

**CHRISTIANITY AND THE  
NEW IDEALISM: A  
STUDY IN THE RELIGIOUS  
PHILOSOPHY OF TO-DAY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649548002

Christianity and the New Idealism: A Study in the Religious Philosophy of To-Day by Rudolf Eucken & Lucy Judge Gibson & W. R. Boyce Gibson

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

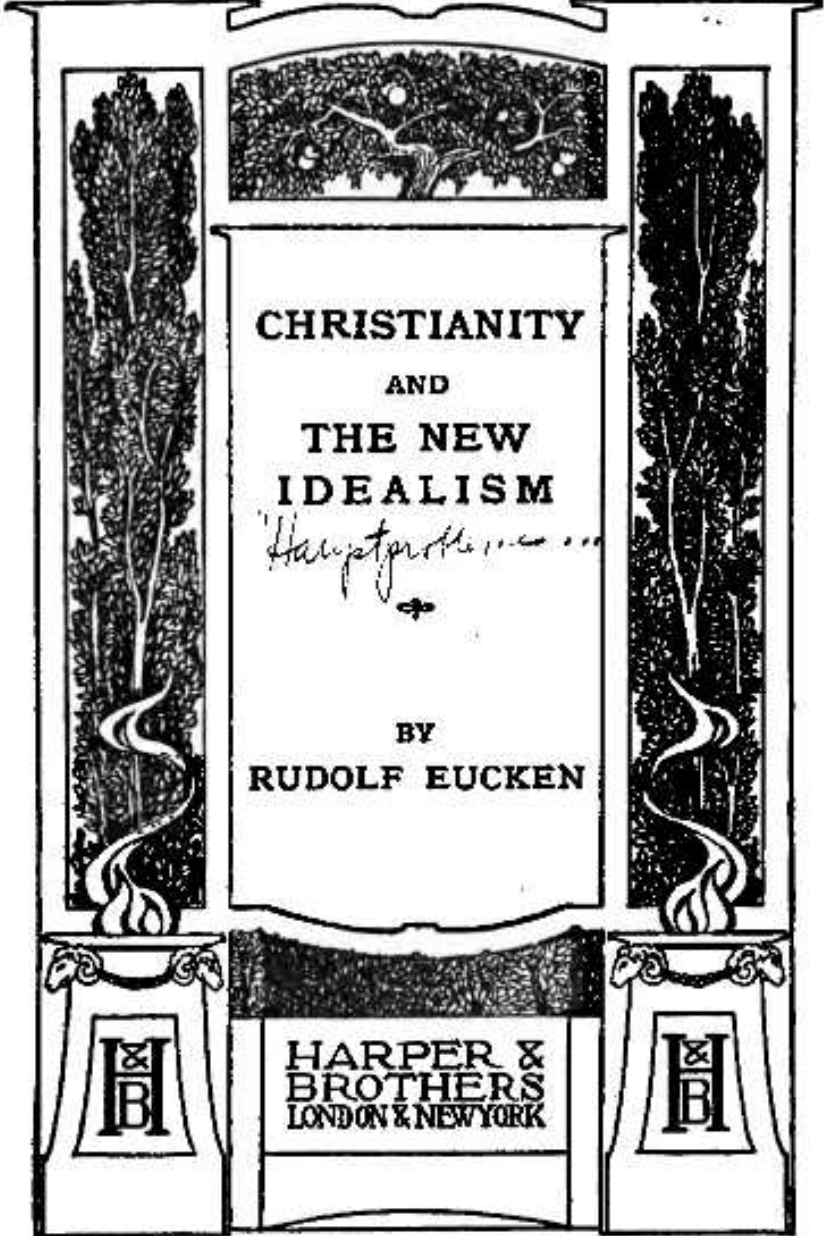
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**RUDOLF EUCKEN & LUCY JUDGE GIBSON & W. R. BOYCE GIBSON**

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**CHRISTIANITY**  
**AND**  
**THE NEW**  
**IDEALISM**

*Hauptprobleme...*

**BY**  
**RUDOLF EUCKEN**

**HARPER &**  
**BROTHERS**  
**LONDON & NEW YORK**

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# CHRISTIANITY AND THE NEW IDEALISM

A STUDY IN THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY  
OF TO-DAY

BY  
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AWARDED THE NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE IN 1908

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LONDON AND NEW YORK  
HARPER & BROTHERS  
45 ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1913

*First Edition . . . . . October 1909*  
*Second Edition . . . . . January 1912*  
*Third Edition . . . . . April 1913*



64-10-21EM

PREFACE TO THE FIRST AND  
SECOND EDITIONS

THIS book is the outcome of lectures given at Jena on October 23 and 24, 1906, in connection with the Theological Vacation Course. These lectures grappled with certain problems which deal with the sharp oppositions that perplex our life to-day, and therefore seem to call very specially for elucidation. In the course of our inquiry we have sought to show as clearly as possible what these oppositions are, and have done our best to surmount them.

The first lecture deals with the grounding of religion in the inner life. Our aim in this lecture is to find some mean between the older thought which favoured the cosmological approach to religion, and the newer which takes the human soul as its starting-point, but is so liable to the defects of vagueness and formlessness. Over against both these methods we proceed to elaborate a system which, while based on the inner life, still preserves a cosmic character. In this way a clear distinction is drawn between

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a religion of the spiritual life and a religion that is merely humanistic.

The subject of the second section is "Religion and History." There is hardly anything so significant for the position of religion to-day as the tendency to refer continually to history. Whatever the advantages of such reference, we must not ignore its dangers. It was incumbent on us to weigh them well, and in particular to ascertain whether it were possible to overcome the evils of a stifling and enervating historicity, whilst still maintaining the significance of history in opposition to a radicalism which is hostile to it. This we could not do without framing certain fundamental convictions as to the meaning of history which shed a new light on the picture of life as a whole, and therefore concern each of us individually.

Lastly, the incessant disputes waged to-day over the nature and value of Christianity invite philosophers also to consider the question: What is Christianity? The main function of philosophy in the matter is to bring out the spiritual character of the Christian Faith, and discuss the type of life peculiar to it. We must reach a conception which is sufficiently broad to take in all that is vital to the temper of this Faith and allow it full freedom to develop; while yet sufficiently definite to afford clear guidance to

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## PREFACE

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thought and life, and stand as a protest against the mischievous vagueness so prevalent in the treatment of these matters to-day. Our discussion takes us back to that which is most fundamental in life, and seeks at the same time, through a brief historical *aperçu*, to sum up and appreciate the part which Christianity has played in the world's development. Throughout we expressly defend the right of the modern world to shape Christianity in its own way.

While our inquiry presupposes a systematic philosophical position, it is yet couched in as easy and intelligible terms as the case admitted, and addressed not merely to academic circles, but to all who, to-day, amid the prevalent spiritual confusion, are still concerned with the problem of religion and, in the treatment of this problem, desire freedom without shallowness and depth without immobility.