

# **UNITY AND SCHISM**

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**T. A. LACEY**

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BY THE  
REV. T. A. LACEY, M.A.

*The Bishop Paddock Lectures  
for 1917*

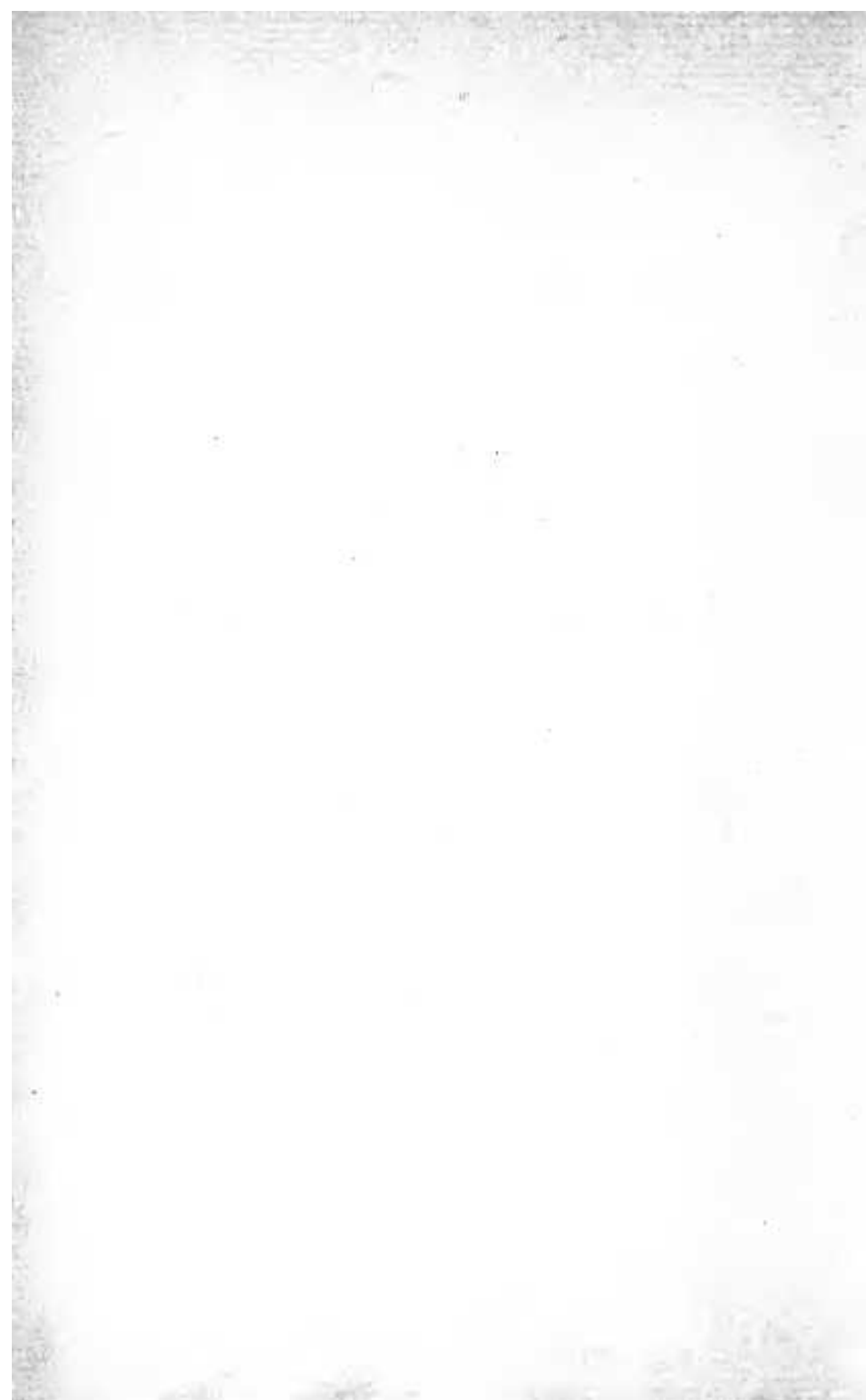
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## PREFACE

THE Bishop Paddock Lectures are delivered annually in the Chapel of the General Theological Seminary at New York. When the Trustees of the foundation honoured me with an invitation to undertake the course for the year 1916-17, the Dean of the Seminary suggested that I might with advantage lecture on the Unity of the Church and the effects of Schism. I gladly adopted the suggestion. The subject is one which insistently demands attention. Concurrent with a growing toleration of the divisions of Christendom is an active and widespread movement towards Christian union. The combination is curious. Men who are unwilling to speak of schism, who resent plain speaking about it, and accept its present consequences as if they were a normal feature of the Christian religion, press forward eagerly in search of a plan for modifying or even terminating a state of things to which they seem to have little objection in principle. There are dangers in this course of action. To make

disunion the starting-point, to seek union without condemning schism, or to condemn its manifestations only on the ground of expediency, is to pin one's faith to a purely human scheme, and to aim at a result purely artificial. In criticism of this habit of thought I have tried to ascertain what is the natural unity given to the Church by the purpose and act of God. It is an investigation of what is, not of what may be. There are positive theories to be tested, and negations to be examined. Unity and schism are correlatives. We cannot properly understand a rending, and still less can we repair the rents, without knowing the nature of the fabric that is torn.

I fear I may seem rather rash than courageous when I criticize the dominating theories on which the various sections of Christendom have built their practice, finding flaws or insufficiencies in all alike. In case of need I can defend myself, observing that in point of fact the working of these theories has produced precisely that state of things which is universally deplored. But indeed I trust that in criticizing them I have not contradicted anything which is taught by the whole Catholic Church, and that I have treated with due

respect what is taught or done even by any part of the Church. At any rate my temerity has not carried me to the length of proposing any reconstruction of existing systems.

I have thought it well to add to my Lectures appendices containing important documents in illustration of the theories examined. Quotations from St. Cyprian I have woven into a connected argument; the rest I leave for the most part to tell their own tale. Some readers will probably be glad to have the complete text of the dogmatic decree of the Fourth Session of the Vatican Council. In some respects it would be more satisfactory to substitute the Encyclical *Satis cognitum* of Leo XIII; but this seems to be in a less degree authoritative, and the use made of some patristic quotations — *pace tanti uiri dixerim* — is so strange and forced that its detailed argument is even less persuasive than the curtness of the conciliar exposition.

I am indebted to my friend and neighbour, the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, for a copy of the Interim Reports of the Committees appointed by the Mansfield College Conference of last year, and to the Rev. F. J. Hall, D.D., one of my kind hosts at the General Seminary, for