

**THE THREE HOURS'
AGONY OF OUR
BLESSED REDEEMER**

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The three hours' agony of our blessed Redeemer by W. J. Knox Little

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W. J. KNOX LITTLE

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121.



The Three Hours' Agony

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MEDITATIONS

BY THE REV.

W. J. KNOX LITTLE, M.A.

CANON RESIDENTIARY OF WORCESTER, AND RECTOR OF
S. ALBAN'S, MANCHESTER

NEW EDITION

RIVINGTONS

WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON

MDCCLXXXIV

[Price One Shilling]

The Three Hours' Agony

OF OUR

BLESSED REDEEMER

BEING

ADDRESSES IN THE FORM OF MEDITATIONS

DELIVERED IN

S. ALBAN'S CHURCH, MANCHESTER

ON GOOD FRIDAY, 1877

BY THE REV.

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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

IN looking over this little book before the printing of this edition, the Author has found that, though many improvements might doubtless be made in a work necessarily so crude, yet to alter at all would be, in fact, to rewrite the whole. He has thought it better, therefore, to leave it in precisely its original state. He can only hope that, in God's goodness, it may still be of help and comfort to some as kind friends have assured him it has already been.

ATHENS,

Lent, 1884.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following Addresses are published from a shorthand report taken down *verbatim* at the time. They appear, therefore, just as they were uttered. They are published by request, and it is thought better to leave them exactly in their original form.

In all doctrinal statements involved in them, the author trusts that there is no deviation from the revealed faith; and desires to submit them unreservedly to the mind of the Catholic Church, as manifested in the testimony of the Church of England. He prays God that, of His mercy, they may be helpful, in some small measure, in drawing labouring, longing souls nearer to the boundless love of Jesus, our Redeemer.

All Glory be to God.

S. ALBAN'S RECTORY,
MANCHESTER,

Easter, 1877.

Order of Service

FOR THE

DEVOTION OF THE THREE HOURS' AGONY.

INTRODUCTORY :

Hymn 100. A. and M.

Address.

FIRST WORD : "Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do."

Meditation and Silence for Prayer.

Hymn 99.

SECOND WORD : "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

Meditation and Silence.

Hymn 97.

THIRD WORD : "Behold thy son . . . Behold thy Mother."

Meditation and Silence.

Hymn 98.

FOURTH WORD : "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken ME ?"

Meditation and Silence.

Hymn 102.

FIFTH WORD : "I thirst."

Meditation and Silence.

Hymn 96.

SIXTH WORD : "It is finished."

Meditation and Silence.

Hymn 103.

SEVENTH WORD : "Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit."

Meditation and Silence.

Hymn 91.

CONCLUSION :

Address.

Hymn 101.

Benediction.

“Jesus only ; Jesus always ; All for Jesus.”



INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

THERE are, my dear friends, three distinct ways, at least, in which it is possible for us to view the Passion of our Master. We may study the Passion of Jesus first of all as a great historical fact. We may look at it in the bearing it has had on the political events of the civilised world, and the influence it exercised over the Jews at the time in their relation to the empire of Rome. And, indeed, there is no doubt that the Passion of our Blessed Redeemer is of the very first rank of importance as a matter of history.

Or we may look at it, passing from that, simply in its doctrinal aspect. The Passion of the Lord Jesus is a perfect fund of doctrinal truth. It is there that are collected together some of the most mysterious and some of the most powerful of the doctrinal revelations of the Will and Character of God.

Now, the Church of Jesus Christ has always laid great stress upon the one aspect and the other. The aspect of doctrine is of course of importance ; for to read what the Passion means, and to throw it into accurate statement—that is to say, to state it doctrinally—is really one of the fundamental necessities of Christian thought, if we are to hold the faith.

But there is another aspect. It is possible to view the Passion of our Blessed Lord from a *devotional* point of view—as in itself furnishing the subject-matter of an important Devotion. Now, viewing anything in this way, as a *devotion*, is altogether distinct from the other two methods which I have put before you. When we talk of *devotion* we mean a concentrated energy of will and thought and affection, not upon any particular work so much as upon a person ; not upon any particular scheme of operations so much as upon a character and a life. Life is summed up in death. As a man lives, so he dies. As a man is, so are his last hours for the most part. As Jesus was in His pre-existent eternity and in His earthly life, so He was in the last days of His Passion.

Well, now, this morning we are going to contemplate the Passion from a purely *devotional* point of view ; we are going, that is to say, to gaze at it as an historical fact, as a truth of revelation, of such a character that it may kindle, draw, excite, and brace

our feelings, our affections, our will, our thoughts, and concentrate them all in a fruitful manner for His glory (whether it be the glory of being worshipped by His creatures, or His glory by our being drawn nearer to Him) upon the person of that one wonderful Character upon whom your and my hopes depend in time and in eternity.

The Passion of Jesus is a great Drama. It begins, in the narrow sense of the word, with the Agony in the Garden; it ends with the last cry on the Cross, or the burial in the Sepulchre. It has various stages; scene after scene; act after act; working out just the one central thought of the redemption of mankind. But in that Drama there is one part, one crisis, one catastrophe upon which all the rest turns; and that part, that crisis, that catastrophe is to be found in the three hours of the exceeding Agony of our Lord in the throes of His mysterious and awful Death. You and I, dear brother and sister, are going to try this morning to gaze simply at that crisis in the Drama. Now, what have I to ask you to do in order to gaze with profit?

I. First of all, you will require *effort*. Devotion is no dreaming; devotion is no sentimentalism; devotion means the effort of the will, of the mind, of the heart concentrated upon an object upon which