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JOHN OMAN

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## PREFACE

IT was said of William James that he derived undue credit for originality by ignoring his intellectual ancestors. But I confess to sympathy with his true reason, which was not a desire for undeserved merit, but a dislike to burdening his pages with the display of learning, preserving names, as he puts it, like flies in amber. Moreover, many references were not necessary for my purpose: for, though I use the classical forms to state positions in preference to abstract questions, I am not concerned with the history of philosophy. For example, I refer to Kant and Hegel with considerable frequency, yet it is not to expound either, but because the former was concerned with the central problem of the eighteenth century, what I have called the *Individual*, and the latter with the central problem of the nineteenth, what I have named *Individuality*: and I have referred to them so often because a large part of my contention is that both problems should be taken together and that they are not two problems but one. As little have I attempted to write the history of religion. Though I use the religions because they are the concrete and illuminating presentation of the problems, my concern is with the problems, and in particular with the one problem of the relation of the Natural and the Supernatural.

At the same time I should willingly acknowledge my obligations were it possible after a somewhat extended life spent in reading and thinking on the subject. A long list of authorities could be compiled, but the proper place for them is a text-book, like Dr Galloway's, where it is given with learning and discrimination. Also I have read a great deal of the recognised literature without much sense of obligation, and many other works with more profit. In any case, to attempt to distinguish what I might claim as my own from what is due to the suggestions of others would at this time of the day be a hopeless task. The obligation I am most conscious of is to those from whom I have most differed. For example, I mention Siebeck thrice to disagree

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## PREFACE

with him. But of all the *Religionsphilosophien* I have read—Rawvenhoff's, Höffding's, Pfeiderer's, Runze's, Seydel's, Eucken's, and one or two others—I incline to regard Siebeck's as the most profitable. Again I have seldom referred to Prof. Leuba except to disagree with' him, but though I judge his acquaintance with religion to be mainly with a rather crude type of evangelism, he knows what he is talking about, and I have learned more from him than from any other psychologist of religion, though mostly by way of differing.

Mr Francis Healey and Mr George Alexander read the whole MS., Dr Alexander Wood the scientific part and Prof. Welch the Old Testament part. To all of them I am indebted for suggestions about the form of presentation. Miss Wolstencroft's interpretation of my palimpsest into lucid type made this help possible. Mr Alexander has read all the proofs, and the Rev. H. C. Carter read the earlier part and the Rev. B. R. H. Mein the later. To all these I desire to express my warmest thanks.

JOHN OMAN

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE  
*Cambridge, May 1931*

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