

**A REVIEW OF THE 'VIE DE JÉSUS' OF M.
RENAN: CONTAINING DISCUSSIONS
UPON THE DOCTRINE OF MIRACLE, THE
MYTHICAL THEORY, AND THE
AUTHENTICITY OF THE GOSPELS**

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J. B. PATON

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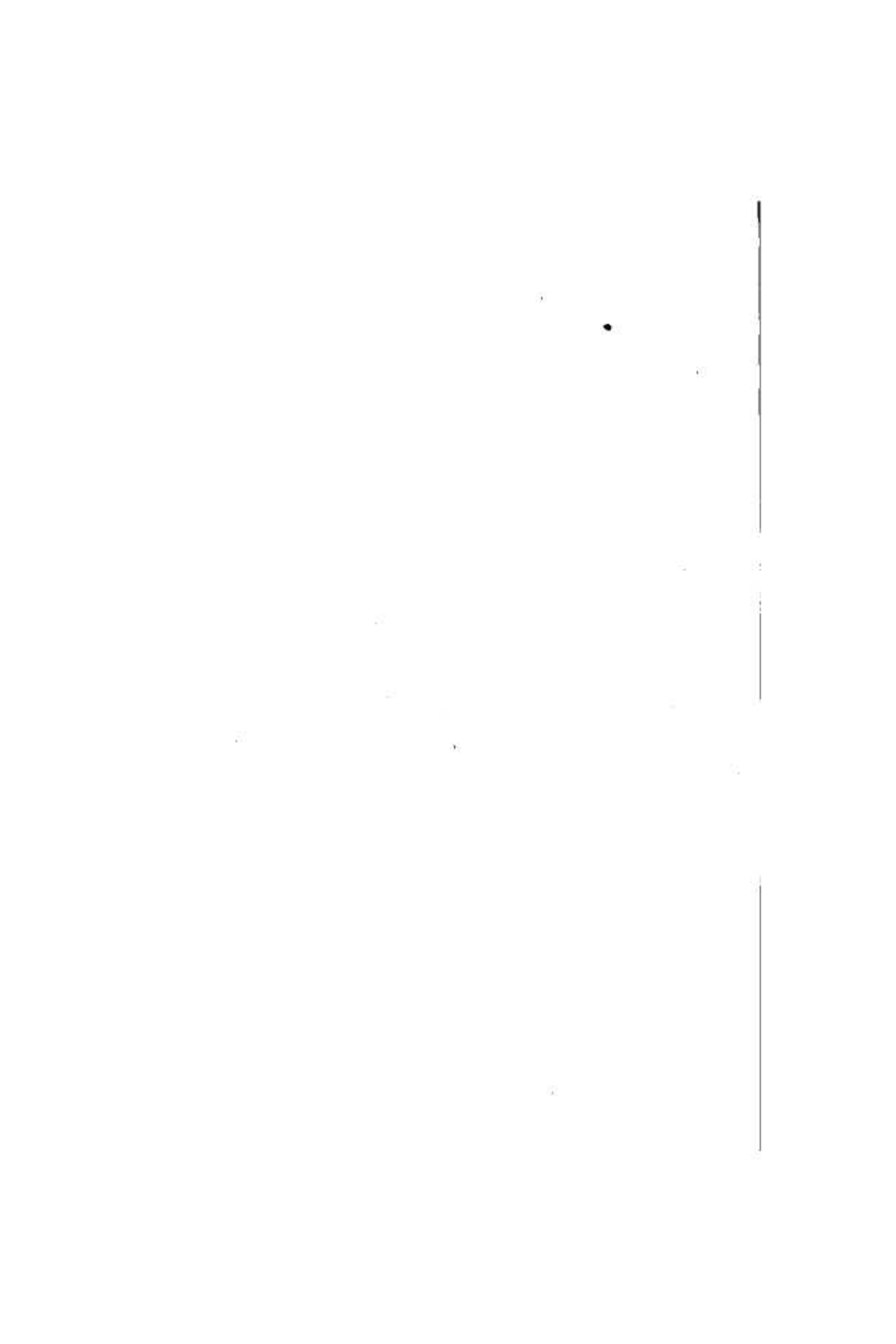
BY
J. B. PATON, M.A.



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1864.

130. f. 91.

TO
HENRY ROGERS,
MY FRIEND AND FORMER TUTOR,
I inscribe these Pages,
IN TOKEN OF
GRATEFUL RESPECT AND AFFECTION.



INTRODUCTION.

THE contents of this volume have already appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*. This fact explains their peculiar arrangement and style, which I leave unaltered. I have corrected typographical errors, and introduced a few additional notes. I confess that the "studies" upon the important subjects considered in this volume, which were suitable for a periodical, scarcely deserve this new and separate existence. Friendly advisers have ruled otherwise; and I submit to their judgment in the hope of filling up hereafter, in ampler form, and with more solid materials, the outlines of a Christian Apology, which I believe the Infidelity of the present day is, itself, furnishing for the defence of Christian Truth, and which I have hastily sketched—with broken lines, and on a small scale—in these pages.

Some topics are discussed in the long notes, that might have claimed a place in the text they annotate. They are consigned to the inferior position they now occupy from the desire to relieve the general reader of the more scholastic argumentation which they contain, and which is tiresome to all, even students who are "to the manner apt." In a quarterly journal their admission at all was only possible on such terms; and their original form determines their present. I hope, however, the notes may receive the same attention and kindly criticism as I pray for the whole book.

J. B. PATON.

CONGREGATIONAL INSTITUTE, NOTTINGHAM,
October 31, 1864.

A REVIEW OF
"LA VIE DE JÉSUS"
OF M. RENAN.

THIS book has created deep and wide-spread interest alike on the Continent and in our own country. The theme of the book is one of transcendent importance. Whilst it controverts and repudiates everything supernatural or miraculous in the history of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *tanto magis* His proper Deity, it reconstructs for us His history, denuded of His Divine glory, with a most cunningly exquisite grace, in accordance with the stern conditions of the *soi-disant* high criticism of our age. The book is written with that consummate art, delicate poesy, sentiment, and thorough scholarship, which have distinguished the previous productions of M. Renan, and placed him in the first rank of living writers. It is undoubtedly the worthiest and greatest work of a purely infidel cast which has been written this century.* Written, moreover, with a warm luxuriousness of style, and a subtle refinement of feeling which is almost feminine, and charms the reader's sensibilities like a perfume, it will insinuate its infidelity into many minds which a

* We do not except Strauss's "Life of Jesus," in which there is much more trenchant vigour and more minute elaboration, but which is so thoroughly vitiated by the monstrous hypothesis in which it is rooted, and is so far-removed by its severe intellectualism from the sphere of religious emotions, that its scientific value, in attempting an explanation of the Gospel history of Jesus and of the rise of Christianity from purely natural causes, cannot be compared with the work of M. Renan.