

**THE SHRINES OF LOURDES,  
ZARAGOSSA, THE HOLY STAIRS  
AT ROME, THE HOLY HOUSE OF  
LORETTO AND NAZARETH, AND  
ST. ANN AT JERUSALEM**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649362103

The Shrines of Lourdes, Zaragoza, the Holy Stairs at Rome, the Holy House of Loretto and Nazareth, and St. Ann at Jerusalem by Robert Needham Cust

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Cover @ 2017

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**ROBERT NEEDHAM CUST**

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THE SHRINES

OF

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Lourdes, Zaragossa, The Holy Stairs  
at Rome, The Holy House of  
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BY

ROBERT NEEDHAM CUST,

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*University of Michigan*

*Jan. 23. 1890.*

LONDON: TRÜBNER & CO., LUDGATE HILL.

1885.

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HERTFORD:  
PRINTED BY STEPHEN AUSTIN AND SONS.

Revised 9.26.92 N. T. T.

## PREFACE.

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THE following are studies made upon the spots which they describe. I am not insensible to the feeling of "Religio Loci": on the contrary I am particularly susceptible of it. I cannot imagine a person of a cultivated mind not feeling some emotion, when he stood, as I have stood, in the Forum of Rome, on the Parthenon at Athens, amidst the ruins of Carthage, on Mount Olivet overhanging Jerusalem, at the top of the Great Pyramid, or at the foot of the great Statue of Memnon at Thebes. Whatever may be the legends which have entwined themselves round them, there is an actual reality and truth in the physical objects, which present themselves to the eye.

But the feelings which arise from the contemplation of pious frauds, and fond delusions,

patronized by misguided Religionists, for the purpose of deceiving simple souls, and collecting offerings, can only be those of pain and disgust. They are common to all countries, and to all forms of degraded Piety. They disappear before the light of Spiritual Religion. It is the Pagan Element that crops out in all, clinging to the skirts of a Purer Faith.

Are the Roman Catholics of England less true to their religious tenets, because the Shrines of St. Edward at Westminster, St. Thomas of Canterbury, and our Lady of Walsingham, have been destroyed? Do they care, except in the case of excited perverts, to worship at the French Shrine of Lourdes, the Spanish Shrine of Zaragossa, or the Italian Shrine of Loretto? And yet the Miracles performed at each of these places, if true, equal or even surpass any Miracle recorded in Holy Writ.



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THE phenomenon, presented by Roman Catholic Missions in Asia and Africa, is one which cannot be overlooked by any who are interested, as I deeply am, in the progress of Christian Missions. Complications of a startling kind will arise in this or the next generation amidst the nascent Christianities, and it is as well to consider calmly, drawing our notices from their own published reports, whether in very deed the Roman Catholic Missionaries do preach the same Gospel as ourselves. If it can be shown that they do not, the line of division between us and them must be drawn, reluctantly perhaps, but as clearly, as betwixt us and the Hindu, the Mahometan, and the Buddhist. The most

dangerous of errors is the perversion of the truth. One fact is of the utmost importance, viz. the appearance in Roman Catholic Missions of a Fourth Supreme Personage outside of, and in addition to, the Trinity. There is no use in mincing words here ; for the Native of Asia or Africa will never be brought to see the position I speak of in any other light. Roman Catholic publications are full of the worship, the goodness, and the power, of the Mother of our Lord. Chapels are erected even in China to "Notre Dame de Lourdes." Venerable Bishops, after spending years in Abyssinia, hurry off to Lourdes, as soon as their vessel reaches Marseilles. In moments of trial and difficulty prayers are offered to "Our Mother at Lourdes." In fact, this petty town, from the mind of the French Missionary at least, has driven out the thought of Rome and Jerusalem, and the newly-fashioned image in the cleft of the rock of the Pyrenees has drawn away the worshippers of older shrines.

To enable me to comprehend this phenomenon, and to obtain trustworthy and original documents, I proceeded in the autumn of 1880 to Lourdes, carefully inspected the outward

symbols of the new cult, and purchased at the Cave copies of all the literature sold by permission of the authorities. Lourdes is the newest, and most frequented by the French, of the shrines of the Virgin. Here I found French refinement and Nineteenth Century culture in the graceful lines of the modern statue, and in the tasteful arrangements of the beautiful gardens and walks that surround it. I crossed the Pyrenees on leaving Lourdes, and about one hundred miles due south I came, from the youngest, upon the oldest shrine in Europe, that of Nostra Señora del Pilár, at Zaragossa. Here I was face to face with what has been the consolation and hope and joy of the Spanish Nation for fifty generations. I carefully inspected the outward symbols of the worship offered, and purchased a copy of the authorized Spanish narrative in connection with it. Absence of culture and presence of dirt, a Madonna and Child of wood, of an antiquity and rudeness which render it priceless, and clothed in tinsel garments which assimilate it to the appearance of a Hindu idol, was what I encountered here, and the contrast with Lourdes was of the