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TO
MY DEAR WIFE
EDITH CONSUELO
THIS BOOK IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE

THE present work has arisen out of the cosmological speculations embodied in "Two New Worlds," which themselves were suggested by certain recent advances in our knowledge of the atoms of matter and of electricity. It seemed to me desirable that the new materials should be used as soon as possible to further the solution of the "question of questions," the possibility of human immortality.

Lest it appear presumptuous for a physicist to venture an opinion on such a subject, which is usually associated with psychology and theology rather than experimental science, I may plead that the relations between mind and matter require for their elucidation an extensive acquaintance with what is actually known about matter and what is *not* known about it. And every one, I think, will acknowledge that the relations between mind and matter are at the very root of all possible theories concerning immortality. Now the physicist is permanently confronted with problems concerning the ultimate nature of matter, more so even than the chemist, and much more than the physiologist, who usually derives his ideas concerning matter from elementary text-books of physics and chemistry. This explains the fascination which ultimate ques-