

**JESUS CHRIST:
CONFERENCES DELIVERED
AT NOTRE DAME IN PARIS**

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Jesus Christ: Conferences Delivered at Notre Dame in Paris by Pere Lacordaire

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PERE LACORDAIRE

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IN MEMORIAM.

E.

ROME, *May 27th*, 1864.

H. D. L.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE subject of the following Conferences is daily attracting increased attention in England—so justly famed for her religious feeling and strong sense, yet so distracted by divisions which contradict the authority, the object, and the work of Jesus Christ. Many minds that know not the repose of divine faith, are—timidly perhaps, but anxiously—watching this great question ; requiring, not only to believe, but also and rightly, to know why they should believe.

Humbly desiring to discharge a part of the deep debt of gratitude which he owes to the author of these celebrated discourses, the translator respectfully offers them to his well-beloved country, as a guide in her present religious confusion and a support in her manifest and perplexing doubts, hoping and believing

that they will be to others what they have been to him, namely, heralds of that "glorious liberty" which is the ever-blessed fruit of Catholic Christianity.

The memorable panegyric—delivered in 1847—is added for the same end and in further illustration of the same subject, as a homage, moreover, to the great Christian hero and the faithful people whose testimony in honour of the Saviour of mankind has become one of the great glories of Christendom.

Whitsuntide, 1869.

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CONFERENCES.

THE INNER LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

MY LORD¹—GENTLEMEN,

IN demonstrating the divinity of Christianity we have not taken our starting-point in the profound depths of metaphysics or in the distant regions of history, but in a living, palpable phenomenon, which has been for ages before the world; we have analyzed this phenomenon, we have shown you that under the intellectual, moral, and social points of view, the Catholic Church is a phenomenon unique here below, and therefore divine. For whatsoever is human is multiple, since whatsoever men have been able to accomplish in a given time and place, other men are able to accomplish in other times and places. We have then changed the ordinary tactics—instead of starting from the basis we have started from the

¹ MONSIEUR AFFRE, Archbishop of Paris.

summit, instead of digging about the foundations of the pyramid, we have examined its apex and its crown, beginning by that which is most visible, to return afterwards to that which is most hidden, and which bears the whole mass. A writer of our times has said: Christianity is the greatest event which has passed in the world. We have said otherwise, and perhaps better: "Christianity is the greatest phenomenon which has been naturalized in the world, the greatest intellectual phenomenon, the greatest moral phenomenon, the greatest social phenomenon," something unique, in a word, and, yet once more, consequently divine.

But what is the primary cause of this phenomenon? Every phenomenon has a cause. After having examined its visible side, we should evidently examine that which has produced the spectacle, that which explains and supports it. Who, then, has made the Catholic Church? Who has founded that society which rules minds by certainty, regulates souls by the highest virtues, blesses the human race by the new elements it has given to civilization? Who has formed, under a hierarchy spiritual and unarmed, that body wherein conviction, holiness, unity, universality, stability, and life, form a tissue of superhuman and incon-