

**THE EXCELLENCY
AND NOBLENESSE
OF TRUE RELIGION**

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The Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion by John Smith

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JOHN SMITH

**THE EXCELLENCY
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OF TRUE RELIGION**

THE
EXCELLENCY AND NOBLENESS
OF
TRUE RELIGION.

BY JOHN SMITH,

FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, IN CAMBRIDGE,

FROM 1640 TO 1652.

"And by the same (*fašā*) he, being dead, yet speaketh."

HEB. xi. 4.



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PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THIS Discourse, on the *Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion*, was first published in 1660, in a 4to. volume, with other Treatises of the same Author, entitled *SELECT DISCOURSES, &c.*, BY JOHN SMITH, *late Fellow of Queen's College, in Cambridge*. The second Edition was published in 1673, also in 4to.

John Smith was born at Thorpe-Achurch, near Oundle, Northamptonshire. He completed his education at Emanuel College, Cambridge, and in 1640 was elected Fellow of Queen's College, in which he died,

August 7th, 1752, in his 35th year. He was buried in the same College, where his Funeral Sermon was preached by Dr. Patrick, then Fellow of Queen's College, and afterwards Bishop of Ely.

One peculiarity which attracts our attention in these published Discourses is, the frequent use of *Italics* and *Capital letters*. Both of these, however, may be accounted for by the necessity the Lecturer was under of making his Discourse clearer to those who heard him, by the use of *Emphasis*. If he wanted to give greater prominence to one portion of a *Sentence* beyond another, he would *underscore* the words ; or to one Word beyond another, he would commence that Word with a Capital. In printed books such signs of *Emphasis* usually take the form of *italics* and *capitals*; but in lec-

tures *orally* delivered, the stress when laid on the words by the *voice* is sufficient. By these means the varying force of *all words* may be sufficiently indicated. Both signs have been, for this reason, preserved in the present Reprint, and by means of these it may be said of the Lecturer—"He, being dead, yet *speaketh*." The *Greek Article* was used, probably, for this purpose. It confers Emphasis on one Word above another, and on one *phrase of a sentence* above another: as, "a Good man, from the Good treasure," &c., and "what *The rising from the dead* should mean."

Another peculiarity belongs only to the present Reprint, and for this the Editor must be held accountable. He has *omitted* all the passages quoted by the Author

from the writings of Greek and Roman Philosophers, or Jewish Rabbis. In the *College Exercises* it was natural, and perhaps desirable, that they should be introduced ; but as the present Reprint is addressed only to English readers,—as the argument is made complete by the Author in the English language, requiring no word to be added, or retrenched, to make the sense perfect when the quotations are left out,—above all, as the *authorities* are of the highest kind, being taken either from the *Old* or *New Testament*, it seemed superfluous to have recourse to any human testimony in corroboration of them : it was like bringing in Candles to assist the Sun when he was shining at noon-day.

Whether the Author would have approved of what has been done, had he lived

to edit his own writings, can only be conjectured. The Discourses were written on loose and scattered sheets of paper, and had none of them the benefit of the Author's final revision. "By a lethargic distemper," says Dr. Patrick, "which seized on his spirits, he passed the last six days of his life (if I may call it a *life*) in a kind of sleep; and without taking much notice of anything, he slept in the Lord."

The Editor can only hope, that the advantage which he has derived from making this work his frequent companion will be experienced by all those who find pleasure in its perusal.

VERIDICUS.

January, 1864.