

THE GROWTH OF CHURCH INSTITUTIONS

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The Growth of Church Institutions by Edwin Hatch

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EDWIN HATCH

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THE GROWTH OF CHURCH
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BY THE REV

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PREFACE.

THE present work is an endeavour to give an answer to questions which are frequently asked in regard to the apparently wide differences between the primitive and the modern forms of some Christian institutions. It is designed less for scholars than for general readers who are interested in theological subjects. Its aim is to be not controversial, but historical. It is a summary of the results at which the writer has arrived from an independent study of original sources, and the meagreness with which some important subjects are treated is due to the fact that it is intended to be supplemented hereafter by a more elaborate work, which the writer has for some time had in preparation.

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And since the work is thus designed for general readers, and is a summary of results rather than a detailed explanation of the facts upon which they are based, the writer has not thought it desirable to encumber the pages with more than the most necessary references to his authorities. But since the scantiness of the references may convey to some minds an erroneous impression that the evidence also is scanty, the writer thinks it proper to add that he is not aware of having made any statement which he is not also ready to support by sufficient proofs.

The work has the secondary aim of endeavouring to stimulate students who have leisure for historical study to give more attention than hitherto to the wide field which lies before them in the ecclesiastical history of the centuries which lie between the fall of the Roman Empire and the political settlement of mediæval Europe.

OXFORD, *March 16th, 1887.*

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The justification of the fact that Christian institutions have not always been what they are now is to be found in the nature of Christianity. The justification of the particular changes is to be found in Church history.

The present work is designed to show in outline the historical circumstances under which some of the more prominent institutions of modern Christianity came to exist, and which form the justification of their existence pp. 1—8

THE DIOCESE.

What is the origin of the modern diocese? How was it that the majority of Christian Churches in the West came to have an incomplete organization?

The answer is to be found in the circumstances of the original Christian communities of Gaul and Spain. They were Roman, and not native, and in the cities rather than in the country. The Teutonic conquest at first both preserved and accentuated this state of things. The organization of the Church preserved that of the empire; the Romans who remained were