

**CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY: IN
A COURSE OF LECTURES
PREACHED AT THE CATHEDRAL
AND
PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649548040

Christianity and Slavery: In a Course of Lectures Preached at the Cathedral and Parish Church of St. Michael by Edward Eliot

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Cover @ 2017

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EDWARD ELIOT

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From the Author

CHRISTIANITY

AND

SLAVERY;

IN A

COURSE OF LECTURES

PREACHED AT

THE CATHEDRAL AND PARISH CHURCH OF ST.
MICHAEL, BARBADOS.

BY

EDWARD ELIOT, B. D.

ARCHDEACON OF BARBADOS, AND LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF
EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even
so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."
1 THESS. II. 4.

LONDON:

J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY;

RIVINGTONS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD;

AND PARKER, OXFORD.

1833.



TO
THE RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT
HOLDERS OF SLAVE PROPERTY
IN
THE WEST INDIES,
THE FOLLOWING LECTURES
WITH THE EARNEST PRAYER THAT THE DUTIES RECOMMENDED
IN THEM, MAY BE FAITHFULLY AND FEARLESSLY
PERFORMED BY THEMSELVES,
AND
BY THEIR SUBORDINATE AGENTS,
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Lectures (with the exception of the last) were preached at the Cathedral in Barbados, before large congregations of the white inhabitants. My object was to impress on the community the necessity of attending to the moral and religious welfare of their slave population. The subjects are not new. Most of them have, within the last few years, been at times prominently insisted upon in the pulpit (though not in a connected and consecutive form) by myself or by my brethren in the ministry. The lectures are now published with a view

to disseminate more widely the suggestions which my residence in the West Indies, from the establishment there of episcopacy, has enabled me to offer, as well to non-resident proprietors in England, as to their agents and subordinate officers on estates in these colonies. I am aware that many of the facts and opinions introduced in them will meet, at best, with a hesitating and reluctant approval. Why, it will be asked, thus draw forth the faults of our ancestors, or even expose our own defects? Why disturb us with the language of reproof, or with exhortations to measures of doubtful expediency?

——— *Quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero
Auriculas?*

My answer is, because the case requires that there should be no concealment of the truth, and because the official situation in which the author is placed, not

only authorizes, but compels him to speak plainly on the subject of Christian duties. "If," says the pious Augustine, "we must give an account of our idle words, how much more of our idle silence!"

The minister of the gospel in the West Indies is often beset with difficulties. He must either neglect his duty, or give offence to the people. If he preaches openly and unhesitatingly the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, he is reproached with being needlessly severe. His discourse, to use the words of Bishop Latimer, is considered to have a "full bite, to be a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a biting sermon. He is a naughty fellow, a seditious fellow: he maketh trouble and rebellion in the land; he lacketh discretion." "For my part," continues the same venerable pre-

late, "it rejoiceth me sometimes, when my friend comes, and tells me that they find fault with my discretion; for by likelihood, think I, the doctrine is true; for if they could find fault with the doctrine, they would not charge me with the lack of discretion, or the inconvenience of the time."

That the system of slavery, as it is at present conducted in the West Indies, is associated with practices of an injurious tendency, even its warmest advocates must allow; but many of the evils complained of may be diminished, if not entirely removed, by the meliorating influence of Christianity. I am at a loss to imagine what advantage the master can propose to himself by keeping his people in a state of moral and mental degradation. Intellect, which is the most