

**EXACT PHILOPHY;
BOOKS FIRST
AND SECOND**

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Exact philophy; books first and second by Hughes Fraser Halle

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HUGHES FRASER HALLE

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PREFACE.

THE first indisposition of the general or national mind which a philosophical writer has to anticipate and provide against is, an indisposition towards the reading even, to say nothing of the study, of philosophic truth, whatever may be its degree of practical value. To the ordinary thinker this kind of knowledge presents nothing that will immediately excite ordinary pleasurable sensation ; he perceives that the study of it would be irksome ; and he evades the trouble that the study of it would cost him by the self-flattering, lying plea of its inutility. To him whose cranium is becoming the case of hardened forms of spurious knowledge, that philosophic truth which is indispensable to the formation even of the loftiest order of human intelligence, is to *him*, the ordinary thinker, unnecessary.

In vain you verify for him by means of his daily experience, as a caution-light, the Greek thesis — “ God gives nothing without labour.” “ The slug-gard,” says the royal Hebrew philosopher, “ is wiser “ in his own conceit than seven men that can render “ a reason.”

It is necessary, therefore, to supply something in the way of preface to induce men, generally, if pos-

sible, to read what follows, anticipating that they will afterwards feel themselves compelled to study the whole.

A rough application of the principles of the intellectual and emotional philosophy to some theological matters was sent, in 1836, with a view to publication in a separate form, to the late Mr. Fraser, who, in mistake, sent the MS. to the then editor of "Fraser's Magazine." The "matter" was adjudged "good;" the publisher's "friend" added, that it "would do much good among the religionists," and advised its publication. Mr. Fraser also promised that it should receive a "favourable reviewal in Fraser's Magazine," "if published in a cheap form." To this gentleman, then, and to the editor of "Fraser's Magazine,"—at that time a most, if not the most, distinguished periodical—the author is indebted for the first encouragement that he ever received in a most difficult undertaking.

With the exception of some newspaper reports of lectures, and the publication of some of the leading laws in a crude form, no formal publication of any part of the philosophy appeared until the spring of 1842. A good opportunity then presented itself for an application of the logical principles in an analysis of the most dangerous and daring kind of hypothesis that the intellect of man ever constituted, and which had been forced upon the attention of the public in the then most popular of weekly journals, which boasted of a weekly circulation of 60,000 copies.

That the publication of this hypothesis was of sufficient importance to justify its being subjected to the tests of exact logical criticism, the following facts will serve to prove. The anti-theological articles of the journalist had excited so much public attention, on account of his popular repute as a political pillory-artist, that the chief proprietor of the journal lost the civic chair through their publication. Of his position in relation to the religious world, something may be learned from the following testimony by a writer in *Hopé's British Monthly Magazine* (Jan. 1842, p. 7) : —“ Is it not somewhat enigmatical that, in this “ Christian country, no one has yet dared to take up “ the gage so fearlessly thrown down by ‘ Publicola,’ “ the notorious champion of infidelity? To what “ cause are we to attribute this total absence of moral “ courage on the part of our countrymen? The “ whole country, in fact, appears panic-struck with “ the bold bearing of the infidel chief. Even the “ press have been awed into submission ; for, with one “ exception, ‘ The Times,’ not one champion has it “ furnished to break a lance with the infidel chief. “ This has been denominated the age of wonders, but “ the greatest of wonders is, the Christian press of “ this country quailing before the pen of a scribe, “ whose sole employment seems to be to sap, by every “ means in his power, the religious institutions of his “ country.” In the month of January, 1842, this writer, then the reputed editor of the paper, published two articles in it, commendatory of atheism ; one of

which contained an extraordinary, and, to superficial observers, a powerful and startling series of deductions, constructed, according to the writer, chiefly by means of "Greek and Latin authors," which was announced by him as the sum of that "abstract doctrine" of atheism which "had been discussed, in all probability," "twice or thrice three thousand years." *

On the publication of "Critical Letters, Letter I.," containing the fundamental principles of exact logic, and an analysis of the atheistic argument, governed by these principles, the authorities of the *Standard* hesitated to advertise the publication, took a day or two to consider, and then refused to advertise it in "any shape or form." "What!" was the reply, "you advertise the bane, and refuse to advertise the 'antidote?'" "Ah! but, you see, it's the 'Dispatch,'" said the clerk; "we would rather have nothing to do with it!"

Whether this refusal was produced by fear—since the ex-alderman's journal had previously been "showing up," as it is termed, a former editor of the *Times*—or whether some other strange motive caused the rejection of an advertisement which the *Times* inserted, remains to be discovered. Few men, of course, will venture to attack an unscrupulous vitu-

* Weekly Dispatch, Jan. 30th, 1842.

"The ex-alderman Harmer's weekly newspaper has by far the greatest circulation of any newspaper in London"—*Standard*, Feb. 25th, 1843.