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Collected and Edited by George R. Eden and F. C. Macdonald

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LIGHTFOOT OF  
DURHAM

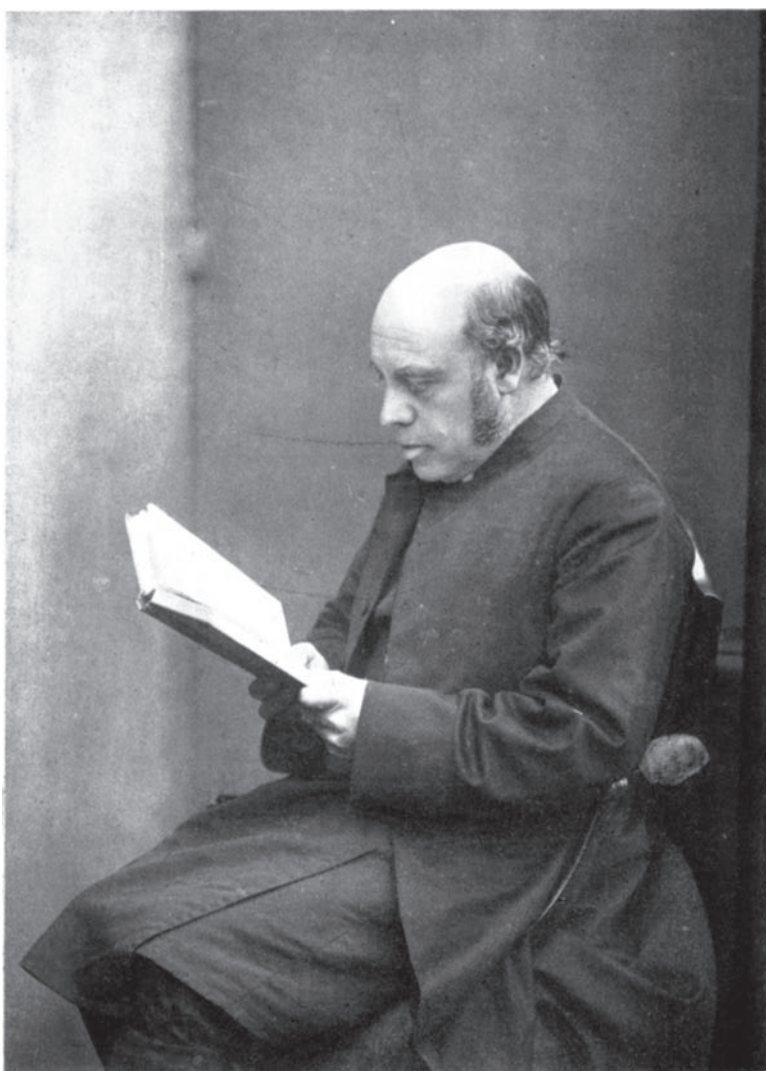
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*Phot. Russell*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "G. R. Eden".

BISHOP LIGHTFOOT IN 1879

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# LIGHTFOOT OF DURHAM

Memories and Appreciations

Collected and Edited

by

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and

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*Honorary Canon of Durham Cathedral  
Rector of Purleigh*

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IN PIAM MEMORIAM  
PATRIS IN DEO  
HONORATISSIMI AMANTISSIMI DESIDERATISSIMI  
SCHEDULAS HAS QUAESCUNQUE  
ANNOS POST QUADRAGINTA  
FILII QUOS VOCITABAT DOMUS SVAE  
IMPAR TRIBUTUM  
DD

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#### BISHOP LIGHTFOOT'S BOOKPLATE

This shews the Bishop's own coat of arms quartered with those of the See, and the Mitre set in a Coronet, indicating the Palatinate dignity of Durham.

Though the Bookplate is not the Episcopal seal its shape recalls the following extract from Fuller's *Church History* (iv. 103):—'Dunelmia sola, judicat ense et stola.' "The Bishop whereof was a Palatine, or Secular Prince, and his seal in form resembleth Royalty in the roundness thereof and is not oval, the badge of plain Episcopacy."

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## P R E F A C E

“THERE are many nineteenth century personalities”, wrote a recent reviewer, “whose lives and characters are nowadays due for a revaluation.” There are few to whom this remark could be more fitly applied than Bishop Lightfoot, of whom *The Times* wrote on the morrow of his death: “The Church of England has been too soon deprived of one of the greatest minds by whom it has been served and adorned not only in this generation but in its whole history.... He was at once one of the greatest Theological scholars and an eminent Bishop. It is scarcely possible to estimate adequately as yet the influence of his life and work”.

