

**SMALL BOOKS ON GREAT
SUBJECTS, NO. XVII. CHRISTIAN
DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE IN THE
TWELFTH CENTURY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649532285

Small Books on Great Subjects, No. XVII. Christian Doctrine and Practice in the Twelfth Century by Caroline Frances Cornwallis

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

CAROLINE FRANCES CORNWALLIS

**SMALL BOOKS ON GREAT
SUBJECTS, NO. XVII. CHRISTIAN
DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE IN THE
TWELFTH CENTURY**



Small Books on Great Subjects.

EDITED BY A FEW WELL WISHERS
TO KNOWLEDGE.



N^o. XVII



CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND
PRACTICE IN THE
TWELFTH CENTURY



LONDON
WILLIAM PICKERING

1850



CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE
IN THE TWELFTH
CENTURY.

IT has been said before, but it can hardly be too often repeated, that religion takes its tincture from the degree of civilization in which it finds its professors. The ignorant man cannot *conceive*, he can only see and feel: whatever is to him beyond the reach of his senses, is also beyond the reach of his thoughts, and if he even professes to believe in a God that is invisible to his eyes, he takes the earliest opportunity of making some tangible object the representative of the, to him, absent Deity, and very soon transfers his homage from the abstract idea, to the tangible object thus set up.

It was this tendency of the human mind which made the mode of manifestation adopted by the Father of all things, at the promulgation of Christianity, so peculiarly effectual. Our strongest

2 CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

sympathies are with our fellow-creatures; and it was a fellow-creature who brought the message of God to man. We have difficulty in reaching an abstract idea; and the Deity deigned to make that human form his temple,* and speak, as from his sanctuary, through human lips. In youth and in temptation it is sometimes not easy to master our passions; that human soul was sanctified by communion with the indwelling God, till the *man* gained a grandeur of character which, even amid poverty and suffering, made him the object of admiration and love. Example was joined with precept, and the young and admired Teacher passed through all the dangers of his situation with a meek and dignified reserve which won respect even from his enemies, and formed a man so amiable, and at the same time so noble in his bearing and demeanour, that while the poor man might see with pleasure what he himself *might* become, the noble might listen with respectful deference, and gain a lesson for his own manners and conduct.

Whilst he was the object of personal recollection, this sufficed, even to the rudest minds: the

* "Destroy this *temple*, and in three days I will raise it up." John ii. 19.—and see also John xiv. 9.

preachers of Christianity appealed to their remembrance of "the Lord Jesus," when they wished to enforce amendment, either of manners or of morals; and for a time nothing else was needed: but after a century or two had passed away;—when no one could any longer recur to the traditional tales which had been heard in childhood from persons who had lived nearer the time of his sojourn on earth,* even "the man Christ Jesus" became by degrees an abstract idea: and his personal appearance and manners were forgotten in his supernatural powers. Questions as to his nature were now agitated; the actuality of his human body was doubted; and the teachers of Christianity probably did not always object to the custom adopted by many of the Gentile converts, of making likenesses of Christ and his apostles, and keeping them as honoured memorials: since this special recollection would appear the most probable means of keeping alive that affectionate remembrance of the living man which seemed requisite to give full effect to his example. Such statues were not uncommon in the time of Eusebius; and he mentions one very

* See Euseb. Hist. Ecc. lib. v. c. 20, where Polycarp's reminiscences are mentioned. See also Iren. cont. Hæreses, lib. iii. c. 3.