

**PHILOSOPHIC  
THOUGHT  
AND RELIGION**

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Philosophic Thought and Religion by D. Ambrose Jones

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## PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT AND RELIGION

FROM the beginning human beings have striven to solve the riddle of the Universe. The Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, no less than the Greeks and other cultivated races of ancient times, attempted a solution. Modern philosophy may be traced as far back as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, whose thoughts have profoundly influenced the thoughts of the philosophers of every succeeding age. Some still wonder how this marvellous universe ever came into existence. Others wonder what is behind it all; they seek to discover the reality that is behind mere appearances or phenomena. Others are led to marvel how it is that we get to know things at all.

## PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT

When are we certain that we truly know anything? Some are tempted to deny the possibility of knowing reality, and hold that we can know things only in their relations, and not things in themselves. Thus many leave the riddle of the universe to study, as far as they are able, the phenomena of consciousness. Others leave consciousness and study utility. Since they cannot agree as to what is useful, they fall back on instinct and intuition. But intuition fails to satisfy, and many are starting a new quest for religion, but it too often happens that it is a religion of their own making.

## I

In modern history certain names stand out pre-eminently in the field of philosophy. Let us begin with Anselm, a subtle thinker who was a metaphysician as well as a theologian. Thomas Aquinas and the Schoolmen dwelt chiefly with a system of theology. Hooker was a deep thinker, and he employed his great mental powers in the defence of the principles of the Anglican Reformation. Modern English philosophy may be said to be much indebted to Bacon. It is true that Hobbes created a system of his own, and so did Spinoza, the remarkable Dutch Jew, but their systems no longer are taken seriously. Berkeley and Hume raised new problems.\* Hume

\* Berkeley, a devout Christian, held that "existing objects consist of ideas or objects perceived or