

THE EPISTLES OF ST. JOHN

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CHARLES GORE

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BY CHARLES GORE, D.D.

**HON. D.D. EDIN. AND DURHAM, HON. D.C.L. OXFORD, HON. LL.D. CAMBRIDGE
AND BIRMINGHAM, HON. FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,
LATE BISHOP OF OXFORD**

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1920**



PREFACE

AN exposition of St. John's Epistles by the present writer was announced, as one of a series of such expositions, in 1900. This was to have been a revision of lectures actually delivered in Westminster Abbey, but it was never accomplished. And now that I am taking advantage of some recovered leisure to publish the intended exposition, I have not gone back upon the reports of former lectures. The present exposition is entirely new.

Both in the introduction and in the exposition itself I have had in view especially the ordinary man and woman who lack the equipment and knowledge of a scholar, and I have tried to take no knowledge for granted that an ordinary education does not supply.

Believing, as I do, that nothing is more important than to get people in our day, whatever their state of belief, to study the New Testament books for themselves, I have had it for my own

object to make these epistles intelligible and interesting to them. After the necessary introduction on the authorship and character of the documents, I have used the following method. Each section of the Epistle is preceded by an "explanatory analysis." This is intended to include all the explanatory matter necessary for the general understanding of the passage, though that may have to be found in the Old Testament or in the Fourth Gospel or elsewhere. But it concludes in each case with what can properly be called an analysis of the particular passage immediately to be studied. It is followed by the text of the passage from the Revised Version; and this again by notes on particular points in the passage.

It is obvious that the Epistle has a very direct bearing on present-day controversies—especially on the tendencies commonly called "Modernist" and on the social application of Christianity and the function of the Church in society. I have from time to time indicated such applications, but I have resisted the temptation to write at any length upon them, because I came to the conclusion that I had better confine myself pretty strictly to the function of

exposition properly so-called. But I may say that I believe nothing can be more important for our modern world than that we should believe St. John's principles, theological and ethical, with all our hearts, and set ourselves to apply them with all our will.

CHARLES GORE.

Ash Wednesday, 1920.

P.S.—Since Dr. Sanday's declaration in *Divine Overruling* (Clarke, 1920), his name should no longer be included in the list given below, p. 17.

