

# **THE SPIRITUAL ASCENT OF MAN**

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The spiritual ascent of man by W. Tudor Jones

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**W. TUDOR JONES**

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ASCENT OF MAN**



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BY

W. TUDOR JONES, D.PHIL.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

A. L. SMITH, M.A.

MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

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## INTRODUCTION

(BY THE MASTER OF BALLIOL)

THIS book aims at bringing the best philosophical thought of the time within the range of the ordinary reader. It is an undertaking likely to be all the more useful, as the ordinary Englishman is not a philosopher; with him, as with Dr. Johnson's friend, "cheerfulness will keep breaking in." This cheerfulness is doing noble service to the nation to-day in the trenches and in the workshops. But it is itself based on an inarticulate philosophy, and there is danger in our English foible of being too proud to be articulate. For the present is a time which is stirring men to think, and to think hard, who never thought before. Out of this stirring, if properly guided, great things should come—a better Europe for the na-

tions to share in, and a better England for our children to live in. Such guidance is being daily proffered by many—by preachers, by social reformers, by historians, and by international lawyers. But not many of the philosophers have come forward, and, when they do, philosophers seem to the average man to write in a jargon of their own. This book, though written by a deeply read student of philosophy, will be found intelligible, and even agreeably readable. Its message is one of hope, or rather of confidence and conviction, and it is expressed in such a spirit that must leave the reader with a very friendly feeling towards the author.

The first chapters approach the problem from the standpoint of modern science; the rest of the book attempts to advance through psychology to ethics and to religion. This part will require more effort in the reader, but the sort of effort that is both educational and inspiring. He will be rewarded, moreover, in his journey by lighting on many fine thoughts well expressed,



such as these: "How to create interest in the masses for the things of the Spirit is the great problem of to-day." . . . "There is no limit to the possibility of spiritual development." . . . "The ideal is always close at hand, and the only way to progress is through human social relations." . . . "The union of the human and the Divine is possible; this is the essence of Christianity." . . . "Every man, however much he would deprecate the charge of being a philosopher, has felt that there must be meaning in the universe: that is, there must be mind, or else it would be not a universe but a chaos." . . . "That life cannot be reduced to matter, that the body must be a means to the development of the soul, that the so-called conflict of religion and science can only be a transient phase, that, in the words of a famous psychologist, 'This world, with all that lies within it, is a spiritual world,' that the conception of a God is something to which thought and life lead up as a fact."

Here he will find these convictions set

upon a logical ground, correlated with experience and with knowledge, and set in their due place in the new spiritual movement which many forces are now converging to produce, and which alone can recompense the world for the present war.

A. L. SMITH.

OXFORD,

*November 1, 1916.*

## PREFACE

MY object in this volume has been to present some of the main problems of science, philosophy, and religion as these are dealt with by a number of the most prominent writers of our day. It is no longer possible to keep science, philosophy, and theology in different compartments, and probably the greatest weakness of the Church in the past has been the failure to give due heed to the various branches of knowledge in their bearings on religion. A religious synthesis which is obtained at the expense of the conclusions of these various branches is without a doubt destined more and more in the future to be of less and less avail and finally to pass away. The time has arrived for a reconstruction of religion on its intellectual side, and the signs of the coming of such a synthesis are already in our midst. This volume will have served its purpose if it satisfies, in some degree, the