

EVIDENCE—LOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL.

The Christian religion is not dependent on any one kind of evidence, or any single class of arguments for the establishment of its truth. Yet, though many methods of proof are at the service of a Christian for the defence of his faith, all are not equally satisfactory to every individual, or to the same individual at different times.

It is always desirable to bring to the proof of any proposition its most direct and natural evidence, but this is not always practical or efficient. It can, for instance, be ascertained to a certainty, that the distance to the sun is nearly ninety-five millions of miles. The proper proof is the *Geometrical* demonstration, but to a man deficient in mathematical knowledge this proof cannot be understood, yet upon the testimony of scientific men in whom he has confidence, or from his observation that transits and eclipses of the heavenly bodies are calculated with the utmost precision long before they occur, or other considerations, he very properly believes that astronomical distances are measurable. Here the inferior proof has the superior force.

If this is true in a single proposition of an exact science, much more is it true in relation to Christianity, which includes many propositions, and has an infinity of aspects and relations. Various men approaching it from different angles, and having different points of sight, are not equally affected by its claims. In great kindness has it been arranged that the evidences of the truth of the gospel are graded to meet our varied capacities and incapacities; and the want in us of sufficient moral purity, or spiritual elevation, to apprehend the highest proof, does not operate as a bar to all conviction, for there are considerations to meet us on a lower plane. One man is influenced by historical proof, another by miracles or prophecies, and a third accepts at once and finally, the demonstration mentioned by Christ in John 7:17.

One man requires a logical argument with all its terms nicely adjusted, he builds his faith upon syllogisms, and prepares himself to give a *reason*, or forty of them, why he believes. Another man with an intellect less hardy, but with a finer and more impressible moral nature, accepts Christianity, not upon its being demonstrated, but upon its being *explained* to him.

There are persons so simple, child-like, and transparent, that they are illuminated by the light that beams from the Saviour, the instant they come within its sphere. There are others on whom the light and