I may say that the whole matter of the style of the New Version will receive due treatment from the very able pen of Dr. Sanday.

In another paper I hope to discuss the new renderings of Greek grammatical forms. I purpose to take up the various matters which in Greek Grammars fall under the head of Syntax; and to discuss the degree to which the Revisers have reproduced in English the sense which the Writers of the New Testament intended to convey by their use of Greek inflexions and particles and order of words. This task will be even more difficult than that which in this paper I have attempted. I shall not be able to give, as I have done here, my approval to all the changes the Revisers have made. At the same time, I shall endeavour to shew that on the whole they have done their work well, and have given to the millions who speak the English language a translation far better than any which has hitherto been published.

JOSEPH AGAR BEET.

THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN a recent article in the *Expositor*,[1] Professor Wace has referred to the feeling which often arises in the minds of those who contemplate the heavens, "that man is too insignificant a creature to evoke those displays of the Divine love and grace of which our Faith speaks;" and has remarked that "some feeling of this kind is probably at the root of many difficulties felt by thoughtful men of science at the present day." There can be no doubt that this feeling prevails extensively, and operates powerfully; and it must be admitted that, at first sight, it seems not

[1] Vol. i., *Present Series*, pages 73–4.

unreasonable. That such a Being as his wonderful works more and more every day declare the Creator to be, should turn aside as it were from the development of his infinitely perfect and therefore immutable purposes in nature —stretching from eternity to eternity, and determining the conditions of unnumbered worlds—to listen to the prayers, to sympathize with the sorrows, to aid by supernatural means the efforts of creatures such as we, has seemed to many—perhaps in certain moods seems to most—a faith almost too daring, the dream of an overweening human self-esteem, natural enough in the infancy of the race when the earth appeared to be the universe and men the only children and sole care of the Father-God, but which cannot be entertained by minds habituated to the methods and familiar with the results of the science of these latter days.

And yet it must be clear, upon consideration, that such comparisons between the magnitude of the universe and the littleness of man have no real force as an argument against that lofty estimate of the value of something in human nature which is the basis of all religious faith and hope. The moral excellence which many men do, and which all, in a measure capable of indefinite increase, *may* possess, is not small as compared with immensity, nor insignificant as compared with infinity, nor of little value as compared with a thousand worlds. The terms of the comparison stand to each other in no relation of proportion whatsoever; they are simply incommensurable. Moral goodness belongs to an order of being altogether distinct from material magnitude, and, if we can form any judgment on the matter at all, one infinitely higher. We may safely conclude that the Almighty does not take delight in size, that mathematical relations are not the rules by which He measures value, that He weighs moral good and evil in quite other scales than those in which He weighed of old the mountains and the hills.

It is not, as some have represented, the pride of man which produces his religion, and prompts him to imagine that he is the object of the Divine regard in a special and peculiar sense. Rather is it a feeling very different from pride, the conviction that the Supreme Power must be also the Supreme Goodness, righteous Himself in all his ways and requiring righteousness from all his rational creatures, and the consciousness, common to man and strongest with the best men, that, weighed in his balance, they are found wanting. It is this instinctive conviction that the true glory of God is his goodness, and that all have sinned and come short of it, which has in every age caused men to fear his displeasure and to seek some way of regaining his favour. It is not, then, because we have high thoughts of ourselves, that we believe in those displays of Divine love and grace of which Christianity speaks; but because we cannot help thinking highly of our Maker. It is not because we are *men*, but because we are *moral agents*, capable, if we will, of working that righteousness which He values most, that we feel that our ways cannot be hid from the Lord, and that our lives and our deaths may be made precious in his sight. Whatever the creature conceived of might be, whatever the place or the mode of his existence, if only he were conceived of in *this* character, our conclusion would be the same. If it were made known to us that in the obscurest star amid the thousands of heaven a being was struggling or suffering for righteousness' sake, we should necessarily regard the dim spot which was his field of conflict or place of martyrdom with a deeper interest than we could feel in the brightest of the planets if it were known to be unpeopled, or peopled only with creatures who, however highly endowed in other respects, had no part in this warfare and no concern in the triumph in which we believe it will end. The facts and forces, the struggles and victories, of the moral world are, to man,

