

**A MANUAL OF
CHRISTIAN
EVIDENCES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649044771

A Manual of Christian Evidences by C. A. Row

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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C. A. ROW

**A MANUAL OF
CHRISTIAN
EVIDENCES**

A MANUAL OF
CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

BY THE REV.
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Modern Thought," etc.*

THIRD EDITION COMPLETING SIXTH THOUSAND

NEW YORK:

THOMAS WHITTAKER,

2 AND 3, BIBLE HOUSE.

1889.

NEW YORK:

THOMAS WHITTAKER,

1889.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

PREVIOUSLY to entering on our subject, it will be necessary to set before the reader what it is that the Christian advocate is called upon to defend. A misapprehension on this point is attended with very serious consequences, because it is possible to extend the defence of Christianity over an indefinite range of subject-matter, including important points of philosophy and science, of history and critical investigation, the canonical authority of the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, their authorship and authenticity, the nature, possibility, and evidential value of miracles, and a vast number of similar inquiries. There are not wanting those who would require of him a defence of what are called by different sections of the Christian Church "Fundamental Doctrines," not merely as they are set forth in Scripture, but as they have been formulated by theologians. The treatment of all these subjects, and the answering the various difficulties connected with them, could only be done effectually in a work extending over a considerable number of volumes. But for the overwhelming majority of mankind who are engaged

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in the active duties of life, such an investigation is impossible; for they have neither time nor talent for it; and what is more important still, there are numerous points connected with such investigations which require a special training on the part of the student to render his judgment respecting them of the smallest value. In all such subjects he is compelled to rely on the judgment of experts. But Christianity, if true, is a matter of such profound importance that we require to rest our belief in it on evidence which is intelligible to men of ordinary understanding; for, according to its principles, it is to be embraced, not on the authority of Churches, ancestors, or experts, but because it commends itself as true to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

There is also a great danger in extending the defence of Christianity over a wider range of subject-matter than is absolutely necessary. My meaning will be rendered plain by an illustration drawn from military tactics. A prudent general will never present an unduly extended front to his opponent. If he does so, he is in danger of having his line of defence broken through, even by an inferior force, when concentrated, and brought to bear on some weak point of his position. A place whose lines of defence extend over a certain area may be impregnable if defended by ten thousand soldiers, even against an army ten times as numerous; but if the area is enlarged four times, the lines may be easily broken through at every point. Moreover, my readers have doubtless read of the military phrase "the key of a position." What is this key? A position which, as long as it can be held,