

**EXETER-HALL SERMON FOR
THE WORKING CLASSES:
WITH PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR
OF THE BISHOP OF LONDON**

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Exeter-Hall Sermon for the Working Classes: With Portrait and Memoir of the Bishop of London by Various

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OF THE BISHOP OF LONDON**



THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

[LARGE-TYPE VERBATIM EDITION.]

EXETER-HALL SERMONS

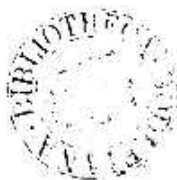
FOR THE

WORKING CLASSES:

WITH

PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR OF THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

Sixteenth Thousand.



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MEMOIR, ETC.

WITHIN fourteen miles to the east of Stirling, passing along by the south side of the Ochils, a traveller's eye would be caught by the ruins of Castle Campbell, looking down upon a scattered village below, in the midst of which is the Academy of Dollar, and, among other objects not distant, the mansion-house of Harrieston. In the mansion-house of Harrieston, DR. TAIT was born. In the Academy of Dollar he laid the basis of that excellent scholarship which is one of his claims to our respect, and of his titles to his office in the English Church.

Dr. Tait's father was a legal gentleman in large practice. His mother, the daughter of Sir Hay Campbell, some time President of the Supreme Court of Justice in Scotland—a lady of noticeable worth, died in giving birth to her son, who, it is said, was afterwards greatly indebted to the care of a female servant.

Anywhere but in Scotland or in some parts of the Orient, where domestic loyalty flowers into many such examples, we should have said BETTY MORRISON was an exceptional servant. As it is, we will be content with saying that she was literally "faithful unto death" in holding the place of a mother to the child. She taught him his earliest lessons; she superintended, with a conscientious care which was more effectual than any mere technical ability could have been, his preparations for his studies while he was at the Academy of Dollar; and she fulfilled, with religiously watchful seal, all the more domestic functions of a mother to her young ward, so far as any one but a mother could do so. At a later date, when he removed from the High School and Academy of Edinburgh to the University of Glasgow, she actually accompanied him thither, and watched over his home welfare as solicitously and industriously as ever. To Oxford, when he went to that University, she could not go, but she sped him on his wider career with prevailing prayers, and was not called to another life till she had seen enough to be satisfied that if his mother had watched him from afar, with

a mother's heart, she could not but give mother's thanks for such a son.

The rest of the history is soon told, and is even too familiar to the public generally to need recital in detail. Distinguished for classical scholarship, and for such moral qualities as might befit him for the chair once filled by ARNOLD, and the hall once occupied by MILNER, it is well known that DR. TAIT became Head Master of Rugby School, and, subsequently, Dean of Carlisle. Not long ago, every British heart ached at the story of his domestic griefs, when five daughters were removed in a few weeks by the same fever. But the sorrow at this event was scarcely more general than the satisfaction which was felt when the Dean of Carlisle was made Bishop of London. None of the recent ecclesiastical appointments gave more general satisfaction than this; and in none has public expectation been better justified by the zeal, activity, and moderation with which the episcopal functions have been fulfilled.

We had written thus far when we received intelligence of the death of his predecessor in the See of London, Bishop Blomfield. Almost at the same time, a work entitled "Bishop Blomfield and his Times," was transmitted to us, the Author of which, the Rev. Dr. Biber, entertains, we understand, what are called High Church views. It is not, however, with his views that we have at present to do. We advert to them, because he describes them as those of the late Bishop Blomfield. We desire to speak of that Prelate with all the consideration due to his position, his talents, his philanthropy, and earnestness. Especially would we cherish such a feeling, when we think that, the day after we received the history of his active life, we had the tidings of his death; and when we learn that in his retirement from public duties, no sentiments flowed more frequently from his lips than those which expressed the conviction of his own inadequate fulfilment of them, and that his last act of consciousness was an act of prayer.

