

**BELIEF IN GOD, ITS ORIGIN,  
NATURE, AND BASIS: BEING THE  
WINKLEY LECTURES OF THE  
ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY FOR THE YEAR 1890**

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# BELIEF IN GOD

## ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, AND BASIS

*BEING THE WINKLEY LECTURES OF THE  
ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
FOR THE YEAR 1890*

BY

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## PREFACE.

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THE following lectures were delivered before the Andover Theological Seminary during the first week of March. They form the sixth course on the Winkley foundation. That endowment is hampered by no conditions whatever; a rare and surely a fortunate circumstance for any theological school. As might have been expected from the spirit of broad scholarship which animates the Andover faculty, the Winkley lectureship has been occupied by experts in different fields of inquiry, who have treated, each from his own peculiar point of view, of a considerable variety of subjects, none of which, however, was without some special interest for the coming religious teachers and workers of our age. Among the lecturers have been some of our foremost names in theology, economics, political science, and even law. The themes they

considered were largely historical or sociological, and generally of a practical bearing. To add to the variety, an abstract subject was deemed desirable for the present year. But for the choice of the particular subject selected, as of course for the treatment of it, I alone am responsible. While I might perhaps claim the sympathy of the members of the Andover faculty for the general spirit and outcome of these inquiries, it would be strange indeed if they accepted all my conclusions, or even looked at common beliefs from the same point of view.

No apology is needed for a fresh examination of the character, origin, and validity of our belief in God. Historical studies are just now greatly in favor. But no theological belief can rest on a mere historical occurrence. An open-eyed theology must have a philosophical basis. And its fundamental and perennial inquiry is into the evidence of the divine existence.

Whoever has read deeply on this subject must have been struck with the fact that so many of his own thoughts were already the thoughts of others. I cannot, therefore, say that the following reflections are original in any other sense than that



they have actually been made by the author. I am, in fact, aware that some of them were derived from teachers, among whom I would especially mention Lotze, Martineau, and Pflleiderer, while others have been suggested by recent writers like Robertson Smith, Seeley, Fiske, Réville, and Thiele. And if it were possible to deduct all I owe to the unconscious instruction received from the great thinkers of our race, from Plato to Hegel, the residuum of individual ownership might be far from flattering. I have, however, not been unmindful of the golden advice of Goethe — to acquire what has been inherited in order to make it my own; and the result is now submitted to the candid judgment of the reader. From him I cannot expect the sympathetic consideration bestowed by my Andover audience; but for dispassionate criticism I shall be equally grateful. I am conscious of no other desire or motive in these inquiries than to discover the actual truth.

A word of apology at the close. Though my subject is abstract, the treatment will, I hope, be found readable, if not exactly light or popular. I have, however, vent-

ured upon the coinage of a descriptive term, which, as it is not likely to go farther, can do no harm, and does here really conduce to precision and brevity. A theism based on the facts of the cosmos, or universe, is called *cosmic*. To the universe we oppose man; and a theism based on facts of human nature might very properly be called *anthropic*. A theism resting on this double ground I call *anthropocosmic*; and I choose this combination rather than *cosmoanthropic*, to indicate that, while mine is a man-universe theism, man must not be interpreted in terms of the universe, but the universe in terms of man; namely, of that self-conscious spirituality which makes us selves and persons. Anthropocosmic theism is the doctrine of a Supreme Being, who is ground both of nature and of man, but whose essence is not natural but spiritual.

THE BROOKS,  
PINE HILL IN CATSKILLS,  
September, 1890.

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