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The Oxford Library of Practical Theology. Confirmation by A. C. A. Hall

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The Oxford Library
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EDITORS' PREFACE

THE object of the Oxford Library of Practical Theology is to supply some carefully considered teaching on matters of Religion to that large body of devout laymen, who desire instruction, but are not attracted by the learned treatises which appeal to the theologian. One of the needs of the time would seem to be, to translate the solid theological learning, of which there is no lack, into the vernacular of everyday practical religion; and while steering a course between what is called plain teaching on the one hand and erudition on the other, to supply some sound and readable instruction, to those who require it, on the subjects included under the common title 'The Christian Religion,' that they may be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them, with meakness and fear.

The Editors, while not holding themselves precluded from suggesting criticisms, have regarded their proper task as that of editing, and accordingly they have not interfered with the responsibility of each writer for his treatment of his own subject.

W. C. E. N.

F. E. B.

PREFATORY NOTE

PERHAPS an explanation may be due of the method followed in the following treatise. For the class of readers for whom the series of volumes of Practical Theology is primarily intended, it seemed to the writer best to begin with Confirmation as actually administered in our Churches, according to the order prescribed in the Prayer Book. This, it may be taken for granted, is fairly well known. It is necessary to show the origin and warrant of this rite from the New Testament, and the correspondence of our service with the ministration of the Apostles, marking the varying customs and theories which have gathered round the rite in different ages and in different parts of Christendom. This plan seemed preferable to that of beginning with an examination of the New Testament passages which may be thought to bear upon the question. It is