

Early Christian Ethics in the West

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From Clement to Ambrose

By

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PREFACE

WHILE pursuing a course of study in the history of Christian Ethics I soon made the discovery that much of the land remained still unoccupied, and the hope arose within me that perhaps I might make some part of it my own. This small volume represents the result of my first labours to collect and arrange the ethical thoughts of the early Church writers. If time and other things permit, I hope at some future date to resume the inquiry and deal with the ethics of writers in the Eastern half of the Empire. The friendly criticism which this little book may evoke, together with the experience of the lecture room, will, I hope, make me a little better qualified for any subsequent work ; but in the present dearth of full and satisfactory histories of Christian Ethics I have thought it right to make public this imperfect attempt to partially fill a conspicuous blank.

The substance of the book was considered by the Senate of the University of London of sufficient merit to constitute their main justification in awarding the

PREFACE

degree of Doctor of Divinity; but both in the preparation of the work and in its revision I have had a larger purpose in view, and have regarded it as something more than a merely academical exercise.

In the task of revision I have had the generous and most valuable assistance of the Rev. Dr A. Caldecott, Professor of Moral Philosophy in King's College, London, who has read over the proof sheets and made many useful suggestions. For any mistakes and blemishes remaining, as well as for opinions expressed, the author must, however, ask to be considered solely responsible.

It has seemed best to present the views of the Church writers as far as possible in their own words; but for the sake of convenience, I have, in most cases, adopted the English renderings, from the Ante-Nicene Library (with the kind permission of Messrs T. & T. Clark), instead of simply transcribing the Latin (or Greek) texts.

H. H. S.

November 7th, 1907.

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