

**LESSER LIGHTS; OR, SOME OF
THE MINOR CHARACTERS OF
SCRIPTURE TRACED WITH A VIEW
TO INSTRUCTION AND EXAMPLE.
THIRD SERIES**

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Lesser Lights; Or, Some of the Minor Characters of Scripture Traced with a View to Instruction and Example. Third Series by Francis Bourdillon

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FRANCIS BOURDILLON

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THIRD SERIES. •

BY THE

REV. FRANCIS BOURDILLON, M.A.,

LATE VICAR OF OLD WARDEN:

AUTHOR OF "LESSER LIGHTS," SERIES I AND II; "BEDSIDE READINGS;"
"ALONE WITH GOD," ETC.

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LESSER LIGHTS.

THIRD SERIES.



INTRODUCTION.

IF there be any object that intercepts the light, then, wherever there is light, there is also shade. In every landscape there is both light and shade. A mountain, a tree, a house, casts a shade. And as there are lesser lights, so are there lesser shades; even a blade of grass throws its shadow on the ground.

So is it with the characters of Scripture. There are some great lights, and some great shades; prominent characters, for good or for ill. And there are also lesser lights and shades; those made by the less prominent characters. Some of these are only just mentioned, but the little that is said of them is all in praise; others appear on the scene for a moment, but all in *shade*; as warnings, not examples.

When there is a strong light on the landscape, the shadows are strong in proportion; when the

light is dim, the shadows also are less deep. And, though light and shade are always present, yet, when these are faint, the eye fixes more on the objects themselves—the mountain, the tree, the house, the blade of grass—than on the effects of light and shade.

In like manner characters are not always in strong contrast. In some cases the scenery (so to speak), the circumstances, the incidents and events, come more into notice than the characters of the persons concerned; much is said of the circumstances, little of the characters. Yet the persons are the more important, and they are moulded and influenced by the circumstances.

"Lesser lights" do therefore include lesser shades. And in some of the chapters that follow, the picture is in shadow rather than in light, the characters being set forth in the way not of example but of warning. A very slight mention of a person, a very short description of some event in a life, is often sufficient to instruct, encourage, or warn.

This third series of lesser lights is written in the same general plan as the first and second; but here, in some instances, not individuals, but groups, form the subject; and in others, not the whole life and character of the person (himself perhaps a greater light) but some minor incident in his life is set forth.



LUZ CHANGED TO BETHEL.

JACOB himself is one of the greater characters of Scripture ; but the change of the name of a place is not in itself a great event. In the change from Luz to Bethel, the patriarch shines to us as a lesser light.

In his fear of Esau, Jacob went in hot haste from Beersheba, and travelled so fast that on the first day he put forty miles between himself and his brother ; for it is evident that it was on the first night of his journey that he slept at Bethel. We read, "and Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran ; and he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night" (Gen. xxviii. 10, 11). This "certain place" was Bethel.

But it was not then called Bethel ; when Jacob lay down to rest the name of the place was *Luz* ; Jacob himself changed its name next day, from what happened there in the night.

What sort of place was it ? There must have been some reason for Jacob choosing it ; tired as he