THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

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The ten commandments by George Jackson

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GEORGE JACKSON

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By George Jackson, B.A.

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W. H. ROLLS : H. WATERWORTH
J. E. DIXON : E. A. FRENCH
F. R. WATSON : T. W. JAMIESON
MY COLLEAGUES, FAST AND PRESENT
IN THE WORK OF
THE METHODIST MISSION, EDINBURGH

PREFATORY NOTE

ALL that it is necessary to ask the reader to note by way of Preface is that the following chapters were delivered as a course of Sunday Evening Sermons to my own congregation during the months of last winter, and that, though they have since been entirely re-written, they still remain what they were originally, sermons, not essays.

G. J.

EDINBURGH, October 1897.

INTRODUCTORY

'And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.'—Exou. xx. :, z,

5.83

INTRODUCTORY

OF the unique position once held by the Ten Commandments among the most religious people in the world, one fact is a sufficient illustration : within the Holy Place was the Holy of Holies, wherein once a year the high priest entered alone to offer up sacrifices both for himself and the people ; within the Holy of Holies was the sacred ark ; and within the ark, shrined in the innermost sanctity of the Holy Place, were the two tables of stone whereon the divine finger had traced the eternal law. Could anything indicate more clearly the reverence paid to the Decalogue by the Jews, or declare with more solemn emphasis that the end of all religious observances is the keeping of the commandments of God?

But Christ having come (as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says), the minister of a new and better covenant, it was no longer possible that the commandments should be to the Christian all that they had once been to the pious Jew. Yet are we not to-day in danger of undervaluing the Ten Words, and of thinking that, because Christ has come, therefore they have lost for us all their deep significance? One can