

**THE CHALCEDONIAN DECREE; OR,
HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY,
MISREPRESENTED BY
MODERN THEOLOGY, CONFIRMED BY
MODERN SCIENCE, AND UNTOUCHED
BY MODERN CRITICISM**

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The Chalcedonian decree; or, Historical Christianity, misrepresented by modern theology, confirmed by modern science, and untouched by modern criticism by John Fulton

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JOHN FULTON

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Charlotte Wood Hlocum Lectures.

THE
CHALCEDONIAN DECREE

OR

HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY, MISREPRESENTED BY MODERN
THEOLOGY, CONFIRMED BY MODERN SCIENCE, AND
UNTOUCHED BY MODERN CRITICISM

BY

JOHN FULTON, D.D., LL.D.

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1892

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The Charlotte Wood Slocum Lectures.

THE CHARLOTTE WOOD SLOCUM Lectureship on Christian Evidences was endowed in 1890 by the lamented lady whose name it bears, the wife of Elliott T. Slocum, Esq., of Detroit, in grateful memory of the life and labours of the Right Reverend Samuel Smith Harris, D. D., LL. D., the second Bishop of Michigan. Mrs. Slocum departed this life in Dresden, 6th June, 1891.

Bishop Harris,—to quote his own words—“moved by the importance of bringing all practicable Christian influences to bear upon the great body of students annually assembled at the University of Michigan, undertook to promote and set in operation a plan of Christian work at said University, and collected contributions for that purpose, of which plan the following outline is here given, that is to say:—

To erect a building or hall near the University, in which there should be cheerful parlors, a well-equipped reading-room, and a lecture-room where the lectures hereinafter mentioned might be given;

To endow a lectureship similar to the Bampton Lectureship in England, for the establishment and defence of Christian truth: the lectures on such foundation to be delivered annually at Ann Arbor by a learned clergyman or other communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

To endow two other lectureships, one on Biblical Literature and Learning, and the other on Christian Evidences:

the object of such lectureships to be to provide for all the students who may be willing to avail themselves of them a complete course of instruction in sacred learning, and in the philosophy of right thinking and right living, without which no education can justly be considered complete.

The first of the Lectureships projected by Bishop Harris, that for the establishment and defence of Christian truth, was endowed in 1886 by the Hon. Henry P. Baldwin and wife. The second to be founded is that on Christian Evidences, and it is in fulfilment of the earnest wish of the Founder, that the first course is given by the Rev. John Fulton, D. D., LL. D. The Lecturer is appointed upon the nomination of the Bishop of Michigan.

As Mrs. Slocum executed no deed of trust when she placed in my hands Ten Thousand Dollars for the object aboved named, I have thought it advisable to appoint as Trustees of this Fund those gentlemen who are charged with the trust of the foundation for the Baldwin Lectureship; viz.,

Messrs. HENRY P. BALDWIN,
HENRY A. HAYDEN,
SIDNEY D. MILLER,
HENRY P. BALDWIN, 2nd.,
HERVY C. PARKE,

with the addition of MR. ELLIOTT T. SLOCUM.

THOMAS F. DAVIES,

Bishop of Michigan.

Detroit, November, 1891.

PREFACE.

As the sheets of this volume have come to me from the press, I have sincerely appropriated the lines of the poet:

*Dum relego, scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno,
Me quoque qui feci iudice, digna lini;*

and if I had in any way sought, or if I had not done all that I could rightly do to avoid, a task which I knew to be so gravely important, and for which I knew myself to be so ill qualified, I should feel that I had been much to blame.

Such as they are, these lectures were intended mainly to clear the way for abler and more competent lecturers by showing first, what historical Christianity is; second, that it is obnoxious to none of the moral objections to which provincial and popular opinions have exposed it; third, that it is in no way invalidated, but marvellously confirmed, by the progress of physical science; and fourth, that it is not so much as touched by any of the so-called results of biblical criticism. Allowing for the conditions imposed by the form of composition, I think this four-fold purpose

may be seen to have been kept clearly in view from first to last.

In a work published ten years ago* I made a critical study of the Decree of Chalcedon as an authoritative, and, to this day, unrepealed, settlement of the Faith of Historical Christianity. I have reason to believe that the arguments set forth in that work have commended themselves to men of widely different tendencies. I have therefore allowed myself to hope that a more popular treatment of the same subject might be useful. If the view which I have presented is just, Christianity is at once relieved of nine tenths of the objections, ethical, scientific and critical, which are alleged against it; nine tenths of all the grounds of the divisions of Christendom appear to have been factitious; the existence of a substantial unity of faith is evident; and the only possible basis of visible unity in the future is made plain.

In a work of this kind originality is impossible, and I should certainly have no sense of humiliation in borrowing from the learned and accomplished writers of "*Lux Mundi*." The fact is, however, that I did not read that work until these lectures were out of hand, and consequently my thesis, that the Triune God of the Nicene Creed is the only God in which modern science has left it possible to believe, was not suggested by the admirable paper of Canon Aubrey Moore. I have held the same view for thirty years, and the advance of science during that period has tended only to illustrate and confirm it. I am deeply conscious that

* "*Index Canonum*," New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co.

the treatment of the subject in the Fifth Lecture is defective; but I am sure that it is in the line of truth, and I cannot but hope that it may suggest a better treatment to some far more competent apologist than I can pretend to be.

It is a pleasure to me to know that what I have said concerning the higher criticism of the Holy Scriptures represents not only my own belief but that of Bishop Harris, as he expressed it to me only a few weeks before he sailed on his last voyage. It is a still greater pleasure to believe that he would not have dissented in the main from anything contained in these lectures.

J. F.