

**THE THREE WITNESSES; OR,
SCEPTICISM MET BY FACT: IN
FRESH EVIDENCES OF THE TRUTH
OF CHRISTIANITY, ADDRESSES TO
ALL EARNEST INQUIRERS**

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The three witnesses; or, scepticism met by fact: in fresh evidences of the truth of Christianity,
addresses to all earnest inquirers by Stephen Jenner

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STEPHEN JENNER

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THE THREE WITNESSES;

OR,

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IN FRESH EVIDENCES OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

ADDRESSED TO ALL EARNEST INQUIRERS.

With an Appendix.

BY

STEPHEN JENNER, M.A.

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"If one man believes that there is a God, and another that there is no God, whichever holds the less reasonable of these two opinions is chargeable with credulity; for the only way to avoid credulity and incredulity—the two necessarily going together—is to listen to, and yield to, the best evidence, and to believe and disbelieve on good grounds."—Archbishop Whateley's *Annotations on Bacon's Essays* (p. 159).

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Dedication.

TO THE

VERY REV. J. J. STEWART PEROWNE, D.D.

DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH,

and late Hulsean Professor of Divinity at Cambridge.

MY DEAR PEROWNE,

YOU and I have so often discussed critical questions together, and I so well know your superior scholarship, that there is no one, I feel, to whom I could more appropriately dedicate this work on Christian Evidence, than to yourself. If there are defects in it, the responsibility will be mine; if there should be any value in it for its purpose, you will not regret that your name has, by your own consent, been associated with it. It will, at all events, be a memorial of our friendship, and a token of my regard.

Although we have sometimes differed on points of interpretation of the Bible, we have always differed, as Christian men should,—“*charitably* ;” but we have never differed in our love of the Bible, as the revelation of the mind of God to man. Being, as you are, a sincere believer in the truth of Chris-

tianity, you will be glad to see it defended, even though it be less effectively than it deserves to be, from the shallow scepticism of our day, which sets the science of Nature against the science of God, and rests upon presumption in the place of *fact*.

I am,

With every feeling of respect and regard,

Your sincere friend,

STEPHEN JENNER.

Bokesbourne Vicarage,
December, 1878.

PREFACE.

So many works on the Evidences of Christianity have been written and published, that it may be thought any additional one must be wholly unnecessary: on the two-fold ground, that the already convinced can need no convincing, and that, to convince the unconvinced, nothing new can be advanced. Had I no other kind of evidence to adduce than such as has already been brought out with such force by Paley, in his "*Horæ Paulinæ*," by Blunt, and by others, I certainly would not add to the number of works on Christian Evidence. But, forcible as those works were, in their way, it cannot be denied that Scepticism prevails, notwithstanding, in many minds; more especially doubts touching the Resurrection—the central truth of the Christian faith. This unhappy state of things has been spoken of, as demanding attention, by our two Archbishops. Hence, if any new evidence, or any old argument put in a new and more convincing form, can be found and exhibited, in support of that great fundamental *Fact*, or of the

truth of the New Testament at large, it must be desirable. Those who are troubled with doubts must wish to have their attention drawn to it; and those who are already convinced will be glad to have their faith confirmed.

It is admitted by Blunt, in his "*Undesigned Coincidences*," "that much of the same kind of testimony has escaped him and others; and still remains to be detected by future writers on the Evidences" (Preface, p. v.)

Though the evidence from "*Undesigned Coincidences*," or the surface facts of one set of documents, compared with the surface facts of another, is, undoubtedly, of great value, as proof of the genuineness of the respective writings, and of the truth at the foundation of them; yet the evidence that *underlies* written records, and, that is of their very *texture*, being more *intrinsic*, and coming less within the possibility of fabrication, must be, I venture to think, of more force still; and such, principally, is the kind of evidence which, in the following pages, I now present for consideration—evidence which has been hitherto strangely overlooked, and which will be found brought out, chiefly, from parts of Scripture which have never, so far as I can discover, been examined with a view to Christian Evidence.

As, then, much of what I shall adduce in the fol-

lowing work will be of a wholly different kind (I allude more particularly to the kinds of evidence exhibited in chapters i., ii., iii., iv., v., Part II.), much more intrinsic than any hitherto adduced or noticed, as *evidence* of the truth of the New Testament, I trust that what I have here searched out, and put in a written form, will not be deemed superfluous, however imperfect it may be in performance. It has brought much confirmation to my own faith; and my hope is that it will bring confirmation to that of others, with conviction also to doubters, for many of whom I feel the most sincere sympathy, in the full belief that their doubts are distressing to their own minds, and that they would gladly have them removed.

It is not, however, sceptics (at least of the settled class) I expect to *convince*, so much as unarmed young men, whom I hope, by the Divine blessing, to *guard* and *fortify* against the specious subtleties and plausible arguments of Infidelity, by bringing before them evidences of the truth of the Gospel history, which may have been unobserved. If I can succeed in saving even one unsophisticated young mind from the Scylla of Scepticism, I shall feel that my labour has not been in vain.

In searching up matter for some of my chapters as ground for my argument, I have derived much help