

**THE MYSTERY OF  
SUFFERING, AND  
OTHER DISCOURSES**

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The Mystery of Suffering, and Other Discourses by E. De Pressense

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THE  
MYSTERY OF SUFFERING,  
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OTHER DISCOURSES.

*By the same author, preparing for publication,*

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THE  
MYSTERY OF SUFFERING,  
AND  
OTHER DISCOURSES.

BY  
E. DE PRESSENSÉ, D.D.,  
*Author of "Jesus Christ: His Times, Life, and Work."*



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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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It is a common complaint of the sermon-hearers of our day, that fire and force are extinct in the pulpit. It is as common a complaint of the preachers, that a cold and critical generation has lost the power of hearing. The two recriminations may perhaps be taken as neutralizing each other: possibly it is those who cannot preach who for the most part complain of their hearers; possibly those who are dull of hearing are loudest in the outcry against the pulpit.

It is at least fair that, while the position of the preacher is thus assailed, his words should have the widest possible opportunity of vindicating themselves through the press, to an impartial public, or of receiving a weightier condemnation than that of any particular congregation. Even in this way the cause will scarcely have a fair trial; for while reasons can readily be adduced for the reputed decline of influence in the modern pulpit, it is less easy to estimate the indirect power for good of many a homely sermon, which the critic's scalpel may soon deprive of all logical unity or vitality.

Even the best sermons are submitted to a severe test, when they have to make their appeal, not through the animated voice, but through cold, unmodulated type. The ordeal must be yet more severe, when the thoughts of the preacher, beside being translated from the vocal to the silent utterance, are submitted to the yet further

transmutation into an alien tongue. It is much if, in such a case, while the form is preserved, the warmth and colour are not lost.

Many of the productions of the foreign pulpit have however recently become familiarized to the English reader in his own tongue ; and we can scarcely doubt that those who have followed M. de Pressensé through his scholarly and loving exposition of the Life and Times of Jesus Christ, will welcome from the English press a volume of his eloquent sermons.

The "Mystery of Suffering," the first series in the volume now presented to the public, appeared in the *Pulpit Analyst* of this year, and is translated by the Rev. R. S. Ashton, B.A. The second series, which, while more miscellaneous in form, has also a unity of thought and purpose, appears now for the first time in English. The whole is the reproduction of a volume entitled "Etudes Evangéliques," published by M. de Pressensé in Paris at the close of the year 1867.

While local separation, and the yet wider barriers of languages and modes of thought foreign to our own, prevent the realization of that oneness which is the aim and ideal of a catholic Christianity, we cannot but rejoice in every opportunity of drawing closer the bonds of sympathy with our brethren in other lands, and thus anticipating in some little measure the time when, in perfect harmony,—a grander thing than perfect unison—every kindred, and tribe, and people, and tongue shall blend their homage to the Redeemer of the world.

ANNIE HARWOOD.

GREAT SHELPORD, CAMBRIDGE,  
August, 1868.

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