

THE IDEA OF GOD IN EARLY RELIGIONS

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The Idea of God in Early Religions by F. B. Jevons

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F. B. JEVONS

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IN EARLY
RELIGIONS**

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THE IDEA OF GOD

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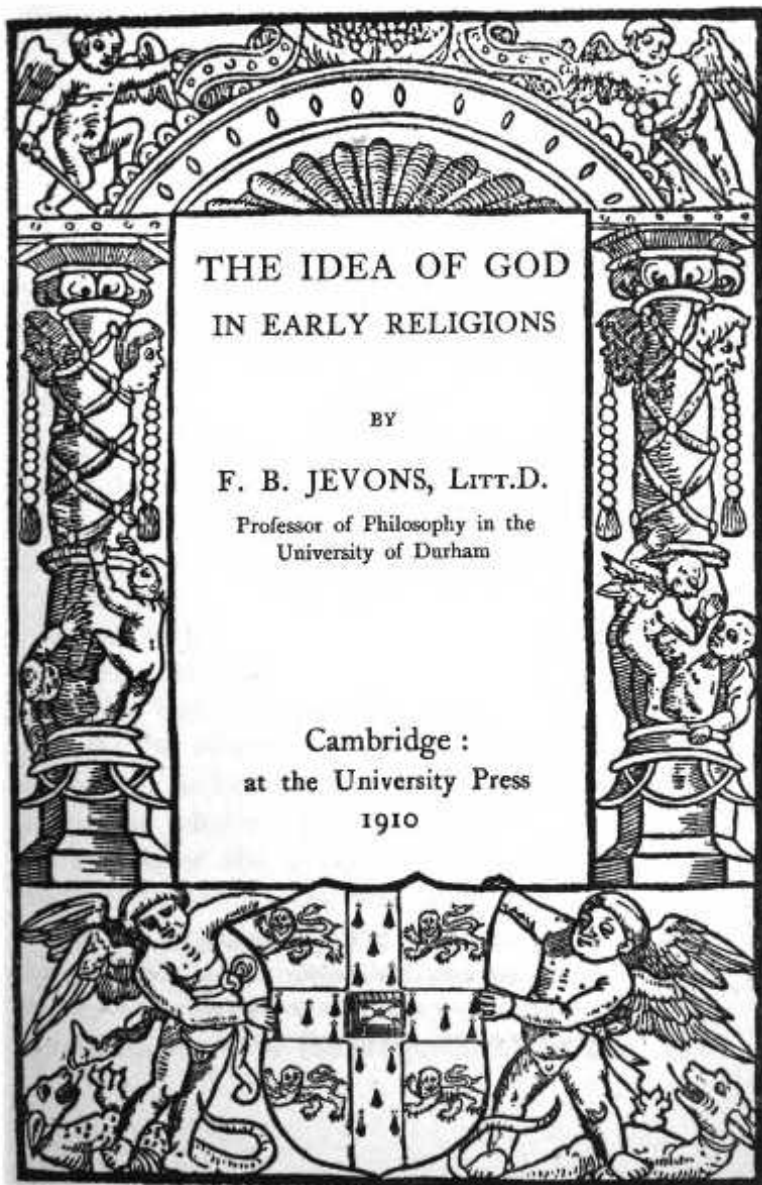
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IN EARLY RELIGIONS

BY

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PREFACE

IN *The Varieties of Religious Experience* the late Professor William James has said (p. 465): 'The religious phenomenon, studied as an inner fact, and apart from ecclesiastical or theological complications, has shown itself to consist everywhere, and at all its stages, in the consciousness which individuals have of an intercourse between themselves and higher powers with which they feel themselves to be related. This intercourse is realised at the time as being both active and mutual.' The book now before the reader deals with the religious phenomenon, studied as an inner fact, in the earlier stages of religion. By 'the Idea of God' may be meant either the consciousness which individuals have of higher powers, with which they feel themselves to be related, or the words in which they, or others, seek to express that consciousness. Those words may be an expression, that is to say an interpretation or a misinterpretation, of that con-

sciousness. But the words are not the consciousness: the feeling, without which the consciousness does not exist, may be absent when the words are spoken or heard. It is however through the words that we have to approach the feeling and the consciousness of others, and to determine whether and how far the feeling and the consciousness so approached are similar in all individuals everywhere and at all stages.

F. B. JEVONS.

HATFIELD HALL,
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October, 1910

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