

**THE INCARNATION OF THE
SON OF GOD; BEING THE
BAMPTON LECTURES FOR
THE YEAR 1891**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649611850

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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THE BAMPTON LECTURES
FOR THE YEAR 1891

BY

CHARLES GORE, M.A.

PRINCIPAL OF PUSEY HOUSE; FELLOW OF TRINITY
COLLEGE, OXFORD

*Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem non
horruisti Virginis uterum.*

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1891

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EXTRACT
FROM THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT
OF THE LATE
REV. JOHN BAMPTON,
CANON OF SALISBURY.

—“I give and bequeath my Lands and Estates to the
“Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University of Oxford
“for ever, to have and to hold all and singular the said Lands or
“Estates upon trust, and to the intents and purposes hereinafter
“mentioned; that is to say, I will and appoint that the Vice-
“Chancellor of the University of Oxford for the time being shall
“take and receive all the rents, issues, and profits thereof, and
“(after all taxes, reparations, and necessary deductions made)
“that he pay all the remainder to the endowment of eight
“Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be established for ever in the
“said University, and to be performed in the manner following:

“I direct and appoint, that, upon the first Tuesday in Easter
“Term, a Lecturer may be yearly chosen by the Heads of Col-
“leges only, and by no others, in the room adjoining to the
“Printing-House, between the hours of ten in the morning and
“two in the afternoon, to preach eight Divinity Lecture
“Sermons, the year following, at St. Mary's in Oxford, between
“the commencement of the last month in Lent Term, and the
“end of the third week in Act Term.

“Also I direct and appoint, that the eight Divinity Lecture
“Sermons shall be preached upon either of the following

“Subjects—to confirm and establish the Christian Faith, and
“to confute all hereties and schismatics—upon the divine
“authority of the holy Scriptures—upon the authority of the
“writings of the primitive Fathers, as to the faith and practice
“of the primitive Church—upon the Divinity of our Lord and
“Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the Divinity of the Holy Ghost—
“upon the Articles of the Christian Faith, as comprehended in
“the Apostles’ and Nicene Creed.

“Also I direct, that thirty copies of the eight Divinity Lec-
“ture Sermons shall be always printed, within two months after
“they are preached; and one copy shall be given to the Chan-
“cellor of the University, and one copy to the head of every
“College, and one copy to the mayor of the city of Oxford, and
“one copy to be put into the Bodleian Library; and the
“expense of printing them shall be paid out of the revenue of
“the Land or Estates given for establishing the Divinity Lecture
“Sermons; and the Preacher shall not be paid, nor be entitled
“to the revenue, before they are printed.

“Also I direct and appoint, that no person shall be qualified
“to preach the Divinity Lecture Sermons, unless he hath taken
“the degree of Master of Arts at least, in one of the two Uni-
“versities of Oxford or Cambridge; and that the same person
“shall never preach the Divinity Lecture Sermons twice.”

PREFACE.

BAMPTON Lectures are addressed necessarily, at least in modern Oxford, to a general rather than to a specially theological audience. It is natural therefore to endeavour to keep within limits the discussion of points of technical theology.

Thus in the present volume of lectures — which are printed as they were delivered, with not more than verbal changes and occasional expansions — I aim at presenting the subject of the Incarnation rather to the general reader than to the professed theological student; and I hope to have the opportunity of preparing another volume which shall appeal to a more strictly theological public, and deal with some subjects which are necessarily alluded to rather than discussed in these pages, such for example as —

(1) The conception entertained in early Greek theology of the supernatural in its relation to nature (see pp. 44–47 and notes).

(2) The relation of Ebionism and Gnosticism to the theology of the New Testament and of the 2nd century (pp. 91–96 and notes).

(3) The conception of the Incarnation at different epochs, patristic (p. 177 and note), early mediæval (pp. 177-9), later scholastic (pp. 164-5). This is said, however, only to explain what would otherwise appear to be the deficiency in the annotation to these lectures, not in any way to depreciate the criticism of theological experts on anything that is contained in them.

It is my hope that these lectures express throughout the same intellectual principle:—the principle namely that all right theory emerges out of experience, and is the analysis of experience: that the right method of philosophy is not *à priori*, abstract, or external, but is based in each department of inquiry upon a profound and sympathetic study of the facts.

As Christians of course we desire that the moral and spiritual facts, with which our religious life is bound up, should be appreciated as from within, before they are criticised; and should be allowed fair opportunity to tell their own tale, and justify their claims at the bar of reason by their power to interpret and deal with experience as a whole. But it is not only in the case of critics of Christianity that we have occasion to deprecate the abstract, external, *à priori* method. Within the area of Christianity this false method is frequently intruding itself.

Thus in current discussions as to the nature of religious authority it is remarkable how seldom the appeal is made to the actual method of our Lord, and how small is the force allowed to indisputable facts of Church history in limiting and conditioning abstract general statements. And in the highest subject of all, the doctrine of the being of God, abstract statements of the divine attributes — infinity, omnipotence, immutability — frequently takes the place of a careful estimate of what God has actually manifested of Himself in nature and conscience and Christ. The religion of the Incarnation is pre-eminently a religion of experience and fact. We know what God has revealed of Himself in the order of the world, in the conscience of men in general, by the inspired wisdom of His prophets, and in the person of Jesus Christ; and the best theology is that which is moulded, as simply and as closely as may be, upon what has actually been disclosed.

I am at a loss in expressing my obligation to others in the preparation of these lectures: in part because it is indirect: in part because it is obligation to so many persons. My indirect obligations to many writers will be apparent; not least to the writers of Essays i, ii, v, vi, in *Lux Mundi*. I have contracted obligations to many persons, because the common enemy, the influenza, made it necessary for me to