In consistency, we trust, with such a feeling, we may yet observe that the late Bishop of London is described by Dr. Biber as having acted, throughout his ministerial and episcopal life, upon some such principles as those above referred to. With less practical exclusiveness, perhaps, than the theoretical maintenance might have led him to adopt, he yet appears to have held a sort of Apostolic succession of the episcopate; a special authority and influence possessed by the clergy, in consequence of their episcopal ordination; and a particular grace conveyed from the same source to the sacraments, when administered by them to the communicants. In particular, he is known to have strongly upheld the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In conformity with these views, he very earnestly inculcated, in regard to the book of Common Prayer, the adoption, in all

their extent and strictness of its various orders and regulations ; and, with great energy and perseverance, he sought to multiply places of worship in his own diocese, and in the colonies, wherein these principles would be carried out—evincing his own sincerity in the munificent sums which he himself subscribed to these and similar objects.

Before taking leave of Dr. Biber, we would observe that he communicates very little information respecting the private history of Bishop Blomfield,—doubtless influenced by the consideration that he was still among the living, though *functus officio*. Feeling a similar scruple in regard to the present Bishop, we have only inserted those few personal details which have been already made public, and that very briefly. Our object is to remark the contrast which, in several important respects, is afforded, between the principles and proceedings of the present and the former Bishop of London. It is not for us to say what may be Bishop Tait's precise opinions of the divers matters that have been referred to. No doubt they are very strongly in favour of Episcopal government, the ministry of the Church of England, and its Book of Common Prayer ; and that, though esteeming the latter a human composition, and partaking of the imperfections which must therefore necessarily cleave to it, he yet regards it as a sublime, beautiful, compendious, and incomparable work. But withal, it is evident that he is not trammelled in the same way and to the same extent as his predecessor, on these different points.

This we infer from his public acts. He at once and frankly joined the British and Foreign Bible Society, and thereby allied himself with other divisions of the Christian Church, recognising their ministry as well as that of his own, and believing that they would be instrumental in fulfilling the great end of both. In particular, he did by this act declare the supremacy of the Divine Word among all other Christian institutions ; that Word which is, indeed, of Divine origin ; where, and where only, is made known the will of God for salvation ; that Word, the truths of which he designs shall be proclaimed as the great instrument for the conveyance of spiritual and everlasting life, which, when applied by the Spirit to the soul, are the means of regeneration indeed, and not the means of that mighty change alone, but of its progress and development, till the soul which is the subject of it is received into heaven, and there made a partaker of perfect holiness, and of perfect and everlasting bliss. This we look upon as the chief distinction between one class and another among the ministers and members of the Church of England. Not but that all of them profess to profoundly reverence the Divine Word, and to submit to it as the alone revelation of the Divine will. But the distinguishing feature we hold to be the acknowledgment that the Word of God is the sole instrument of conversion ; and that

the great object and aim of Christian men, whether in the ministry or otherwise, should be that the word of life should be proclaimed; that Christ, the Son of God, the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, should be held forth to view, in the firm assurance "that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." In no way has the Bishop more clearly manifested this conviction, than in his decided and cordial sanction and approval of the Exeter Hall Lectures. The propriety of consecrating churches for preaching the Gospel, and of using the whole service on occasion of public worship in such churches, will, as a general rule, be maintained by the Bishop and those who have co-operated with him in this matter. But it is manifest that he and the Bishops of Carlisle and Ripon, and others, maintain the Word of God to be above all these things, and that if, in any place and at any time, it can be brought more extensively into contact with the souls of their immortal fellow-creatures, then are all intervening obstacles to be removed, and the truth to be immediately and directly proclaimed—that truth which, when applied by the promised Spirit, will manifest itself to every man's conscience, and make him free indeed. As under the influence of such views the lectures originated, so have they been embodied in the lectures themselves, which, though different in other respects, do yet all conjoin in the recognition of the great fundamental truth referred to, and were delivered under the influence of it; every preacher looking for a saving result only through the efficacy of that word which he addressed to the multitude before him. What the actual result has been, or will be, the great day will declare. We shall only now observe, that it is a matter of devout thankfulness that the important principle we have adverted to should be so distinctly recognised, and so decidedly acted upon; that a great work has thus been begun; that great encouragement has been given to it; that it ought to be prayerfully persevered in; and that there is every reason to hope it will usher in the dawn of a glorious day for England.