

**ESSAYS ON FAITH AND  
IMMORTALITY;  
ARRANGED BY M. D.  
PETRE**

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Essays on Faith and Immortality; Arranged by M. D. Petre by George Tyrrell & M. D. Petre

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**GEORGE TYRRELL & M. D. PETRE**

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# ESSAYS ON FAITH AND IMMORTALITY

BY

GEORGE TYRRELL

ARRANGED BY M. D. PETRE

UNIV. OF  
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## INTRODUCTION

THE following essays of Father George Tyrrell are drawn, for the most part, from notebooks and unpublished material. It was his habit, as has been mentioned elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> to keep what he called a "Journal" of spiritual and philosophical jottings—day by day he thus noted down any thoughts that occurred to him; and the result was, sometimes a series of detached reflections, such as we find in *Nova et Vetera*, or *Oil and Wine*, sometimes a consecutive work, such as *Lex Credendi*, which was, to a great extent, drawn from such jottings.

The "Journal," of which a large portion is first published in these pages, was written during the course of the year 1904, while its author was yet a member of the Society of Jesus, but the collection contains also a good deal of matter drawn from a later, and less elaborated notebook, written during the year 1906, in the months succeeding his rupture with the Society, and particularly during the period of his wanderings in France.

The "Journal" of 1904 is undoubtedly the incomplete scheme of a definite work; perhaps one of the most important works that its author ever planned. Part of it had even been typed and arranged, and

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell.*

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various titles had been under consideration ; of which the one that seems to have been finally preferred was that given to the first chapter of this volume, namely *The Doctrinal Authority of Conscience*. It was all designed in the attempt at reaching a fundamental philosophy of belief ; yet, as it was still in the making, the material was not rigorously co-ordinated, and any stray thoughts that presented themselves were put down as they came, regardless of their exact relation to the whole.

The readers of these essays will probably have some acquaintance with the life of their author, and will know how the religious crisis of the day forced him to deal with immediate and pressing problems, which diverted him temporarily from tasks that could be abandoned and resumed. Not that the works brought forth in those years of stress were without relation to the deepest problems of faith ; but they had necessarily a more direct bearing on difficulties of the day than a work planned in leisure and tranquillity. Furthermore, the "Journal" also provided material for the works of the moment, and was exploited for that purpose ; large portions, for instance, being used, as I have said, in the composition of *Lex Credendi*.

Hence it could not be said that the work was in any sense ready for publication as a systematic whole, and it seemed, therefore, better to arrange it in fresh order, so that place might be found for everything worth preserving. It was also desirable to take advantage of the occasion to publish anything of interest from the later, unconssecutive "Journal" of 1906 ; and a new scheme lent itself to this purpose.

It is here, then, that the present editor must take a share of responsibility. Wherever thought logically succeeds to thought, the original order of the "Journal" has been preserved; but, for the most part, the chapter headings and the sectional titles have been adopted as a means of classification, and the material arranged under those headings, regardless of its place in the MS.

Two great subjects stand out prominent, which give their names to the book and to its two parts—Faith and Immortality. The writer of the "Journal" of 1904 had undoubtedly set out chiefly to consider the fundamental problem of faith; but day by day, as he put down his thoughts, the question of personality, and of personal survival, seems to have appeared and reappeared, till quite a series of the essays were occupied, almost exclusively, with this subject.

Now this is a matter which interests many who care little for religious philosophy in general; hence my original plan was to publish separately the essays dealing with it. Eventually the question was compromised by the division of the work into two parts, whereof the second is devoted to the subject of immortality. To the essays hitherto unpublished have been added two others concerned with the same problem. One of these—"The Parusia and Socialism"—was published in Italy, but never in England; the second, "Divine Fecundity," was delivered as a lecture to the Quest Society in the last year of Father Tyrrell's life, and published, in part only, in the *Quest Magazine*. It is well fitted to form the concluding essay of the series.