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Berkeley by Alexander Campbell Fraser

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ALEXANDER CAMPBELL FRASER

BERKELEY

Philosophical Classics for English Readers

EDITED BY

WILLIAM KNIGHT, LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

BERKELEY

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BY

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL FRASER

HON. D.C.L. OXFORD

PROFESSOR (EMERITUS) OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS,
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH



CHEAP EDITION

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PREFACE.

THIS volume is an attempt to present, for the first time, Berkeley's philosophic thought in its organic unity. He is a unique figure in the eighteenth century, which was hardly able to interpret him. His spiritual growth is here traced in the three distinct periods of his personal history, and its issue is compared with the results of later philosophical endeavours of scientific or theological interest.

Besides new biographical material, the author is fortunate in being able to present an original portrait of Berkeley from a picture taken at an earlier period in his life than those hitherto published. It was painted when he was in Rome, in his thirty-fourth year, and was inherited by his descendant, the late Mr Robert Berkeley. This glimpse of his sanguine youth may be preferred by some to the familiar engravings which represent him at a more advanced age.

The present work, first published in 1881, and re-

produced in 1890, has been carefully revised, and in part recast, for the present edition. It is now offered as a biographical introduction to the spiritual philosophy of the universe.

Since the publication in 1871 of the *Collected Works and Life of Berkeley*,¹ materials of various kinds for an estimate of his place as a philosopher have accumulated. (1) About eighty letters from Berkeley to Sir John Percival, afterwards Earl of Egmont, from 1709 to 1730, have been discovered. Some account of them is given in the Seventh Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (1879). Through the kindness of the late Lord Egmont, I have been able, in the following chapters, to avail myself of this valuable collection, and to present portions of those letters that are of biographical or philosophical interest. (2) Some letters, from or regarding Berkeley, were published in 1874 in Dr Beardsley's *Life of Samuel Johnson, D.D.*, first President of King's College, New York. (3) To these must be added numerous appreciations and criticisms of Berkeley and his philosophy, by eminent thinkers, which have appeared in this country, and in Germany, Holland, France, Italy, and America, since 1871—in-

¹ *The Works of George Berkeley, D.D., formerly Bishop of Cloyne, including many of his Writings hitherto unpublished. With Prefaces, Annotations, his Life, and an Account of his Philosophy.* By Alexander Campbell Fraser, Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. 4 vols. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press: 1871.

cluding, among others, those of J. S. Mill, Mansel, Huxley, Collyns Simon, Maguire, Mr Arthur Balfour, Mr Leslie Stephen, Dr Hutcheson Stirling, Mr Clark Murray, Professor T. K. Abbott, Professor Van der Wyck, M. Penjon, Ueberweg, Hermann Ulrici, J. Janitsch, Eugen Meyer, Spicker, Th. Loewy, M'Cossh, Professor Krauth of Philadelphia, and Noah Porter of Yale College, besides articles in the chief British and Continental reviews.

The revived study of Berkeley, in this country and abroad, has, I believe, contributed to that reconciliation of faith in natural science with faith in religious thought, of which there are signs in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

GORTON, HAWTHORNDEN,
October 1869.