beyond all comparison the most important of all things—the attractions of history, the burden of prophecy, the elements which alone give value and significance to material existence and even to mind itself. And we cannot suppose that it can be otherwise with any superior intelligence, least of all with the Supreme. If it *were* otherwise, if the Supreme Intelligence were a mere constructor of worlds, and not also the Father and Redeemer of spirits; if He cared for suns and systems but could not concern himself about even the humblest human heart;[1] if He took delight in material order but had no sympathy with goodness and with those who are striving after it, the serpent's saying would be less than the truth, and man would be even better than his Maker. A creation, however vast, unconsecrated by some act of heroic self-sacrifice, would be a vulgar thing; a creator, however powerful, who could look upon such a sacrifice, wherever consummated, without sympathy and approval, would be no God. The material universe rises into real significance only when regarded as the stage on which the solemn drama of moral and spiritual action and passion works itself out to its eternal issues; infinite time and space are as nothing save as they are conditions, or aids, to the infinite perfection of the soul. The more we consider the matter the more we shall be persuaded that not height nor depth, nor immensity, nor eternity, nor material magnitude, nor even mental power, is the highest value, and consequently the final purpose, with the Creator of all things, but moral worth or goodness. The word has been greatly abused, so much so that it requires some effort to look through the verbal sign and see in its true quality the thing signified. But no one, I think, who does this can doubt

[1] "Neither in the sun nor in the mere physical forces of which it is the centre can we see anything approaching to the rank and dignity of the humblest human heart."—DUKE OF ARGYLL, *Contemporary Review* for January, p. 12.

that, in sober truth, and not in poetical hyperbole, it is the most valuable product which nature through all her ages of effort has evolved, the final cause of creation, the chief delight of God.

And to be persuaded of the transcendent value in the sight of God of moral excellence is to be persuaded that He has provided means adequate to its production and development in man. That system of means, wherever it is to be found, which is most effectual to this end, which most surely leads men along the true line of righteousness, which most powerfully awakens aspiration after and promotes growth in goodness, is and must be the one true religion of the world.

Is Christianity this religion? It may be. True, it is a "supernatural religion"; it affirms the existence, and professes to avail itself of the energy, of forces which positive science cannot find in nature. But a supernatural religion is not an impossibility: there *may* be powers at work in the world of which positive science knows nothing. The doctrine of Divine influence upon the human soul, upon which Christianity rests, is certainly not in itself incredible. Though it asserts a fact which is above the natural order, it asserts nothing which is opposed to the analogy of the natural. As there are physical forces, or rather perhaps one force variously manifested, by or through which the Supreme Power acts upon the material world, produces animal life, developes or evolves that life from lower to higher forms, from the mollusc, or something less, to man as he is, or that greater something which man in his physical nature may one day be; so there *may* also be a spiritual force, by or through which the Supreme Goodness acts upon the moral world, quickens the human soul, and leads it on from state to state, by an eternal process, to the fulness of its moral glory. And as the natural force exerts its energy according to determinate modes or "laws," by acting in harmony with and obeying which man may make it his

minister for good and derive from it the manifold blessings which it brings; so there *may* also be a system of spiritual laws, an economy of moral means, a supernatural religion, according to which this diviner power, this Spirit of holiness and of God, sheds abroad his influence upon moral beings, to the conditions of which they must conform who would be the subjects of his special ministrations and the recipients of his richest blessings. And what if Christianity be this religion—the divinely-appointed channel through which, though not exclusively yet most abundantly, this heavenly grace is given? There is nothing in all this which is intrinsically incredible, nothing which observation cannot render probable, nothing which experience may not fully prove.

