

THE RELIGIOUS FACULTY:—ITS NATURE, SCOPE,
AND SATISFACTION.

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ANY review of the facts and forces which have made up the world's past history and life, that fails to recognize the influential part which the religious element has constantly played, would be an omission so glaring in its character, as to render such a review both fragmentary and unreliable, and a very uncertain guide to any final and safe conclusion that we might wish to draw.

The more the strange and checkered career of mankind is analyzed and understood, the more fully is it demonstrated that religion, in some form or other, has been the most imperial and world-moving power that has ever had a place and influence among men since man's life and history began. The manifestations and movements of this kingly and undecaying power, are found in all ages and generations; and above the changes and revolutions of the thronging centuries, the religious element forces its way down, and occupies in this latest and progressive age a larger space in the world's attention, intellect feeling, literature and languages, than any other that can be named. The presence of this persistent and universal power constitutes one of the most important facts in the history of mankind, and it is to the examination and explanation of this great force that a large share of the most advanced thought of our day is being specially directed. The principal object of this paper is to look somewhat carefully at this world-wide religious phenomenon, to indicate its distinguishing characteristics, and show in as clear a manner as possible, that amid all the multitudinous attempts which have been made to meet the continuous and irresistible demands of man's religious nature Christianity alone is equal to the task.