It is the object of this book to preserve some knowledge of the personality of Lightfoot while there yet survive some of those who knew him intimately both at Durham and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

There are happily several chance references to him in the biographies of his lifelong friends, Archbishop Benson, and Bishop Westcott his successor, and such

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Butler was one of Lightfoot's most illustrious predecessors, yet only the most meagre traditions of his personal life remain. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter, who succeeded him as Rector of Stanhope, after eighty years' interval, wrote to Archdeacon Goddard of Lincoln on Jan. 25th, 1835 “I earnestly wish I could supply you with several anecdotes of Bishop Butler. The truth however is that I have been mortified by almost entire failure. (*Stanhope Memorials of Bp. Butler.*” W. M. Egglestone.)

At Auckland Castle the searcher is little better off. There is a writing table of cedar wood with “J.B.” inlaid in brass given him by the merchants of Bristol, and a silver coffee pot, and a defective Latin inscription, and a tradition that he would stroll in “Butler's Walk” or sit in the Chapel to listen to Father Smith's sweet-toned organ.

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books as Bishop Forrest Browne's *Recollections of a Bishop*, and Mr A. C. Benson's *Leaves of the Tree*. There are some letters at Auckland Castle. And there is the most valuable article on Lightfoot in the *Dictionary of National Biography*—the last thing we have from Dr Hort's pen. And last but by no means least is the Article reprinted from the *Quarterly Review* of Jan. 1893. This is so masterly in its grasp and arranged so admirably under the heads of the Inscription<sup>1</sup> on the recumbent effigy in Durham Cathedral<sup>2</sup> that it must live as the best contemporary sketch of the great Bishop.

But something more is needed. He who did so much to direct men's attention to the Northern Saints should have men's eyes turned on him and his solid saintliness. His books reveal his learning and his extraordinary diligence: here, we may hope, stories of his daily life and intercourse may tell something of his character, albeit the beauty of inner life must remain unseen.

Bishop Westcott once expressed the wish that "there were some adequate record of his part in University affairs". This desire is met, at any rate in part, by Bishop Moule, his old pupil, who was afterwards to succeed him at Durham.

It is right too, that something should be told of the

<sup>1</sup> † In Memoriam Josephi Barber Lightfoot S.T.P. Episcopi Dunelmensis Natus A.D. MDCCCXXVIII, Obiit A.D. MDCCCLXXXIX. Qualis fuerit antiquitatis investigator evangelii interpres ecclesiae rector testantur opera ut aequalibus ita posteris profutura † Ad majorē Dei gloriā. Am. Pon. Cur. †

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Westcott was once asked what he thought of this recumbent effigy as a likeness to his predecessor. He said "I have never seen it." "But, my Lord," he was answered, "you were there when it was dedicated, and you could not stand in your Throne without having it straight in front of you, just below." "I have never allowed myself to look at it" was his reply, revealing at once his extraordinary strength of will, and his ceaseless devotion to his friend.

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origin and growth of the Auckland Brotherhood. Bishop Westcott wrote:<sup>1</sup>

If I may speak from my experience during the last three years, I believe that his greatest work was the Brotherhood of Clergy whom he called to labour with him in the Diocese, and bear his spirit to another generation, greater than his masterpieces of interpretation, greater than his masterpieces of masculine and passionate eloquence.

These words were written after three years of observation. Those of us who have been members of the Brotherhood for more than forty years could find no words to describe better what our Father in God was, and still is to us.

As years have passed, our *φιλαδελφία* has expanded into *ἀγάπη*, and we are glad to place on record our debt to what so many have described as “far the greatest influence in our lives”.

The sermon which stands here as “The Epilogue” was the foundation on which this book has been built. Archbishop Lord Davidson had expressed a wish that it should be published, and it was considered by us all as so valuable a review that we agreed that reminiscences should be gathered to it, and put into book form.

We have thus a mosaic of memories the result of team work of men bound together in love as Lightfoot’s sons.

Among our contributors and helpers not mentioned in the text, are Dr E. A. Welch, the Bishop of Durham, the Bishop of Oxford, the Bishop of Southampton, the Bishop in Argentina, Bishop G. L. King, the Dean of Windsor, Canon D. S. Boutflower, Canon Alfred Boot, Rev. H. H. Birley.

Some subjects which claimed his attention we have deliberately omitted, for our aim is not to attempt a

<sup>1</sup> Prefatory Note, *Bishop Lightfoot*. Macmillan & Co. 1894, p. ix.

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Biography, but rather to give word pictures from different points of view of the Bishop as we knew him.

Our pages will also endeavour to shew something of his mind as revealed in his writings, and the influence of his utterances on his contemporaries no less than his contribution to the Theology of his day, his place among Church leaders, and his lasting value as a Teacher.