I know that the reality of spiritual existence and supernatural influence has been denied by some in the name of science. But I know too that in this matter, at any rate, the name of science has been taken in vain, and that the process by which such results have been arrived at is the very reverse of scientific.[1] It is well known that some, who have been cautious and reverent investigators in the realm of physical nature, have been speculators, "saucy and overbold," in that of spiritual being. They have been rigidly inductive in the one department, moving patiently from point to point, comparatively careless how slow their progress if only it were sure, and refusing to accept any doctrine which did not rest on a firm basis of ascertained facts. But, in the other department, they have pursued a different

[1] "I cannot help observing language used by some of our men of science which appears to savour rather of the adventurous spirit of the old Greek system-builders than of that caution, if I must not say humility, which is the general characteristic of modern physical philosophy and the most essential condition of its success . . . writings in which the Divine personality and the spirituality of the human soul appear to me to be either denied or ignored. But I am no less sure that science itself is not in the least responsible for these conclusions, and that if they are adopted by men of science it is wholly at their own risk."—BISHOP THIRLWALL (*Address as President of the Royal Institution of South Wales*).

course. They have made no experiments, though the field lies equally open to experiment (of course by other methods, since spiritual things must be spiritually discerned), but have preferred to follow the "high priori road;" and starting from some general principle, based not on facts but upon their arbitrarily assumed absence, have "reasoned downwards," till they have not doubted only, but sometimes denied, the reality of any spiritual existence whatever. Because they have not found the supernatural in physical nature, where by the very terms of the definition it was not to be looked for, they have concluded that it is not to be found at all; and have neglected or refused to make any researches in that realm where only the appropriate experiment can be made and the truth determined. Like Lucretius, they have

> "Dropped their plummet down the broad
> Deep universe, and said: No God!"

But, seeking God by such processes, it is no wonder if they have not found Him. The plummet of physical science is not the fitting instrument for discovering the Infinite Spirit; a higher organon is needed for this investigation. The universe they have sounded, "broad and deep" though it be, is after all but one sphere, and that the lowest, of the true universe as it may be known to man. Physical and physiological research can go far; it has gone so far of recent years that some Christians have felt half-afraid lest it should succeed at last in reducing the whole world of being under the empire of mechanical necessity, prove men to be "magnetic mockeries—cunning casts in clay," and leave no room for religion. But all such fears are quite groundless. Science can go far, and the farther she can go the better; but she has found and she has recognized her limit. Beyond the molecular changes in the substance of the brain,

further than the furthest point to which scientific processes, the scientific reason, even the scientific imagination, can go, is the hyperphysical fact of consciousness. And, with regard to this, science admits that she knows nothing. Her far-reaching deep-searching analysis fails here. Her most delicate instruments are too coarse to dissect a motive, or weigh a desire, or measure the force of a moral effort. She can only stand powerless before the inexplicable undeniable facts and say: "This knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it."[1] Yet consciousness is everything. It includes the whole world of feeling, the whole world of thought; all bodily sensations, all mental conditions, all moral emotions; whatever is lovely or pleasant, or just or true, or holy or divine. Outside of it either there is nothing, or all that is is good for nothing. In this sphere, the highest, the most real, perhaps, as even the scientists[2] admit, the *only* sphere of the universe, the laws of mechanical necessity do not rule; here, and not in the sphere of the physical, spiritual forces must be sought for and may be found; here there is ample room for the freest play of the most supernatural religion.

Christianity, then, for anything science can say, may be

[1] "The mind runs along the line of thought which connects [physical] phenomena, and from beginning to end finds no break in the chain. But when we endeavour to pass by a similar process from the physics of the brain to the phenomena of consciousness, we meet a problem which transcends any conceivable expansion of the powers we now possess. We may think over the subject again and again, it eludes all intellectual presentation. We stand at length face to face with the Incomprehensible."—DR. TYNDALL, *Belfast Address*, preface, p. xxix. "It is absolutely and for ever inconceivable that a number of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen atoms should be otherwise than indifferent as to their own position and motion, past, present, or future. It is utterly inconceivable how consciousness should result from their joint action."—DU BOIS REYMOND. See *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xviii., p. 585.

