

**MODERN SERMONS BY
WORLD SCHOLARS. IN
TEN VOLUMES, VOLUME
IV - FOSTER TO HYDE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649514069

Modern Sermons by World Scholars. In Ten Volumes, Volume IV - Foster to Hyde by Robert Scott & William C. Stiles

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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ROBERT SCOTT & WILLIAM C. STILES

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*Modern Sermons by World
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VOLUME IV

FOSTER TO HYDE

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F O S T E R
B A N I S H I N G P O V E R T Y

FRANK HUGH FOSTER

PROFESSOR of history in Olivet College, Olivet, Mich., since 1907; born in Springfield, Mass., June 18, 1851; educated at Harvard College and Andover Seminary; after two years in the pastorate, went to Germany for three years, graduating at Leipsic in 1882 (Ph.D.), having taken special studies chosen with reference to subsequent teaching in systematic theology; chair of Church history, at Oberlin, 1884-92; professor of systematic theology in the Pacific Seminary (Congregational) at Oakland, Cal., where he spent ten years; author of "A Genetic History of the New England Theology," etc.

BANISHING POVERTY

Prof. FRANK HUGH FOSTER, Ph.D., D.D.

"They shall not hunger nor thirst."—Isa. 49 : 10.

THE aim of Christianity has always been the well-being of man. It has always conceived the need of men in concrete and practical ways. A wounded traveler has found some good Samaritan to bind up his wounds and pour in wine and oil. The prophet in representing the perfection of the glory which God shall bring upon Israel thinks of common necessities, and says that redeemed Israel "shall not hunger nor thirst." "Fulfilling the law of Christ"—*i.e.*, filling it full, completely carrying it out—consists, according to one text, in "bearing one another's burdens." A spiritual good, totally divorced from temporal and material good, finds no support in the Bible as a goal to be attained by the perfecting church on earth. Men are everywhere to feed the hungry and clothe the naked till there be no more hungry and naked to help.

Christianity has also always been hopeful. It has always believed that in every sphere, greater are the forces which are for us than those that are against us. It has had hope of men in spite of its theories of original

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sin, because it has believed in grace and salvation. It has likewise had hope of men in their earthly relations in spite of all the accumulating facts of perennial misery and poverty, because it has believed that God was able to cast up in the desert a high-way for men to return out of captivity to a land flowing with milk and honey. Its predominant but not sole method has been to convert men and to rely upon God to bring them out of poverty and distress by the operation of His Spirit bringing grace to their souls. A man saved could scarcely be a shiftless and lazy man. And the history of revivals has justified its hope.

Now and then along the path of the Church there have been efforts made to banish poverty from the earth or from small sections of it. When I speak of banishing poverty from our land, and eventually from all the world, I wish to shelter myself from the immediate reply I might otherwise expect, by mentioning these efforts thus, before I come to any propositions of my own. Else I might fear the reproach that many a bold but wise man from Paul down has received—"The man's mad!" To mention no other definite case, it was the purpose of the founders of our own nation that no one should fail to have land to cultivate and the full opportunity to gain a large prosperity. This was but seeking to fulfil the words of the prophet Isaiah.