THOUGHTS ON PRESENT CHURCH TROUBLES: OCCURRING IN FOUR SERMONS PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL IN DECEMBER, 1880

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Thoughts on Present Church Troubles: Occurring in Four Sermons Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral in December, 1880 by H. P. Liddon

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H. P. LIDDON

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Trieste

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Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral in December, 1880

WITH A PREFACE

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H. P. LIDDON, D.D. CANON RESIDENTIARY OF ST. FAUL'S, AND IRELAND PROFESSOR AT OXFORD



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Reb. Edward Ring, D.D.

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH,

AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY,

THESE SERMONS ARE DEDICATED

WITHOUT HIS PERMISSION

BUT

IN TOKEN OF

THE TRUEST AFFECTION AND RESPECT.

Pretace.

THE title of this little book is fairly open to the objection that it raises expectations which the contents must fail to satisfy.

Under ordinary circumstances there would have been no reason for publishing the four Sermons which are here presented to the reader. Their main purpose is simply to illustrate some aspects of the Church's teaching, during the season of the year in which they were preached. In the case of two of them, the text is taken from the services for the day. The substance of the other two is, it is hoped, not out of keeping with the solemn associations of Advent. The lessons which they inculcate can lay no claim to novelty; since, as each year comes round, these lessons are set forth from thousands of pulpits throughout Christendom, and, it need not be added, often in a much more effective manner.

That, as a rule, matters of contemporary con-

¹ Sermons II., 1V.

viii General rule as to preaching [PRE

troversy are better excluded from the Christian pulpit, is the writer's serious conviction. It is not that such matters are by any means necessarily inappropriate; but that, in his experience, there is little or no room for them. The scanty opportunities at a preacher's disposal will only enable him to traverse a very small part of the ground which the momentous issues of life and death, and the overwhelming doctrines of Grace and Redemption must inevitably suggest. It is not without a feeling of misgiving that this, the true province of the Ambassadors of Christ in the exercise of their sacred ministry, can be even momentarily abandoned; but every rule has its rightful or its necessary exceptions. During the eleven years which have passed, since it became the writer's duty to preach in St. Paul's Cathedral, he has heretofore departed from his general practice at the bidding of two important occasions, on which, as he believed, religious and moral interests were deeply involved. Of these the first was when in 1874 the Public Worship Regulation Bill was being passed through Parliament, at the dictates of an unreasoning panic, and with much apparent disregard of the historical structure, and spiritual independence of the Church of England. The other was when, after the