[2] "We have already seen clearly and distinctly, and in a manner which admits of no doubt, that all our knowledge is a knowledge of states of consciousness. 'Matter,' and 'Force' are, so far as we can know, mere names for certain forms of consciousness. . . . All the phenomena of Nature are, in their ultimate analysis, known to us only as facts of consciousness."—HUXLEY'S *Lay Sermons*, pp. 340, 341.

what it claims to be, the divinely appointed means to the moral perfection of man. Is it so? There is, in the nature of the case, but one process by which the question can be decided, the process of experiment. The supreme test of a religion, as of all practical systems, is power. That religion, and that only, is true which has truly power to do the work of religion. And whether Christianity possesses this power or not must be discovered, not by talking about it, not by reasoning about it, but by trying it. The pure reason, as Kant has shewn once for all to the satisfaction of all following philosophers, cannot prove a single fact in any department of human experience. When the facts are furnished, reason can deal with them and draw certain conclusions from them; but she cannot find them. They must be found by experience itself. They must be felt as existing; this is their only proof, and it is the best of all possible proofs. "The surest ground," as South has well said, "that a man can have for believing anything is that he feels it in himself;" and it is upon this rock, the rock of conscious experience, that a practical faith in any system or science or art must rest. The internal evidence of Christianity is consequently of necessity its only conclusive evidence. If the spiritual facts and forces of which it asserts the existence, and professes to employ the energy, really exist, and are truly operative, they must reveal themselves in the experience of those who conform to its conditions by the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. The natural man cannot discover them for they are spiritually discerned. "In order to an efficient belief in Christianity a man must be a Christian." [1]

What then, it may be asked, becomes of the external evidences of Christianity? Are they of no value? What is to be said of the work of Christian apologists in every age? Have they laboured in vain and spent their strength for

[1] Coleridge.

nought? Can reason, which is also of God, do nothing for religion? Must we wait until men have become Christians before we can hope to convince them, by arguments addressed to the understanding, that they ought to be Christians?

Not so. Reason can do much for Christianity, and all that is necessary. Though it cannot demonstrate that the Religion possesses the regenerating efficacy which it claims to possess, it can demonstrate that it has a right to have its efficacy tested. The Christian apologists have an indispensable work to perform; though they cannot force an efficient belief in Christianity on those who will not try it, they can force upon all who will seriously consider the question the conviction that Christianity is worth trying and ought to be tried. The point is an important one; and as the want of clear views with regard to it sometimes causes men to doubt the sufficiency of the external evidences of Christianity because they mistake their purpose, and to look for the proof of the religion in the wrong place, it well deserves the short consideration which I propose to give to it.

If a new religion were at any time proclaimed among men, it would not thereupon become their duty to accept it as true. It would not even become their duty to examine it, and try whether it were true or not. They would have a right to expect and require that it should in the first place make out a *primâ facie* case; that it should come with such credentials as to make it their reasonable duty to inquire into it earnestly, and put its pretensions to the proof. Until this had been done, they would have a right to remain indifferent to it. Men are not bound to seek after and search into every new system which professes to have come from God; if they were, there would be no lack of pretenders, and a long life would be too short to give them all a trial. It is only when it becomes un-

reasonable not to examine and try a religion which is new, that it becomes wrong to reject it, even though it should in fact be true.

The principle applies to Christianity as to all other systems of religion. It also is bound to make out a *primâ facie* case. It must meet men who are not yet Christians upon their own ground, and "shew them signs," signs which will necessarily change with the changing ages, but which must always be sufficient to render indifference to its claims unreasonable, and therefore wrong. And this it both has done from the beginning, and does at the present day.

In the beginning it did so by miracle. Those to whom Jesus in the first place came were not bound to receive Him for his word's sake. They might say, and justly, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; what they teach us that we will observe and do. But who is *He*, this peasant of Galilee, that we should do his commandment and observe his rules?" The force of this objection Jesus Himself admitted. He allowed that, if it had not been met, they would not have sinned in rejecting Him. But it *was* met. He shewed them the sign. He did among them works which no other man did. Unless they could deny his miracles, they could not, on their own principles, dispute his claim—not indeed to be forthwith accepted as the Messiah, but at least to be listened to without prejudice, and to have his doctrine tried. Even his miracles were not proofs of the truth of his doctrine; for this reason, if for no other, that those to whom He came believed that great signs and wonders might be wrought by a false prophet. They might say without inconsistency, so far as the mere act of power was concerned: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." But they could not, without inconsistency, refuse to see whether this were so or not. They were not necessarily bound to

recognize at once as Divine even this Spirit, mighty as it was; but they were bound, when they saw its might, to try its moral quality. If they had come to the inquiry with honest and candid minds, they would not long have remained in suspense as to whether the worker of these wonders were the colleague of Beelzebub or the Son of God. But they were not candid; and this was their condemnation. They closed their eyes to the light, because they loved darkness better. They hardened their hearts against the Spirit of Truth, who doubtless strove with them as He strives with all; and thus committed the sin which, not by any arbitrary decree, but by its very nature, cannot be forgiven.

