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THE PROBLEM OF JOB.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

EVERY great work of literature is in living sympathy and union with the age in which it is written. Not only is it a product of its age, but in turn it aids in making its age what it is. The book, in its deepest meaning, is an exponent of the deep vital forces then operating. It gives evidence of the hopes, needs and problems moving and moulding the common thought and sentiment. The author, by the power of that genius which enables a man while belonging to an era to rise above it and descry its prevailing features, represents, not himself alone, but the vast body of his time.

A book which is a manifestation and expression of to-day, must be interpreted by the assistance of all the past, for the present is but the past carried up to date. To apprehend the significance of the book, is to apprehend its author, and to apprehend what he is, is to know what has made him such as he is. Knowing this, we know two things—the formative spirit of his age, and his peculiar personal characteristics.

Mystery shrouds the authorship of Job. It is impossible to determine the extent to which the personal and subjective element has been infused. This factor must remain unequated. A study of the work, however, will permit Job to be taken as the representative of the ripest thinking and culture of his