

**SEEING AND BEING
AND
OTHER SERMONS**

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Seeing and Being and Other Sermons by John W. Chadwick

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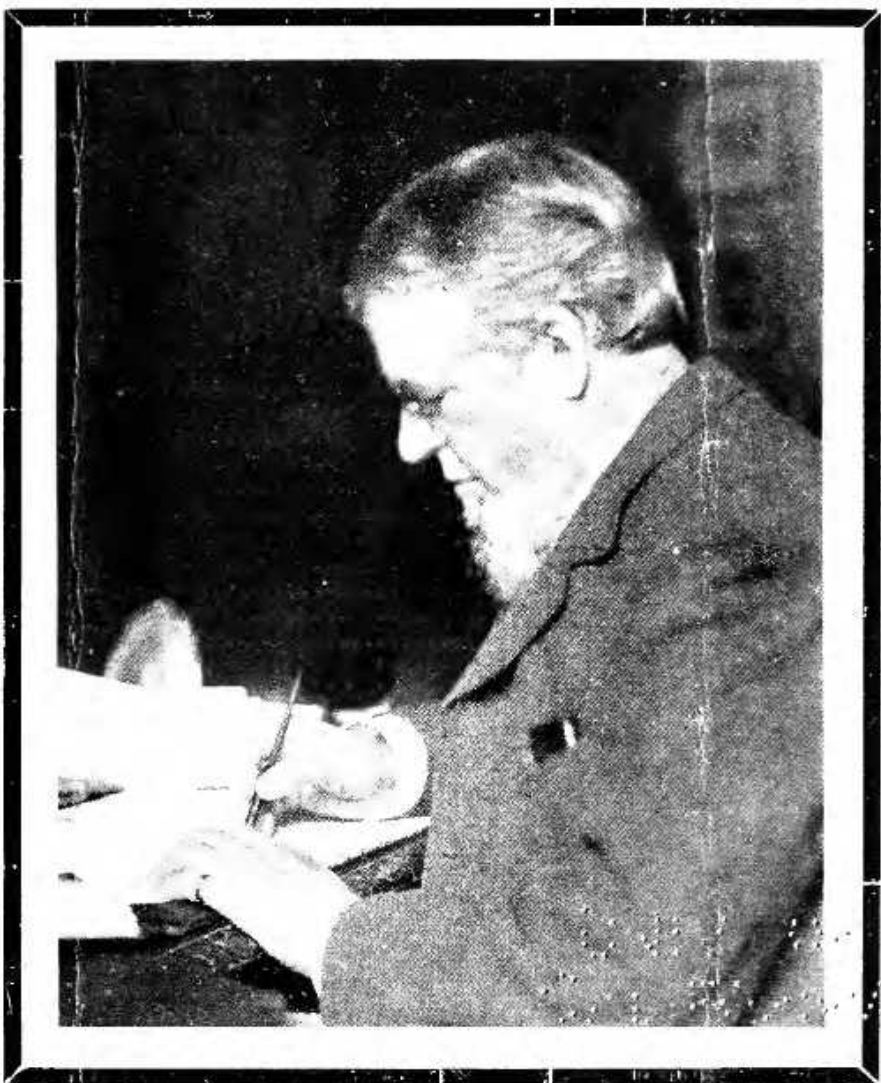
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JOHN W. CHADWICK

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from a photograph of Mr. Chadwick, made in his study in the fall of 1903, by Mr. Henry Hoyt Moore. This is perhaps the last photograph taken of him.

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AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

JOHN W. CHADWICK

AUTHOR OF "THE BIBLE OF TO-DAY," "THE FAITH OF REASON," "THE MAN
JESUS," "A BOOK OF POEMS," ETC., ETC.

SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH SERIES

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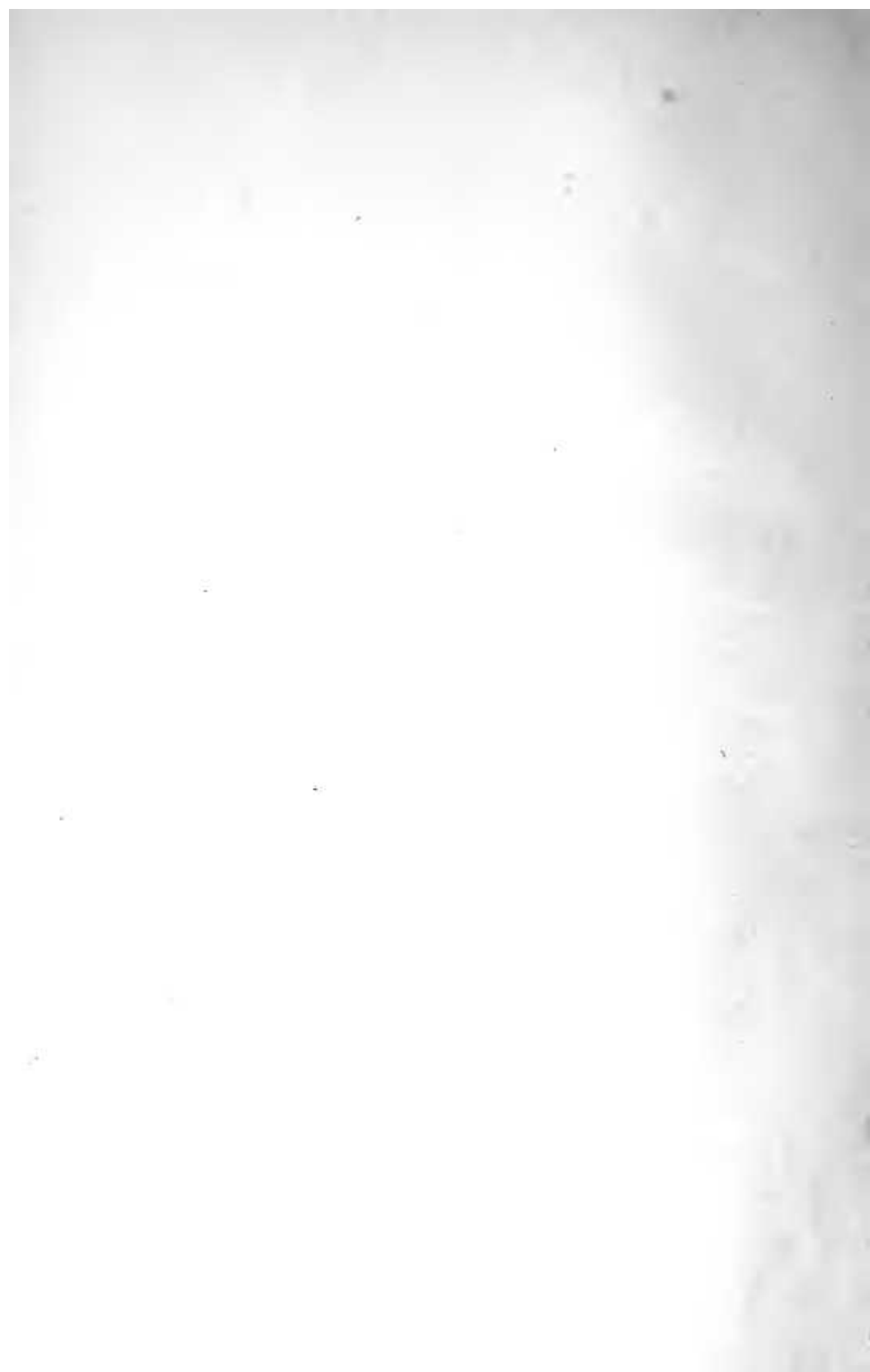
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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

GREAT HOPES FOR GREAT SOULS.

WHEN the French revolutionist Condorcet was outlawed by the Revolutionary Tribunal because he dared impeach the murder of the Girondins as a crime against the State, he went into concealment in Paris, and with the uproar of the Terror daily ringing in his ears, his life in constant jeopardy, he found a quiet place in his own mind, from which he listened with an imperturbable serenity to the mad tumult raging everywhere about him. Under such circumstances, he completed his great work upon the Progress of the Human Mind, concluding it with these memorable words: "Does not this picture of the human race, freed from all its fetters, withdrawn from the empire of chance, and walking with assured step in the path of truth and virtue and happiness, present to the philosopher a sight that consoles him for the errors, the crimes, the injustice, with which the earth is yet stained and of which he is not seldom a victim? It is in the contemplation of this picture that he receives the reward of his efforts for the progress of reason, for the defence of liberty. He ventures to link them with the eternal chain of the destinies of man: it is there that he finds the true recompense of virtue,—the pleasure of having done a lasting good. Fate can no longer undo it by any disastrous compensation that shall restore prejudice and bondage. This contemplation is for him a refuge into which the recollection of his persecutors can never follow him; in which, living in thought with man reinstated in the rights and dignities of his nature, he forgets man tormented and corrupted by greed, by base fear and envy; it is here that he truly abides with his fellows in an

elysium that his reason has created for itself and that his love for humanity fills with the purest joy”

There is nothing strange, unique, phenomenal in that prophecy and vision of the hunted refugee for whom “Madame Guillotine” was sharpening her knife, but whose death, then close at hand, was not to stain her catalogue of misconception and ingratitude and crime. In that prophecy and vision we have a single illustration of a universal law, which is “Great Hopes for Great Souls.”* Wherever there is a great soul, it triumphs over the misery and terror of the immediate present. In spite of seeming failure, or, it may be, of cruel death impending, the future large and glorious looms upon its sight. There is no unreality in that closing scene in Victor Hugo’s “Ninety-Three,” where till the morning breaks the prisoner Gauvain, and Cimourdain who has decreed his death and is to be his executioner, forget their mutual relations and the approaching fatal hour as they seek to draw aside the curtain that conceals from them the glorious future of mankind. The conquered, the condemned, becomes the teacher and inspirer in that solemn and transcendent hour. It is the great soul that makes the great hope,—makes it so great that it dwarfs the huge, dark failure of the present into an insignificance so absolute that it is as if it did not exist. “Be of good cheer, Brother Ridley,” cried Latimer from out the flames; “for we have lighted a candle this day in England which shall never be put out.” The pages of history are illuminated in a thousand places by such incidents as these. What have they to do with the average, humdrum life of men and women? “Difficult duty is never far off,” but difficult duty is not always interesting and dramatic. Nevertheless, all life is of a piece; and the most dramatic episodes of history are but the toils and sacrifices, the battles and the victories, of the humblest people on God’s earth writ in some larger character. That great hopes are for great souls means that, the greater the soul, the greater is the hope,

* The formula is Martineau’s, but I believe the treatment is unmixedly my own.