Such was the purpose and such the effect of miracle on the original institution of Christianity. It did not prove the truth of the religion, but it made it the reasonable duty of those to whom it came to put it to the proof. And it is not easy to see how this indispensable end could have been effectually attained otherwise. It may be, as Butler suggests,[1] that, according to the law of the universe, special messages of Divine grace are always accompanied by special manifestations of Divine power, though, in consequence of the comparative rarity of the instances on earth, it is impossible for man to verify the law inductively; and to us, consequently, miracle must seem to be and must be regarded as an interruption, or rather as an overruling, of natural law. However this may be, it is certain that this was virtually the view which prevailed among the Jewish people in the time of Christ, and that it made a supernatural sign from Him almost a moral necessity. Though it was not believed that all who wrought miracles must be sent of God, it was believed that whoever was sent of God would possess and would exercise the power of working miracles; and, consequently, the absence of

[1] *Analogy*, Part II., chap. i.

miracles would be the absence of the sign which alone could make it obligatory upon them, or even lawful for them, to listen to the teacher of any new religion. And it is certain that the miracles of Christ were effectual to this end. They made it incumbent upon those to whom He came to hear without prejudice, if not with favourable prepossession, what the new Prophet had to say; they left those who rejected Him unheard, or who heard Him only with a predetermination to reject, without excuse: and they were the means of leading many to listen with candour, to examine, and to believe.

Having accomplished their purpose, they ceased. The Apostles wrought them less and less frequently; and their successors have not wrought them at all. Their place was taken, and their function fulfilled, by other evidences. The teachers of the Religion shewed new and not less convincing signs. When they went everywhere preaching the word, testifying to the resurrection of Christ, suffering the loss of all things for his sake, their evident sincerity, their self-sacrifice, their noble lives and heroic deaths, were a sufficient reason why men should listen to their message with candid minds, and try whether their sayings were true or not. When the number of believers multiplied, when the new religion demonstrated its power by doing its work, transforming bad characters, vivifying cold hearts, redeeming, regenerating, and emancipating the most depraved of mankind,[1] a case was made out which rendered a careless indifference to its call unreasonable, and a rejection of its

[1] "The Fathers . . . urged with a just and noble pride, that whatever doubt there might be of the truth of the Christian doctrines, or of the Divine origin of the Christian miracles, there was at least no doubt that Christianity had transformed the characters of multitudes, vivified the cold heart by a new enthusiasm, redeemed, regenerated, and emancipated the most depraved of mankind. Noble lives crowned by heroic deaths were the best arguments of the infant Church. Their enemies themselves not unfrequently acknowledged it."—LECKY, *History of European Morals*, vol. ii. pp. 440–1.

offers sin. When "the Christian Church grew up a stately and spreading tree, overtopping the older and less vigorous growths, and stifling them by its shade,"[1] until it stood not simply pre-eminent, but alone, the one religious teacher and guide of the nations—this standing miracle, this continuing sign, sufficed of itself to make the neglect of its claims inexcusable, and the trial of its efficacy as a moral system a duty which could not be put by.

