

**SELECT PASSAGES FROM
THE
THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS
OF BENJAMIN JOWETT**

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Select passages from the theological writings of Benjamin Jowett by Benjamin Jowett & Lewis Campbell

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BENJAMIN JOWETT & LEWIS CAMPBELL

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THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS
OF BENJAMIN JOWETT

LATE MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE AND
PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF OXFORD. DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY OF THE
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PREFACE

THE passages of Professor Jowett's writings which are here reprinted have been selected from the following sources : —

1. The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, with notes and dissertations. 2nd edition, 1859.

2. An Essay *On the Interpretation of Scripture* contributed to *Essays and Reviews*, 1860, and reprinted in the 3rd edition of the *Epistles*.

3. Three posthumous volumes of *Sermons*, edited by the Honourable and Very Reverend W. H. Fremantle, Dean of Ripon, 1899–1901.

4. A few extracts from Professor Jowett's Notebooks, which were published in his Biography (*Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett*, Murray, 1896).

5. Some MS. fragments, which Professor Jowett had preserved amongst his papers, probably with the intention of working them into future Sermons. These *Anecdota* are indicated with an asterisk prefixed.

Although the Sermons are naturally less finished than the Essays which were published in the author's lifetime, Jowett's style in preaching is not markedly different from that of his notes or dissertations on theological subjects. In both there is an avoidance

of mere rhetoric, and an appeal at once to reason and to spiritual emotion. Nor were his views of religious truth much altered after middle life.

Until his forty-second year, Jowett's main interest centred in theology; and afterwards, although the bulk of his working time was occupied by the labours of the Greek Professorship, including his translations, and by the duties of the Balliol Headship, religious topics were rarely absent from his mind. This is proved by many entries in his note-books. And he deliberately sought an outlet for his thoughts in preaching.

He wrote from Scotland to an intimate friend in August, 1865:—‘I certainly mean when my *Plato* is finished to devote two or three years to preaching, giving up my whole mind to this and publishing the *Sermons*’.¹

A special opportunity occurred in 1866, when Arthur Stanley, by that time well established in the Deanery of Westminster, invited his friend to preach to the Sunday afternoon congregation in the Abbey. And every summer thenceforth, shortly after the conclusion of the Oxford term, the Master of Balliol's Westminster Sermon was an event eagerly anticipated and richly enjoyed by a goodly company. This continued until the year of his death (1893). In 1892, having recently recovered from a dangerous illness, he delivered there the sermon on Richard Baxter, containing the reflections on old age which appear on pp. 207-11 of this volume.

It is hoped that from these extracts some readers may be induced to proceed to the *Sermons* themselves and to the work on *St. Paul*, which was reissued

¹ *Life*, vol. 1. p. 412.

PREFACE

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by the present editor in 1896, with the omission of some portions of the Commentary. This partial abridgement was in accordance with Professor Jowett's own direction. He said, 'I think that perhaps two-thirds of what I have written in theology might be preserved.'

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