

**THE POLITICS OF
CHRISTIANITY,
REPRINTED FROM THE
NONCONFORMIST, 1847-1848**

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The politics of Christianity, reprinted from the Nonconformist, 1847-1848 by Edward Miall

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EDWARD MIALL

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POLITICS OF CHRISTIANITY.

REPRINTED FROM THE NONCONFORMIST,
1847—1848.

BY

EDWARD MIALL.

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ARTHUR MIALL, 18, BOUVERIE ST., FLEET ST.

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PREFACE.

THE papers which make up this volume were written in 1847-8, and were then published in the journal which the writer has conducted for several years. From time to time, several requests have been made that they should be placed before the public in a separate and connected form, but have not been complied with. Lately, however, an application reached the writer under circumstances which made it difficult to withhold his consent—and hence the publication of this little book.

Having acceded to the request that this series of short papers should be re-printed, the writer had to determine whether to translate them out of the editorial style, or to let them retain their original form. The latter alternative was decided upon, not as a matter of taste, but as a matter of convenience. So much reconstruction would have been involved in converting newspaper articles into essays, that to have been satisfactorily done they must have been re-written

—a task which would have largely intrenched upon other, and, in the writer's opinion, more important work. He has merely struck out from them, therefore, a few allusions which derived their whole significance from events then passing, leaving the papers in all other respects just as they were. Two of them on War were elicited by the correspondence of objectors. They might have been omitted altogether, but as they deal with objections likely enough to occur to many minds, it has been deemed preferable, on the whole, to let them keep their place.

The present are not times in which the British public evinces much anxiety to fashion its political opinions upon religious principles. Christianity, no doubt, by its silent and unobserved working in the minds of men, exercises considerable influence in the formation of such opinions, but it can hardly be said to be received as an authoritative standard in political affairs. It is questionable whether the nation gains anything to speak of by discarding the deepest of all truths from the province of Government. It is curious, too, that precisely that portion of the public which would sneer at the notion of founding their politics upon the principles of the New Testament, insist upon

the necessity of giving effect to the religion of the New Testament by political agencies and arrangements. The spiritual must not pretend to govern the political, but, in all its external affairs, must be governed by it—a rather startling inversion of the natural order of things. The papers comprised in this volume were written to suggest that the natural order of things may, after all, have something not entirely unreasonable said in its behalf. The writer may have fallen very far short of his purpose—but if his failure points the way to others far better qualified than he to follow it to the end, he will regard the result as ample compensation for his labour. Of one thing he is fully convinced—that the more studiously this country conforms its politics to the great ethical principles to be found in the Christian revelation, the more satisfactorily will its public affairs be conducted.

18, BOUVERIE STREET,

APRIL 29, 1863.