In these latter days this always indispensable end is attained by the combined force of the appeals to historical testimony, to the natural reason, and to the moral sense, which constitute what are commonly known as the Evidences of Christianity. Men have still a right to say to the Religion: What sign shewest thou? And the Religion is still bound to answer the challenge and shew the sign. But times change, and that which sufficed in the past is not necessarily sufficient for the present. Miracles are wrought no longer; Christianity is not the only system which now claims to have the power of regenerating the race. Science has appeared since Christ; she too has produced her credentials, and has shewn that she also is of God; and it is asserted by some that the fuller natural revelation has discredited the supernatural religion, that the pretensions of Christianity can no longer justify themselves to the "Faith of Reason," and that its methods and results do not satisfy the philosophical requirements and meet the moral and spiritual needs of the present day. If this were so, it would no longer be the duty of men to receive it. If science could shew that the supernatural does not exist, and that consequently Christianity cannot be Divine in the sense in which it has always claimed to be so; if philosophy could prove that Christ was nothing more than a human teacher, and that his system was only one of a series of natural developments

[1] Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 19.

of the religious instinct, good for its time, but which has lost or is losing its efficacy, men would have a reasonable excuse for turning away from the Christian faith as a "creed outworn," and seeking salvation elsewhere. It is the duty of all who know that the religion of Christ is indeed divine, and as divinely efficacious as ever, to see to it that no such excuse shall be left to any. It is for the Christian apologists of the present day to meet the men of science and of philosophy on their own ground, as their predecessors met the Jew and the Greek of old; and to prove to them from their own principles—the principles of natural reason and common sense—that they have no right not to be Christians. And they have done so. They cannot, it is true, prove the supernatural by means of the natural; they cannot demonstrate by *à priori* reasoning that which can only be discovered by experience. But they *can* shew that neither our present knowledge of physical nature, nor any conceivable increase in that knowledge, can disprove in the slightest degree the spiritual and the divine; that philosophy cannot produce the shadow of a reason why the Gospel of Christ may not be the power of God to the salvation of every one who receives it; that a system of moral discipline which has been incomparably the most effectual means to its great practical end in the past—which has "produced more heroic actions and formed more upright men than any other"[1]—may reasonably be expected to be efficacious in the present and in the future; and that men of science of all men,—who have no more right than other people to refuse or neglect to employ the most effectual means to their moral and spiritual improvement, and whose motto, as we are often reminded, is "Ex-

[1] "One great cause of its success was that it [Christianity] produced more heroic actions and formed more upright men than any other creed; but that it should do so was precisely what might have been expected."—LECKY, *History of European Morals*, vol. i. p. 419.

periment, experiment, nothing proves but experiment,"—are bound among their many experiments, and more than any other, to make the experiment of the Christian religion.

Such, then, is the purpose, and such the effect, of the evidences of Christianity in the present age. They cannot demonstrate the truth of the Religion now any more than miracles could demonstrate it at the time of its first promulgation; but they can shew now, what miracles shewed then, that it is the duty of men to examine it earnestly and put its power to the proof. To this extent they are conclusive signs, so conclusive that it is probably quite safe to say of those who are not persuaded by them, that neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. If any one who addresses himself to a study of the writings of Christian apologists expects that they will remove all metaphysical difficulties, explain all theological mysteries, answer all speculative objections, he will be disappointed; just as he would be disappointed if he addressed himself with similar expectations to an examination of the evidences of any other practical system or of any physical science. None of these (as I may perhaps hereafter have an opportunity of pointing out) could be proved true by the mode in which many persons demand that the truth of Christianity shall be proved. But if the candid student of the evidences of Christianity remembers that all that the Christian advocate has to do is to shew him that the Religion of Christ comes to him with such credentials that he cannot reasonably reject it untried, or safely put it aside until he has found them insufficient, he will be satisfied that this much has been abundantly made out. And if this has been accomplished, it is enough. It will not of course be enough for those who, being perfectly satisfied with their own righteousness, feel no need for any religion at all. For such no sign will be sufficient; the most powerful argument will be as unavailing to move them to make a trial of Christianity

as the most striking miracle was to their prototypes of old. With such men nothing can be done; there is no help for them. Nor will it be enough for those sceptics who are not really in earnest in the matter of religion, who "doubt for doubting's sake, and seek only to remain undecided;"[1] such men will never want some speculative excuse for refusing to put Christianity to the proof. But to those who—feeling that they are not what they should be, and honestly wishing to become better—earnestly seek for that religion which will be most effectual to this end, Christianity comes with the fullest confidence and with all-convincing signs. Such men will almost certainly be persuaded that the religion of Christ has the first claim upon them, and that it is their reasonable duty to try it. To this extent the evidences of Christianity are not sufficient merely, but superabundant. No other way of salvation, no other means to the moral perfection of man, can be compared with it for a moment. It is no fanatical assertion, no uncharitable judgment, to say that those who reject, untried, a religion which comes to them with such credentials as the Christian act unreasonably and are without excuse.

