

**CHRISTIANITY. THE
RELIGIONS
OF THE WORLD**

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Christianity. The Religions of the World by J. Estlin Carpenter

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J. ESTLIN CARPENTER

**CHRISTIANITY. THE
RELIGIONS
OF THE WORLD**

THE PLACE OF CHRISTIANITY
AMONG THE
RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

CHRISTIANITY & THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

By J. ESTLIN CARPENTER

AUTHOR OF "THE BIBLE IN THE NINETEENTH
CENTURY," "THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS," ETC.



BOSTON · AMERICAN UNITARIAN
ASSOCIATION · MDCCCCIV

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE first three chapters of this little book were originally written for the *Inquirer* in 1901, as part of a series of surveys of the progress of thought and knowledge in philosophy and religion during the nineteenth century. They are now republished (with the addition of a section on Islám), by way of a brief popular introduction to the great study of the history of religion which is at length definitely established among us.

The fourth chapter was prepared at the invitation of the Committee of the International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers, which held its second meeting at Amsterdam in September, 1903. A few passages in the section on Hindu thought have been expanded, in order to bring out more clearly the contrasts between the fundamental conceptions of religious experience in the Indian and the Hebrew developments. In tracing the barest outlines of the succession of faiths, and endeavouring to estimate their relative spiritual significance, it is inevitable that those who speak from the outside should lay a different emphasis on the same facts compared to those who speak from within. Just as the art, the poetry, the ethical types, of the higher races vary, so also must the specific expressions of faith. The time has not yet come when the East and the West can see eye to eye. But we are daily learning new lessons of sympathy and reverence. To help, however imperfectly, to enforce this teaching, is the purport of the following pages.

J. E. C.

Oxford, *January*, 1904.

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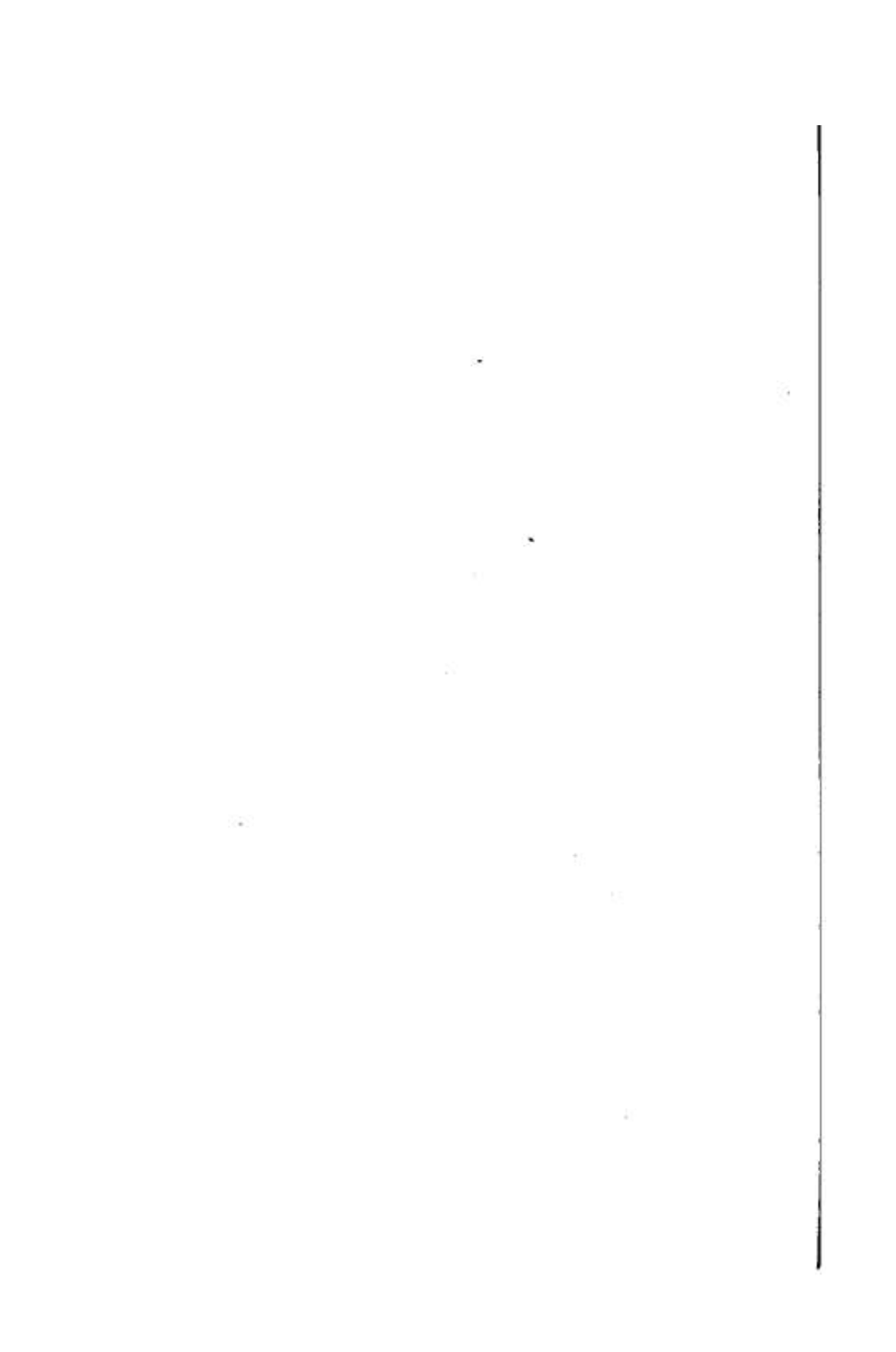
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I.

COMPARATIVE RELIGION AND MODERN THOUGHT.

AMONG the new studies of the nineteenth century none has grown more rapidly, or produced already more significant results, than that which Professor Max Müller, a generation ago (1870), formally described as 'The Science of Religion.' More than a hundred years before Hume had laid the basis for it in his dissertation on *The Natural History of Religion* in 1757. With the materials then available, by comparison and analysis, Hume had endeavoured to work out the problem of the origin of religion in human experience. He traced it back to the intellectual impulse which sought