STUDIES IN ENGLISH RELIGION IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, ST. MARGARET'S LECTURES, 1903

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Studies in English religion in the seventeenth century, St. Margaret's lectures, 1903 by H. Hensley Henson

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H. HENSLEY HENSON

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STUDIES IN ENGLISH RELIGION IN THE SEVEN-TEENTH CENTURY

ST. MARGARET'S LECTURES

1903

By H.[€]HENSLEY HENSON, B.D.

CANON OF WESTMINISTER AND RECTOR OF ST. MARGARFT'S, WESTMINISTER LATE FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD

LONDON JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1903

TO THE WARDEN AND FELLOWS OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THEIR KINDNESS AND CONFIDENCE CONTINUED THROUGH NINETEEN VEARS (1884-1903) THE AUTHOR INSCRIBES THIS VOLUME WITH THE UTMOST AFFECTION

Preface

Some years ago I formed the design of writing a history of the "Savoy Conference," and, by way of preparing myself for my task, I directed my reading to the literature of the seventcenth century. In the summer of 1900 I printed for private circulation two lectures, the one on "The religious situation under Elizabeth," the other on "The Hampton Court Conference," and these lectures were republished last year, together with other essays, in a volume entitled Cross-bench Views of Current Church Questions. When, in the course of my duty, I had to arrange for a fresh series of S. Margaret's Lectures, many persons expressed to me their desire that I should take the opportunity of continuing my discussion of English religion in the seventeenth century. That will, perhaps, suffice to explain the subject of the lectures for 1903, and the fact that I myself was the lecturer. In adopting the title "studies," I could not escape from the limitations implied in

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PREFACE

the composition of lectures intended in the first instance for delivery in a church. A few leading truths insisted upon again and again, a few representative facts discussed with care, a few authorities advanced and used throughout-these would seem to be the unavoidable features of public lectures, designed to set out clearly positions, deliberately adopted, which, for their sufficient establishing, would properly demand a more elaborate treat-The service which such "studies" are ment. able to render is that of suggesting points of view and stimulating thought. Incidentally they may contribute information, but that is not their proper work. If I insist upon the limitations under which I have perforce laboured, it is in order to protect myself against a kind of criticism which, however legitimate in other spheres, is out of place in connection with these lectures. It is not to be inferred that unnamed authorities are also unknown and unused, or that important facts unmentioned are also unconsidered. Much had to be taken for granted as already known, and it seemed to me that this might be the more reasonably done since the period of history dealt with has been, perhaps, more thoroughly and effectively handled in easily accessible works than any other. The time has not come yet, if it ever comes, when such books