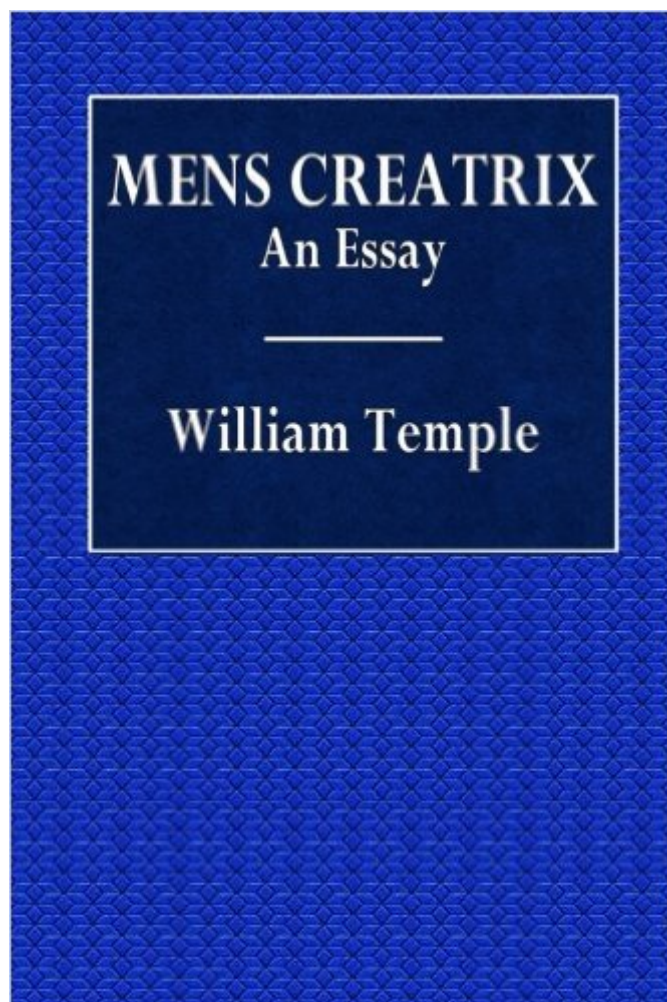


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Mens Creatrix: An Essay



Synopsis

"Mens Creatrix" is Mr. Temple's magnum opus, a broad philosophical justification of Christian faith resting on five pillars. It is broad and upon that there are some remarks to be made below. It is philosophical philosophy having been Mr. Temple's special subject of work. It is a justification that is, he points out that science, art, morality, and religious experience all, by their very nature, cry out for a perfect object, a perfect whole, that explains itself, which object they cannot reach by their unaided strength; but the Incarnation supplies precisely what they demand. The volume expresses a devout, sincere, vigorous mind, lifted by aspiration. In the light of the observations above, however, it invites two remarks. Superficially it has in a marked degree the merits that in so much Anglican literature are lacking; of its substance so much can hardly be said. In range of interests, in lively sense of the varied problems of human life, in familiar touch upon literature, music, politics, history the work stands out as exceptional. On the other hand, in its real attitude, outlook, and workmanship there is discovered after all that essential inadequacy which mars so much of the work in this field. In a certain individual trait that has characterized all Mr. Temple's writing there was danger; his treatment is summary, makes every topic too easy, has done with it abruptly. It is not that he jumps to conclusions but that he steps too lightly and unconcernedly to them. The sensitive and patient drudgery that craves to do justice to a subject is unusual and decidedly it is not Mr. Temple's habit of mind. In its absence there is but one thing that with any safety can take its place and that is a familiarity with the best tests and standards and the habit of applying them. Our task here is not to examine the book as a whole, interesting and remunerative as that would be, but to consider one by one a few of the prompt and lighthearted conclusions scattered by the way, and thus to consider its methods and spirit. Very early in the volume we come upon the following example: 'When a man sets out an array of facts [Mr. Temple is apparently speaking of the facts of life] and then draws conclusions from them after the manner of a physicist or chemist, he is inevitably omitting a great number of facts that are relevant.' — "Anglican Theological Review, Vol. 1

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