

**THE GOSPEL OF THE
SECULAR LIFE: SERMONS
PREACHED AT OXFORD,
WITH A PREFATORY ESSAY**

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The Gospel of the Secular Life: Sermons Preached at Oxford, with a Prefatory Essay by W. H. Fremantle

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W. H. FREMANTLE

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THE
GOSPEL OF THE SECULAR LIFE.

Sermons Preached at Oxford.

WITH A
PREFATORY ESSAY.

BY
THE HON. W. H. FREMANTLE,
LATE FELLOW OF ALL SOULS;
RECTOR OF ST. MARY'S, BRYANSTON SQUARE, AND CANON OF CANTERBURY.

NEW YORK
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1883



A.
2065

To

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AND ESPECIALLY TO ITS YOUNGER MEMBERS

IN WHOM LIES SO MUCH OF HOPE FOR

THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED.

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Prefatory Essay.

THESE sermons are published as an attempt to direct Christian thought into a new channel, its great, not to say paramount, concern with the general, common, or secular life of mankind. The Christian Church is a great power, and nowhere more so than in this country. But it appears hardly conscious of its true strength. It concerns itself with public worship, with pulpit instruction, and with works of beneficence of various kinds, and with the extension of the range of these forms of activity. But the general, common, and secular life lies almost outside its purview. Church work and Church influence are commonly spoken of as if they were something lying apart from the life of science, or art, or politics. And the convictions of men on these subjects are apt to be formed almost without reference to Christianity. Those who lead in these departments are consequently apt, whether they are or are not professedly religious men, to hold an ambiguous position towards the Church. There is in the present day, among men of culture in England, little that can be called scoffing at Christian doctrine; and the attitude of the best minds towards the Christian system generally, if it is often that of hesitancy, is rarely that of denial. But