

**BISHOP PEARSON'S FIVE  
LECTURES ON THE ACTS  
OF THE APOSTLES: AND,  
ANNALS OF ST. PAUL**

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Bishop Pearson's Five Lectures on the Acts of the Apostles: And, Annals of St. Paul by J. R. Crowfoot

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EDITED IN ENGLISH, WITH A FEW NOTES,

BY

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M.DCCC.LL

## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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THE works of Bishop Pearson are all so justly valued by Theologians, and have been so carefully edited, that good reason ought to be assigned for publishing a small fragment of them, and that in a form which has not received the Author's sanction.

I have, however, been influenced by more than one motive while endeavouring faithfully to make the substance of these tracts more generally known.

In the first place, they are of a nature to engage the attention and to qualify the views of exactly those theological students, who would probably, in these days, feel it irksome to read them as they have hitherto been published; their frequent use indeed among the Clergy seems to have been laid aside, chiefly because



they are written in the Latin language, and are combined with other less practical works by the same Author.

The Lectures on the Acts have appeared only in Pearson's 'Posthumous Works' edited by Dodwell, and in Mr Churton's edition of his 'Minor Works;' and in consequence, although these Lectures are read by divines and known by name through the references of Commentators on the Acts, the substance of them, and the author's incidental remarks, in which their value chiefly consists, are but little brought under the notice of the Clergy at large.

The Annals of S. Paul are to be found in Randolph's 'Enchiridion Theologicum,' and were edited at Cambridge, in English, in 1825, (of which edition I have not yet been able to procure a copy), and hence they have become better known and more widely appreciated.

But the two tracts, containing, as they do, a genuine sketch of the Church of the Apostles and of the first Christian Missions, an example for all Churches in all times, ought never to have been separated. For though the Annals have been generally esteemed on account of

their chronology, their value as a Missionary Record has been overlooked ; while the Lectures, the fragment of a much more elaborate work, have been lying almost forgotten in an age that can well bear their instruction, and in that Church which they are so exceedingly well calculated to strengthen.

Secondly, we do well to recognize in Pearson the safest guide that we can propose for the study of the Christian Fathers. He brings out his Patristic learning with so much ease, he uses it with so much manliness and good sense, and he discriminates between counterfeit and genuine authors, and between the strong and weak arguments of the latter, with such correct precision, that we are equally astonished, delighted, and convinced by his almost demonstrative remarks. I venture to hope that the perusal of his Lectures on the Acts will be of service in communicating to young students in Divinity the same disposition with regard to these writers, which they observe in Pearson, both inclining and enabling them to advance safely into their works, and so into a rich storehouse of Christian thought and feeling.

Lastly, I have preferred to edit these tracts

in English, from the hope that they would thus be more likely to reach English Dissenters and Roman Catholics, and to become available to all English Missionaries who are preaching in sincerity the Word of God, and spreading the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: for they cannot but tend to reconcile the former to our discipline; and to suggest to the latter that they are following the model of the Apostolic and Primitive Church, while adhering to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England.

All readers of Pearson's Works will at least find that he, in an unsettled and troublous age, held stedfastly to the Church of England, on the like grounds of duty that he worshipped God, and believed in our Lord Jesus Christ; viz. because he was convinced by a calm reason that her doctrines were true, and her discipline, as near as might be, irreproachable.

I may state that I have verified and extended the references, and added a few notes which, I trust, are not irrelevant.

CAMBRIDGE, Oct. 9, 1851.