The external evidences, then, are sufficient to make it the duty of men to try Christianity, and the internal evidence is sufficient for the rest. The trial of the Religion will be its proof. Those who do the will of Christ will know that his doctrine is of God. An innumerable cloud of witnesses in every age since He came have testified, not with their lips only but by their lives, that this saying is true; and those who in this age make the same experiment will have the same experience. They will have the surest ground for believing the power of the Religion that a man can have for

[1] "Nec tamen scepticos imitabar qui dubitant ut dubitent et præter incertitudinem nihil quærunt. Nam contra, totus in eo eram ut aliquid certi reperirem." [I did not, however, imitate the sceptics who doubt for doubting's sake, and seek only to remain undecided. On the contrary, my whole intention was to find out something certain.]—DESCARTES: *De Methodo.*

believing anything; they will feel it in themselves. Against a practical faith built upon this rock, the winds and floods of a merely speculative scepticism will blow and beat in vain.

If any man makes the experiment and finds it fail; if the Christian worship of God—the worship of God as revealed in Christ—awakens within him no increased sympathy with moral excellence, and does nothing to change him into the same image; if obedience to the commands of Christ—the practice of his hard but most necessary lessons of humility, charity, forgiveness, self-sacrifice—fails to promote his growth in goodness; if the promise of Christ is not fulfilled in his experience, and no Divine influence leads him along the way to heaven; if the Christian means of grace and the Christian hope of glory prove inadequate to the needs of his spiritual nature and ineffectual to move him to sustained moral effort, and thus ensure his constant progress towards moral perfection: if he can truly say this, then, indeed, he will have earned the right to put Christianity on one side and to try some other religion. The real existence of such honest doubters may perhaps be honestly doubted. But if any man even professes to be so, Christians, being unable to judge him, will have no right to condemn him. The last word will have been spoken; the supreme effort will have been made; the judgment must be left in the hands of God: if He sees that the doubt is indeed honest, we may be sure that neither will He condemn. But the scepticism of those who will not make the trial, who stand contemptuously or self-complacently aloof from Christianity, caring for none of these things; or who, if they examine it at all, do so as a mere amusement, and, instead of putting its moral efficacy to a practical test, content themselves with raising speculative objections against the principles on which it is supposed to rest—objections the like of which always may be (but never are) raised against every other system or science which has

ever been devised for the benefit of man :—such scepticism is not, as it sometimes assumes to be, peculiarly rational and philosophical, but is plainly unreasonable, and is wrong.

T. M. HOME.

TATIAN'S DIATESSARON.

HAVING seen good reasons for accepting the conclusions of Moesinger and Harnack, that we really have before us in a Latin translation Ephraem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron, and consequently in great measure the Diatessaron itself, it remains to enquire more particularly into the extent and accuracy of our new acquisition. This enquiry seems to lead to at least one conclusion which has been hitherto generally doubted, and which must therefore be advanced with some diffidence. But the evidence in its favour will, we think, appear considerable, and the consequences it invites or suggests are of great interest. This conclusion is that in the Harmony of which we owe the preservation to Victor of Capua, contained in the famous *Codex Fuldensis*, and which, in place of the four Gospels, presents us with a single Gospel, composed out of the four, we possess a document which is at all events very closely allied with Tatian's Diatessaron. Indeed the impression of the present writer is that it exhibits substantially the document on which Ephraem commented, with some occasional alterations of order and some few additions; while there is also the important difference that in Victor's *Evangelium* Tatian has been transferred into the Latin text of St. Jerome, whereas Ephraem commented upon him in a Syriac translation. This conclusion, for reasons we will presently mention, would give Tatian a very curious and interesting place in the history of German Christianity;