

**THE WAVE OF SCEPTICISM AND
THE ROCK OF TRUTH: A REPLY TO
"SUPERNATURAL RELIGION: AN
INQUIRY INTO THE REALITY OF
DIVINE REVELATION", PP. 1-194**

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MATTHEW HENRY HABERSHON

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BY

MATTHEW HENRY HABERSHON, 1821—

*"Animus ad amplitudinem mysteriorum pro modulo suo dilatetur, non
mysteria ad angustias animi contriungantur."*—LORD BACON.

London:

HODDER AND STOUGHTON,

27 & 31, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MCCCCLXXV.

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"Every wave which beats against the rock of eternal truth seems to rise out of the trough caused by some receding wave, and raises its threatening crest as if it would wash away the rock.

"It is of the nature of truth, that the more it is tested the more sure it becomes under the trial. These attacks of opponents are among the means whereby fresh evidences of the certitude of the Gospels are called out."

Translator of Eisehendorf's

Hann [†]Marden Unsere Evangelien Verfasst.

PREFACE.

THIS volume is an amplified and expanded essay read before the members of the Young Men's Society in connection with Park Church, Highbury, on the evening of the 2nd of November, 1874. The original purpose of the author was to indicate to the associates of that Christian institution how the influence of German anti-Christian literature, made plain to English readers by such books as the one under review, might be withstood and neutralised, and to supply an antidote to the poisonous insinuations respecting Christianity which many of the periodicals of the day disseminate in noticing works of this character. Those that are not

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professedly hostile to religion have a way of treating Truth and Error as if nothing had been proved, and as if the question were quite an open one whether Divine Revelation is, or is not, a reality. The present design of the author has a wider range than he first intended. He desires to induce, not only young men, but those nearer his own age, and placed, much as himself, in the great centres of business, who have not much time for research into such matters, to bring their intelligence fairly alongside the bold pretensions of the cavillers and quibblers who presume to *know* that there is no God, or that He has not spoken. He desires to remind those who are doubting that "there is a knowledge that creates doubts which nothing but a larger knowledge can satisfy," and that he who stops in the difficulty "will be perplexed and uncomfortable for life." Having investigated for himself, the author indicates the result, and would like, if he can, to facilitate

the inquiry which it is, unquestionably, the duty and interest of every one to make. If to rest on a foregone conclusion on a matter of such momentous importance is not altogether justifiable on the Christian side of the question, how much less so on the other! For it should be remembered that, on the one side, looking at the question from a *primâ facie* point of view, we have a faith which has the endorsement of the highest civilisation, the best, morality, the truest culture, the noblest aspirations, and the greatest happiness which humanity has ever experienced; in contrast with a negation which has nothing to offer as a substitute, taking away the light that illumines the path of life, and leaving it in utter darkness.

As to the book under review, the anonymous author seems to regard the evidences of Supernatural Religion as a region of swamp or sand, in which solid rock is nowhere to be found upon which faith may obtain a firm footing. He

takes us in his survey here and there, and says that what seems to be solid stone is only slightly congealed sand, which, at the touch of his criticism, dissolves and falls away. We fix our attention on one of these masses, and the result is, that it is not what he alleges, but, verily, granite. If the reader who is not prejudiced against Christianity will attentively peruse this volume to the end, he will probably incline to this opinion. If any whose views in regard to Christianity are hostile should be at the trouble to read it, it is the hope of the author that the result will be to stimulate inquiry and research, for "that which is true in religion cannot be shaken, and that which is false, no one can desire to preserve." In so far as the writer of "Supernatural Religion" and others have, by their reference to early Patristic literature, shown how certain it is that Jesus lived and taught, they have done service to the cause of Christianity; for the writings, the traditions, and

the history of the Church are too closely identified with the Sermon on the Mount to admit of the probability that He who could thus teach was less than "He believed Himself to be." On such a foundation the superstructure is so appropriate, that the "possibility" which John Stuart Mill conceived is near to *probability*, and *probability* to a *full assurance of faith*.

82, ST. MARK'S SQUARE,

WEST HACKNEY, LONDON.

11th December, 1874.