

**PHASES OF FAITH, OR,  
PASSAGES FROM THE  
HISTORY OF MY CREED**

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Phases of faith, or, Passages from the history of my creed by Francis William Newman

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**FRANCIS WILLIAM NEWMAN**

**PHASES OF FAITH, OR,  
PASSAGES FROM THE  
HISTORY OF MY CREED**



PHASES OF FAITH.

PHASES OF FAITH;  
OR,  
PASSAGES FROM  
THE HISTORY OF MY CREED.

BY  
FRANCIS WILLIAM NEWMAN,  
FORMERLY FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE,  
OXFORD.

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MDCCL.

## PREFACE.

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THIS is perhaps an egotistical book; egotistical certainly in its form, yet not in its purport and essence.

Personal reasons the writer cannot wholly disown, for desiring to explain himself to more than a few, who on religious grounds are unjustly alienated from him. If by any motive of curiosity or lingering remembrances they may be led to read his straightforward account, he trusts to be able to show them that he has had *no choice* but to adopt the intellectual conclusions which offend them;—that the difference between them and him turns on questions of Learning, History, Criticism and Abstract Thought;—and that to make *their* results (if indeed they have ever deeply and honestly investigated the matter) the tests of *his* spiritual state, is to employ unjust weights and a false balance, which are an abomination to the Lord. To defraud one's neighbour of any tithe of mint and cummin, would seem to them a sin: is it less to withhold affection, trust and free intercourse, and build up unpassable barriers of coldness and alarm, against one whose sole offence is to differ from them intellectually?

But the argument before the writer is something

immensely greater than a personal one. So it happens, that to vindicate himself is to establish a mighty truth; a truth which can in no other way so well enter the heart, as when it comes embodied in an individual case. If he can show, that to have shrunk from his successive convictions *would* have been "infidelity" to God and Truth and Righteousness; but that he has been "faithful" to the highest and most urgent duty;—it will be made clear that Belief is one thing and Faith another; that to believe is intellectual, nay possibly, "earthly, devilish;" and that to set up any fixed creed as a test of spiritual character is a most unjust, oppressive and mischievous superstition. The historical form has been deliberately selected, as easier and more interesting to the reader: but it must not be imagined that the author is giving his mental history in general, much less an autobiography. The progress of his *creed* is his sole subject; and other topics are introduced either to illustrate this, or as digressions suggested by it.

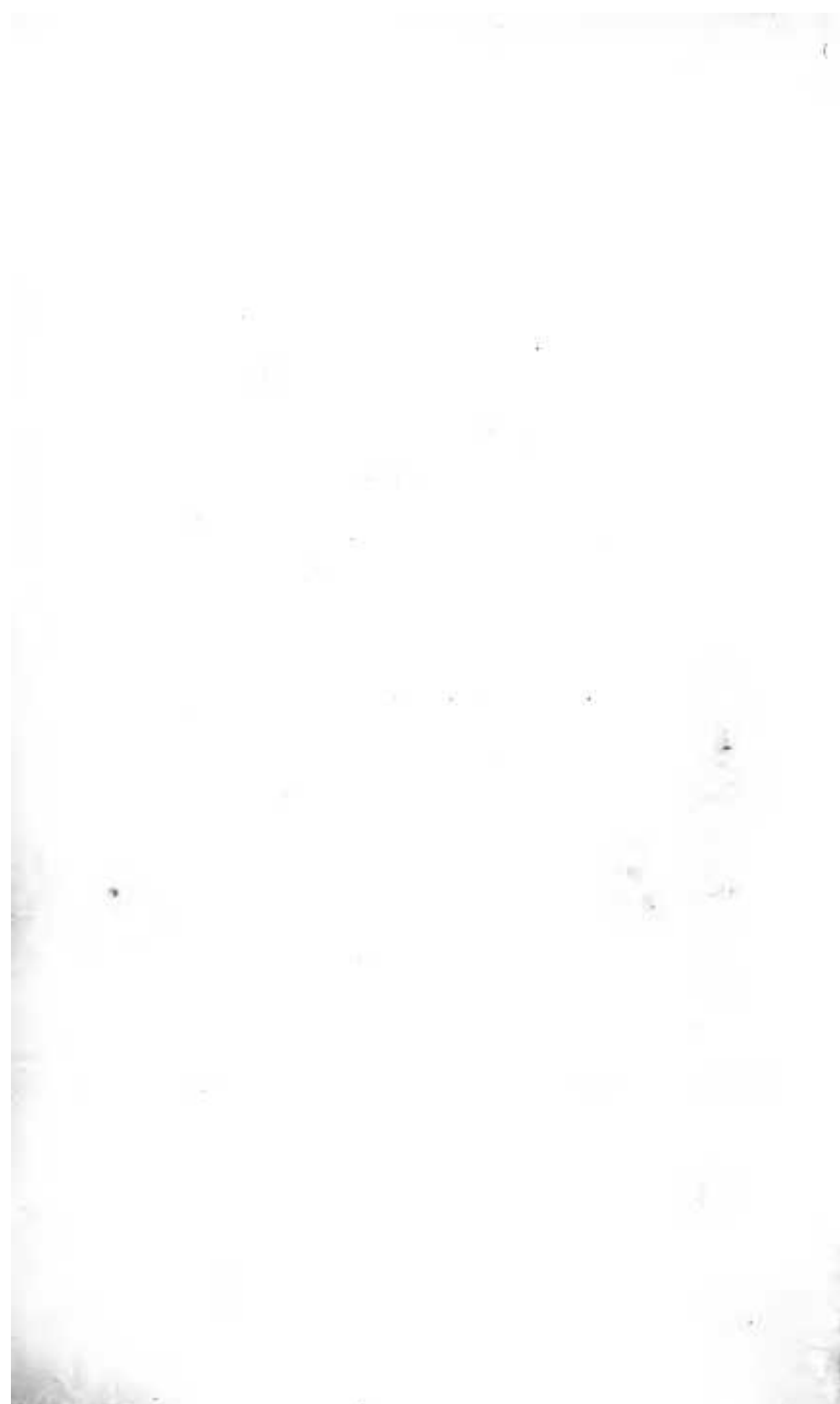
March 22nd, 1850.



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## PHASES OF FAITH.

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### FIRST PERIOD:

#### MY YOUTHFUL CREED.

I FIRST began to read religious books at school, and especially the Bible, when I was eleven years old; and almost immediately commenced a habit of secret prayer. But it was not until I was fourteen that I gained any definite idea of a "scheme of doctrine," or could have been called a "converted person" by one of the Evangelical School. My religion then certainly exerted a great general influence over my conduct; for I soon underwent various persecution from my schoolfellows on account of it: the worst kind consisted in their deliberate attempts to corrupt me. An Evangelical clergyman at the school gained my affections, and from him I imbibed more and more distinctly the full creed which distinguishes that body of men; a body whose bright side I shall ever appreciate, in spite of my present perception that they have a dark side also. I well remember, that one day when I said to this friend of mine, that I could not understand how the doctrine of Election was reconcilable to God's Justice, but supposed that I should know this in due time, if I waited and believed His word;