

ELEMENTARY THEOSOPHY

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Elementary theosophy by L. W. Rogers

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L. W. ROGERS

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THEOSOPHICAL BOOK CONCERN

1917

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By
L. W. Rogers
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PREFACE

To comprehend the significance of great world changes, before Time has fully done his work, is difficult. While mighty events are still in their formative period the future is obscure. But our inability to outline the future cannot blind us to the unmistakable trend of the evolutionary forces at work. One thing that is clear is that our boasted Christian civilization is the theater in which has been staged the most un-Christian war of recorded history and in which human atrocity has reached a point that leaves us vaguely groping for a rational explanation of it. Another obvious fact is that the more than twenty nations involved have been forced into measures and methods before unknown and which wholly transform the recognized function and powers of governments. With these startling facts of religious and political significance before us thoughtful people are beginning to ask if we are not upon the threshold of a complete breaking down of modern civilization and the birth of a new order of things, in which direct government by the people throughout the entire world will be coincident with the rise of a universal religion based on the brotherhood of man.

In such a time any contribution to current literature that will help to clear the ground of misconceptions and to bring to the attention of those interested

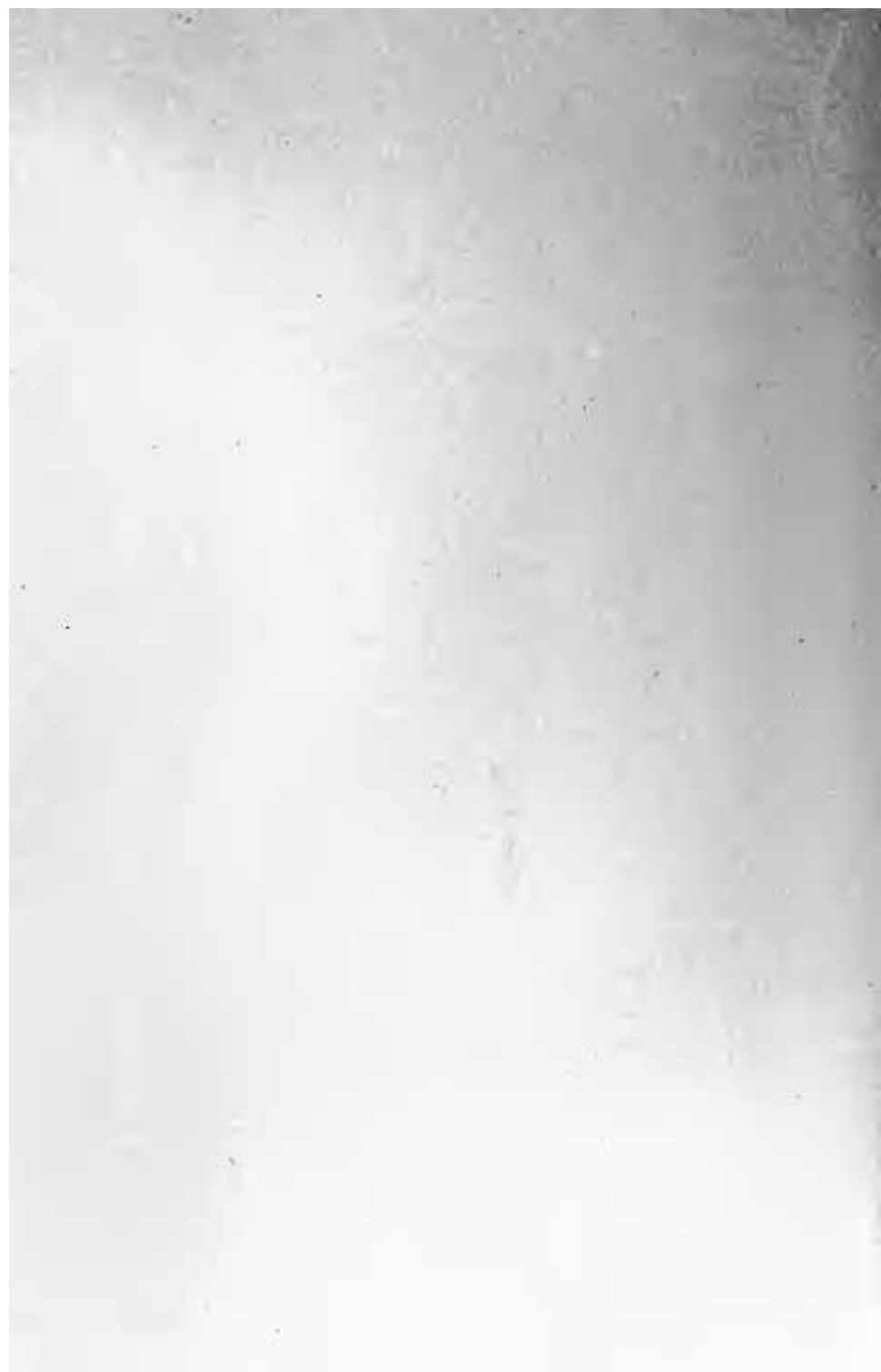
in such things, that set of fundamental natural truths known as theosophy, may perhaps be helpful. Whether or not the world is about to recast its ethical code there can at least be no doubt that it is eagerly seeking reliable evidence that we live after bodily death and that it will welcome a hypothesis of immortality that is inherently reasonable and therefore satisfies the intellect as well as the heart. Those who are dissatisfied with the old answers to the riddle of existence and demand that Faith and Reason shall walk hand in hand, may find in the following pages some explanation of the puzzling things in life—an explanation that disregards neither the intuitions of religion nor the facts of science.

Of course no pretention is made of fully covering the ground. The book is a student's presentation of some of the phases of theosophy as he understands them. They are presented with no authority whatever, and are merely an attempt to discuss in simple language some of the fundamental truths about the human being. No claim is made to originality but it is hoped that by putting the old truths in a somewhat different way, with new illustrations and arguments, they may perhaps be seen from a new viewpoint. The intention has been to present elementary theosophy simply and clearly and in the language familiar to the ordinary newspaper reader. All technical terms and expressions have been avoided and the reader will not find a single foreign word in the book.

L. W. R.

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CHAPTER I.

THEOSOPHY

Rediscovery is one of the methods of progress. Very much that we believe to be original with us at the time of its discovery or invention proves in time to have been known to earlier civilizations. The elevator, or lift, is a very modern invention and we supposed it to be a natural development of our civilization, with its intensive characteristics, until an antiquarian startled us with the announcement that it was used in Rome over two thousand years ago; not, of course, as we use it, but for the same purpose, and involving the same principles. A half century ago our scientific men were enthusiastic over the truths of evolution that were being discovered and placed before western civilization. But as we learn more and more of the thought and intellectual life of the Orient it becomes clear that the idea of evolution permeated that part of the world centuries ago. Even the most recent and startling scientific discoveries occasionally serve to prove that what we supposed to be the fantastic beliefs of the ancients were really truths of nature that we were not yet able to comprehend! The transmutation of metals is an example.