THE EARLY LIFE OF OUR LORD

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The early life of Our Lord by J. Brough

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J. BROUGH

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BY THE

REV. J. BROUGH, M.A.

CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES

NEW YORK

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PREFACE

This book is an attempt to realise the surroundings in which the child of Mary grew to be the man Christ Jesus, in order the better to understand His person and His work.

It used to be said that Providence has drawn a veil over our Lord's earlier years. But what man can know, God has not meant to hide. If there is little said by the Evangelists, it may well be because their business was to tell of what in their Master marked Him off from other men, and not to describe details of life which were common to Him and everyone else at the time. We, of another race and a later age, have to go back, by inquiry and imagination, into the past, if we are to fill in the picture which they barely sketched.

Such works as contain matter related to our subject, either do not deal with it in the biographical spirit, or have too little of this and too much of other things to be read for this special purpose. They are either treatises on Jewish matters, or complete Lives, or sermons. It is hoped that the present volume may be full enough to serve as a handbook for the teacher of religion, and simple enough to be suitable also for the learner.

The main sources of knowledge are: the Hebrew Scriptures, the Gospels, the works of Josephus, and the Talmuds; and the present condition of the Holy Land.

For though the direct notices of the childhood of Jesus are scanty, they are suggestive, while everything is valuable that tells us what were the thoughts and ways of the people among whom He was brought up; and the records of His short and busy public career throw light back upon His earlier experiences.

What our inquiries can yield us is not,