

**THE CHRISTIAN ECCLESIA; A
COURSE OF LECTURES ON THE
EARLY HISTORY AND EARLY
CONCEPTIONS OF THE ECCLESIA
AND FOUR SERMONS. [1897]**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649547869

The Christian Ecclesia; A Course of Lectures on the Early History and Early Conceptions of the Ecclesia and Four Sermons. [1897] by Fenton John Anthony Hort & J. O. F. Murray

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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FENTON JOHN ANTHONY HORT & J. O. F. MURRAY

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A COURSE OF LECTURES
ON THE EARLY HISTORY AND EARLY
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AND FOUR SERMONS

BY

FENTON JOHN ANTHONY HORT D.D.

LADY MARGARET'S READER IN DIVINITY IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

London
MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1897

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PREFACE.

THIS book consists in the first place of a course of lectures delivered by Dr Hort as Lady Margaret Professor in the Michaelmas Terms of 1888 and 1889 on 'The Early History and the Early Conceptions of the Christian Ecclesia'. The plan of the lectures is the same as that of the Lectures on Judaistic Christianity.

They contain a careful survey of the evidence to be derived from the literature of the Apostolic age for the solution of a fundamental problem.

The title 'Ecclesia' was chosen, as the opening lecture explains, expressly for its freedom from the distracting associations which have gathered round its more familiar synonyms. It is in itself a sufficient indication of the spirit of genuine historical enquiry in which the study was undertaken.

The original scheme included an investigation into the evidence of the early Christian centuries, and the book is therefore in one sense no doubt incomplete. On

the other hand it is no mere fragment. The lectures as they stand practically exhaust the evidence of the New Testament, at least as far as the Early History of Christian institutions is concerned. And Dr Hort's conclusions on the vexed questions with regard to the 'Origines' of the different Orders in the Christian Ministry will no doubt be scanned with peculiar interest. It is however by no means too much to say that it was the other side of his subject, 'the Early Conceptions of the Ecclesia', that gave it its chief attraction for Dr Hort. And on this side unfortunately the limitations of lecturing compelled him to leave many things unsaid to which he attached the greatest importance.

An effort has been made to supply this deficiency by including in the volume four Sermons dealing with different applications of the fundamental conception preached on different occasions during the last twenty years of his life. Two of these Dr Hort at one time intended to incorporate in the same volume with his Hulsean Lectures '*The Way, The Truth, The Life*'. The other two were printed by request directly after they had been delivered. The last has a special interest as the last public utterance of its author. It is the expression in a concentrated form of the thought of a lifetime on the vital conditions of Church life in special relation to the pressing needs of to-day.

The course in 1889 began with a somewhat full

recapitulation of the course delivered in 1888. I have not thought it worth while to print this recapitulation at length. A few modifications have however been introduced from it into the text of the original lectures, and a few additions appended as footnotes. Otherwise the Lectures are printed, with a few necessary verbal alterations, as they stand in the Author's MSS. I am further responsible for the divisions of the text, for the titles of the Lectures, and for the headings of the separate paragraphs.

My best thanks are due to the Rev. F. G. Masters, formerly scholar of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, for much help in revising the proof-sheets and for the compilation of the index.

J. O. F. MURRAY.

EMMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

March 12th, 1897.

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