We must also place on record our thanks for permission to quote from books published by Messrs Macmillan, Messrs Bowes and Bowes, Messrs Constable, Mr J. P. Jamieson, Mr W. M. Egglestone, *The Classical Review*.

G. R. E.

F. C. M.

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## INTRODUCTION

WHEN Sir Walter Scott visited Auckland Castle in 1813, riding thither with his son and daughter, he made the acquaintance of Bishop Shute Barrington. They were so pleased with each other that the Bishop ordered his horse, to accompany them, and Scott observed with admiration its proud curvetting. "Why yes, Mr Scott", said the gentle and high-spirited old man, then in his seventh-ninth year, "I still like to feel my horse under me." They parted after a ride of ten miles with mutual regret.<sup>1</sup> The contrast between the leisured morning gallop of the venerable eighteenth-century Prince Bishop, and the ceaseless labours of his modern successor is no greater than the contrast between the days of Bishop Lightfoot and to-day. Though the difficulties he faced were quite as grave and pressing as the modern problems of unemployment and shortage of clergy, they were difficulties of a different order.

The grand Northern Palatinate with its leisured and dignified clergy had been invaded a generation before by the flood tide of industrial revolution. When the stage coach disappeared before the railway train, and peaceful farms had suddenly become pit villages, hardworking clergy and devoted laymen had alike been unable to adapt their ways to modern conditions. But an attempt had begun to be made, and when the new Bishop came he found the way opened for a great advance, and eager hearts waiting for a leader.

<sup>1</sup> Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, II, 231.

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He thus describes the situation in his opening speech at his first Diocesan Conference:

The zeal, and devotion, and business capacities and the untiring energy of my predecessor were fitly expended on the internal work of the Diocese. In addition to the current duties of the episcopate—an ever-increasing burden in a large and growing Diocese like this—it was his special work to develop the parochial system by the formation of new districts, by the building of churches and parsonages and by the increase of the clerical staff. . . .

In his last charge, delivered a few months before his resignation, Bishop Baring expressed his opinion that this particular work, the formation of new ecclesiastical districts, had almost reached its limits. This may be so, though as yet I see no signs of flagging. . . . But a Church is something more than an aggregate of distinct parishes, or isolated congregations. The idea of a Church involves the conception of a corporate life. A Church is only a Church in so far as it realises this conception. To extend the sympathies and motives of common membership beyond the limits of the parish to the limits of the Diocese, is to make an important stride in the realisation of this idea.<sup>1</sup>

To make this important stride was Bishop Lightfoot's chief endeavour, with results that still bear witness to what God wrought by his servant.

His episcopate has often been called "The Golden Age" of Durham, and splendid it assuredly was. He was a great man, sent to meet a great opportunity.

But it is essential, in estimating his work, to bear in mind the extraordinary changes that have come over England since his day. One shrewd observer remarks that "the interval since Lightfoot has been perhaps the most revolutionary in our history, with the possible exception of the Reformation". In every sphere, political, economic, academic, ecclesiastic, and local, there have been astonishing changes.

Three Franchise Bills have completely remodelled the electorate, and "Labour", now such a powerful force in

<sup>1</sup> *Durham Diocesan Calendar*, 1881.

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England, and especially in Durham, was unheard-of in the eighties. Times of great depression they certainly had, coming at regular intervals, but nothing to compare with the stagnation and unemployment that paralyse industry to-day. Again, both in his charitable generosity and in the maintenance of his great position, Lightfoot, were he now living, would find himself handicapped by the altered value of money. Rates in his day were very low—Income Tax could be stated in pence; there was no Sur-tax, and no death duties. He would nowadays have to pay at least £1500 a year more in taxes. Wages were low and commodities such as coal cheap enough.

These and many other changes which have combined to make the work of the clergy of to-day more difficult even than it was forty years ago must be continually borne in mind in the reading of the following pages.

Preaching in Durham Cathedral on the Festival of Founders and Benefactors on January 28th, 1926, Bishop Eden of Wakefield took Bishop Lightfoot as his subject. In the course of his sermon he said:

Words are useless to convey any impression of the new life which sprang up in all directions under his inspiration and guidance. Vast schemes of Church extension seemed to grow up like magic; new Parishes, new Churches, Mission Districts all alike were the fruit of his unstinted generosity and of the willing support of Churchmen.

It is not too much to say, and as one who knew the Diocese before he came I dare to affirm it, that Bishop Lightfoot left a mark in the Diocese, such as few, if any, before him had done.

Thus we are able, by viewing the “Golden Age of Durham” from behind it, and from afar in front, to see its great Bishop in his true perspective. Times change and customs alter, but character remains; and the greatness and the humility of Bishop Lightfoot will be an abiding inspiration for generations to come.