



**A New and Critical Edition of George Osborn's the
Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley (1868-
1872): With the Addition of Notes, Annotations,
Biographical and Background Information**

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This volume offers a 'New Edition' of George Osborn's nineteenth-century collection of "The Poetry of John and Charles Wesley". Publication of this work will widen the access of the original poems of the eighteenth-century Wesleys. It also makes their translations and altered versions of others' poetical works available to scholars. It will allow students and scholars of eighteenth-century verse and hymnology opportunities to view and assess the fullest range possible of the literary contributions of John and Charles Wesley to the social, political, and theological spheres of their day. Over one hundred and forty-one years have passed since George Osborn presented to students, scholars, and readers in general (particularly the Methodists among them) the initial volume of his edition of "The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley" (1868-1872). Four years later, Osborn would complete his project with the issuance of the thirteenth and final volume of the brothers' then supposedly extant poetic corpus. Although impressive in terms of its sheer quantity, Osborn's edition stood far from a perfect instrument for the engagement of scholarly research into the purely creative and lyrical niches of the Wesleys' total literary production. Essentially, Osborn's edition lacked completeness, nor did that editor fully exercise the application of scholarly apparatus. Students and scholars could easily locate and read the poetic and hymnodic pieces that Osborn offered to them, but they would have to venture outside the bindings of his thirteen volumes in search of specific biographical, historical, and Biblical background information necessary to the understanding and appreciation of the motivation, composition, and substance for and of the various poems. Further, although Osborn offered to his readers a number of Charles Wesley's poems that had never before seen the printed page, he did not offer all of those like poems available to him; he 'selected', but he never really, explained his reasons for or methods of selection.

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