Definition: Kingsley, Charles from Philip's Encyclopedia

English writer. He was one of the first clergymen to support Charles Darwin, whose ideas he partly incorporated into The Water Babies (1863). His popular historical novels include Hereward the Wake (1866).

Summary Article: Kingsley, Charles

From The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide

English author. A rector, he was known as the ‘Chartist clergyman’ because of such social novels as Yeast (1848) and Alton Locke (1850). His historical novels include Westward Ho! (1855) and Hereward the Wake (1866). He also wrote, for children, The Water Babies (1863).

He was deeply interested in social questions, and threw himself wholeheartedly into the schemes of social relief which were supported under the name of Christian Socialism, writing many tracts and articles as ‘Parson Lot’.

Kingsley was born at Holne Vicarage near Dartmoor, Devon. Educated at King's College, London, and Magdalene College, Cambridge, he was intended for the law but entered the Church and became curate in 1842 and rector in 1844 of Eversley, Hampshire.

In 1848 he published a drama, The Saints' Tragedy, in which the heroine is St Elizabeth of Hungary. Two novels followed, Yeast and Alton Locke, which deal with social questions affecting the agricultural labouring class and the town worker respectively. In 1853 appeared Hypatia, which depicts the conflict of the early Christians with the Greek philosophy of Alexandria; it was followed by Westward Ho!, Two Years Ago (1857), and Hereward the Wake. At Last (1870) gave Kingsley's impression of a visit to the West Indies. His taste for natural history was expressed in Glaucus, or the Wonders of the Shore (1855), and other works. The Water Babies is written in inspired love and reverence of nature.

Kingsley was professor of modern history at Cambridge from 1860–69 and from this experience came Roman and Teuton (1864). In the same year he was involved in a controversy with John Newman, which prompted the latter's Apologia, crushing Kingsley's hastily assembled arguments. Kingsley, who had in 1869 been made a canon of Chester, became canon of Westminster and a royal chaplain in 1873. He was of a highly nervous temperament; over-exertion resulted in repeated failures of health, and he died two years later.

quotations
Kingsley, Charles

essays
The Great Famine
Selected Poetry of Charles Kingsley (1819–1875)

Water Babies, The

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA


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