

the matter figures itself to me at present, on the strength of the facts now and here known to us."

A few chapters of the book were separately published in various reviews at the time they were first written. They were composed, however, from the outset, as parts of this book, which does not therefore consist of disconnected essays thrown into line in an artificial unity. Each occupies the precise place in the argument for which it was first intended. The chapters in question are those on "Religion and Mythology," and "The Life of the Dead," contributed under the titles of "Practical Religion" and "Immortality and Resurrection" to the *Fortnightly Review*; that on "Sacred Stones," contributed under the same name to the same periodical; and that on "The Gods of Egypt," which originally appeared in the *Universal Review*. I have to thank the proprietors and editors of those magazines for permission to print them in their proper place here. They have all been altered and brought up as far as I could bring them to the existing state of our knowledge with regard to the subjects of which they treat.

In dealing with so large a variety of materials, drawn from all times and places, races and languages, it would be well-nigh impossible to avoid errors. Such as my own care could discover I have of course corrected: for the rest, I must ask on this ground the indulgence of those who may happen to note them.

I have endeavoured to write without favour or prejudice, animated by a single desire to discover the truth. Whether I have succeeded in that attempt or not, I trust my book may be received in the same spirit in which it has been written,—a spirit of earnest anxiety to learn all that can be learnt by enquiry and investigation of man's connection with his God, in the past and the present. In this hope I commit it to the kindly consideration of that small section of the reading public which takes a living interest in religious questions.