinburgh series with hardly a line of comment, and with no editorial helps to the reader whatever. These have been scantily supplied, here and there, where the case seemed to require some elucidation; and in a few instances I have ventured to reduce a word or two in the rendering to liturgical phraseology.

The interest which has recently been awakened in *liturgiology*, and which exists among the learned so generally, will justify me in stating somewhat at large the considerations which are prerequisites to an intelligent study of these compilations. I shall not depart from my rule, nor formulate my personal convictions; but I must indicate sources of information not mentioned by the Edinburgh editors, only remarking, that, while they have cited the learned and excellent Dr. Neale, with others who advance untenable claims in some instances, I shall refer to writers of a more moderate school, such as have taken a less narrow and more historic view of the whole matter. By claiming too much, and by reading their own ideas back into the ancient exemplars, many good and learned men have overdone their argument, and

confused scriptural simplicity with the artificial systems of post-Nicene ages. Earnest and worthy of respect as they are, I must therefore prefer a class of writers who breathe the spirit of the ante-Nicene Fathers as better elucidating the primitive epoch and its principles, alike in doctrine and worship.

Hippolytus, in a few terse sentences, has pointed out the epoch of David, in its vast import, as the dawning of Christianity itself. More elaborately, a recent writer of great erudition has expounded the same historic fact, and given us the pivot of Hebrew history on which turns the whole system of that “goodly fellowship of prophets” who heralded the Sun of righteousness as successive constellations rise before the day. The learned Dean Payne-Smith, more minutely than Hippolytus, identifies Samuel, the master of David, as the great instrument of God in shaping the institutions of Moses to be a prelude to the Advent; in other words, transforming a local and tribal religion into that of Catholicity. The value of the Dean’s condensed and luminous elaboration of this cardinal truth can hardly be overstated.

But, to go behind even the Dean’s stand-point, we shall better comprehend the era of which, under

God, Samuel was the author, by noting the immense importance of that specific Mosaic ordinance which not only made it possible, but which proves that an all-wise *prolepsis* governed the whole law of Moses. We generally conceive of the Mosaic system as one of unlimited hecatombs and burnt-offerings. On the contrary, it was a system restricting and limiting the unsystematized primeval institution of sacrifice, which had done its work by passing into the universal religions and rituals of Gentilism. When the seminal idea of expiation, atonement, and the blood of innocence as a propitiation for guilt, was communicated to all the families of the earth, the Mosaic institutions limited sacrifices for the faithful, and localized them with marvellous significance. Previously the faithful everywhere had imitated the sacrifices of their fathers, Noah and Abraham, who reared their altars everywhere, as Job also did,—wherever they dwelt or sojourned. Now mark the first step towards a more spiritual worship, based, nevertheless, on the fundamental principle of sacrifice. Moses ordains as follows:—

1. “When ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you,...then

there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you, your burnt-offerings," etc.¹

2. "Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest; but *in the place which the Lord shall choose* in one of the tribes, *there* thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee."²

3. "If the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put His name there, be too far from thee" [i.e., *for frequent sacrifices; observe, nevertheless, the law as to the sanctity of blood in thy common use of meats, and forbear to sacrifice, till the opportunity comes*], "only thy *holy things* which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take, and *go unto the place which the Lord shall choose*; and thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the Lord thy God."³

4. "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God, *in the place which He shall choose*."⁴

¹ Deut. xii. 6.

² Deut. xii. 24.

³ Deut. xii. 21, xiv. 24.

⁴ Exod. xxiii. 17; Deut. xvi. 16.