

**THE RELIGIOUS
SENSE IN ITS
SCIENTIFIC ASPECT**

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The religious sense in its scientific aspect by Greville Macdonald

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GREVILLE MACDONALD

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By GREVILLE MACDONALD, M.D.
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To be still searching what we know not by what we know,
still closing up truth to truth as we find it, this is the golden
rule.—MILTON.



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1903

B. 48
M3

GENERAL

We have still one request left. We have at least reflected and taken pains in order to render our propositions not only true, but of easy and familiar access to men's minds, however wonderfully prepossessed and limited. Yet it is but just that we should obtain this favour from mankind (especially in so great a restoration of learning and the sciences), that whosoever may be desirous of forming any determination upon an opinion of this our work either from his own perceptions, or the crowd of authorities, or the forms of demonstrations, he will not expect to be able to do so in a cursory manner, and whilst attending to other matters; but in order to have a thorough knowledge of the subject, will himself by degrees attempt the course which we describe and maintain; will be accustomed to the subtilty of things which is manifested by experience; and will correct the depraved and deeply rooted habits of his mind by a seasonable and as it were just hesitation; and then finally (if he will) use his judgment when he has begun to be master of himself—BACON'S *Novum Organum* (concluding paragraph to Preface).

mp

TO MY FATHER

1937

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SYNOPSIS

LECTURE I

THE RELIGION OF SERVICE

ALL thought that is not confined to bread-winning is philosophy. If, to acquire wisdom, we labour in the fields of knowledge, we are serving ideals that transcend the claims of utilitarianism. But knowledge is not wisdom.

(1) This desire for understanding is but seeking simplification of the complex. Simplification consists in classification of facts and phenomena and their relegation to law. All philosophers and scientists are driven to their work by the old question, "What is Truth?" The child seeking education in his infantile questions, and the philosopher teaching his wisdom, are united in their desire for simplification of phenomena and classification of facts. The relation of poetry to science.

(2) The brotherhood of all life. The law of Heraclitus is now substantiated, and expresses in idea the law of evolution. All that life owns is through inheritance.

(3) Like all other human attributes, the religious sense is an inheritance from mighty small beginnings,