THE INCARNATE PURPOSE; ESSAYS ON THE SPIRITUAL UNITY OF LIFE

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The incarnate purpose; essays on the spiritual unity of life by G. H. Percival

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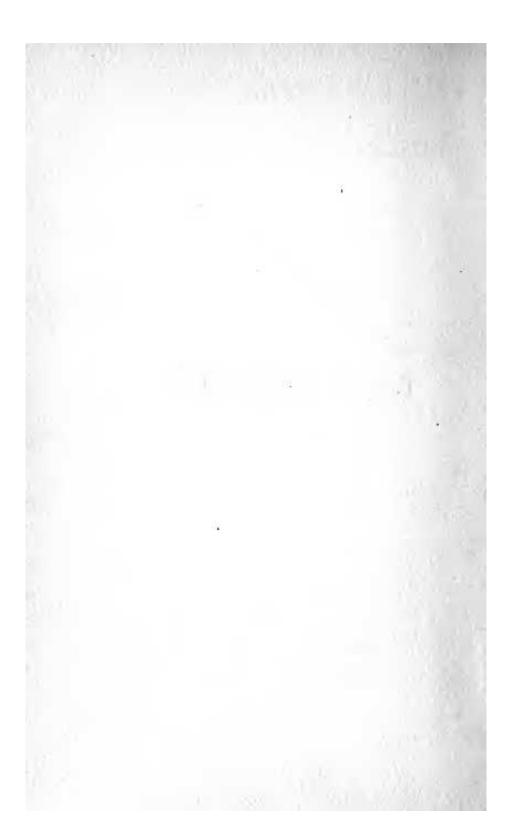
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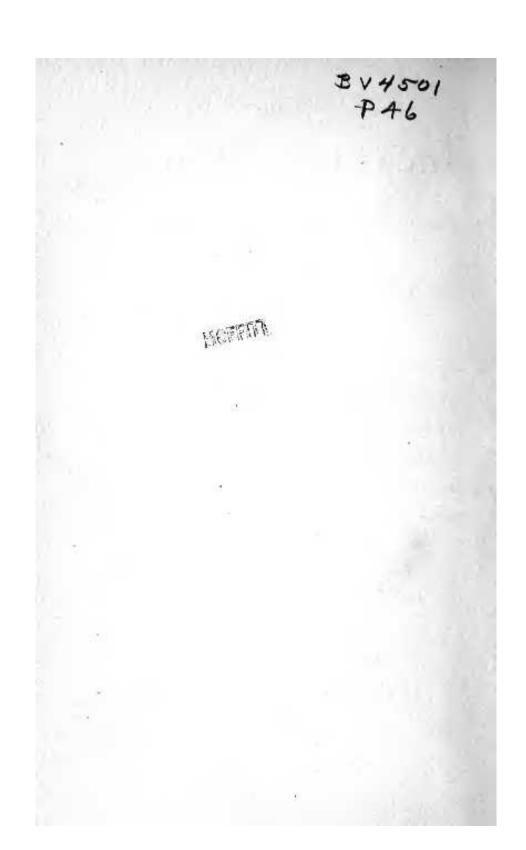
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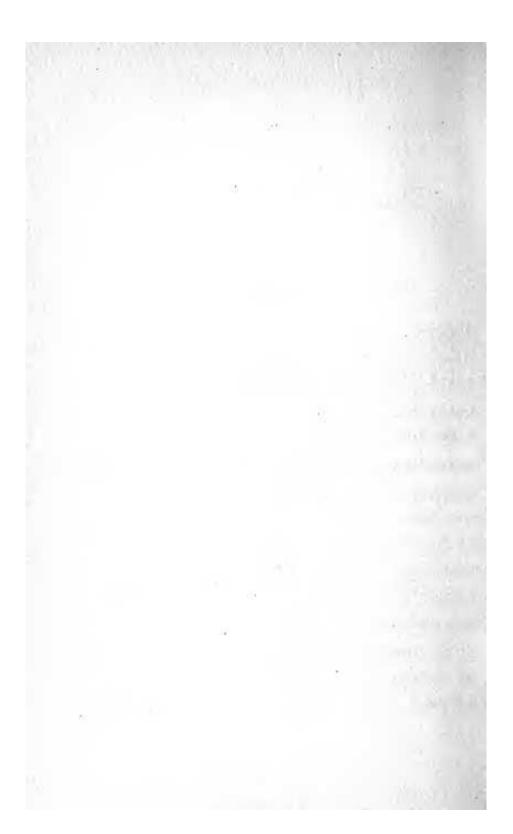
Williams & Norgate 14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden 1908



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The Incarnate Purpose

1

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

THERE exists in certain religious circles the idea that criticism of Christian doctrine is an undesirable thing, because indicative of a spirit of irreverence and faithlessness that is at variance with the fundamental principles of Christianity. According to Catholic teaching, the Church is founded upon divine revelation, to doubt the reality of which is to question the truth of the Word of God. It is not to be supposed that the finite understandings of men can fathom the infinite mysteries of God. Does not the conception that it *is* possible for the divine truths of religion to be comprehended by means of the same evidential methods adopted in the acquisition of secular know-

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ledge, imply a practical denial of the existence of a supreme God, since the creature would thus be made to appear as equal in wisdom and power with the Creator?

Most seekers after the Word of God meet at one time or other with some such argument against the propriety of their endeavours to obtain evidence of the intrinsic truth of Christian teaching. But the charge of irreverence brought against honest inquiry is powerless to affect the belief, held by many educated men and women, that a pure desire to know and to do the will of God necessitates the exercising of intellectual as well as of spiritual faculties, in order that what is true in the teaching offered to them in the name of Christ may be separated from what is false, to the greater glory of God and to the furthering of the divine purpose of Life.

Hostility towards criticism of religious doctrine appears to all impartial minds to be not only of doubtful service to the cause of Religion as a whole, but also to cast discredit