

ASPECTS OF THE SPIRITUAL

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Aspects of the spiritual by J. Brierley

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J. BRIERLEY

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THE SPIRITUAL**

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BY

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PREFACE

THE essays which follow cover a wide range of topics, but they all come, I think, easily under the title which I have given them. And for the reason that, in my view at least, whatever the theme you choose, if you pursue it far enough, it will lead you to the same end. It will disclose itself as an aspect of the spiritual.

We call ours an age of materialism. That need not greatly trouble us, for, if we examine the material of our materialism, we find it always a thin affair; with cracks and crevices in all directions, that offer views into another and a grander realm. And so, whether we discuss, as I have here endeavoured to do, such questions as the psychology of a crowd, or the intelligence of flowers, or sunshine, or religion's innermost gospels, we find that we are only opening different gates into the same field. That field is the spiritual.

In so far as the essays are theological they belong, it will be seen, to a progressive theology. The most

Preface

damnable, surely, of all heresies is that which shuts up Divine revelation to a distant past ; which excludes the present and the future from any share in it. I treat here the revelations of the past as true and as infinitely important ; as evidences of man's constant and intimate relation to a spiritual order. But always in the belief that this revelation is continuous, and that with the development of our higher faculties it will become ever clearer, ever more operative in human affairs. I write under the conception that all history, all science, all discovery, are parts of one and the same movement, a movement which is bringing into ever clearer light the fact that man is a spiritual being in a spiritual universe.

J. B.

LONDON,

July, 1909.

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