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THE SEAT OF AUTHORITY IN
RELIGION.¹

THE excitement caused by the publication of Dr. Martineau's latest book has subsided to a greater or less extent. It seems to have startled the reading world, chiefly on account of the source whence it proceeded. We have so grown to regard Dr. Martineau as a defender of the essentials of the faith that we had almost forgotten that his Christianity was not that which generally is understood by the word. Nevertheless, he has never made the slightest attempt to conceal this fact. The noblest of his works, *The Study of Religion*, contains expressions, passages, lines of argument that could not have been adopted by a believer in the Godhead of Jesus Christ or the true and proper inspiration of the Scriptures. The present volume seems to be intended as a justification of its author's position as a Theistic apologist and a disbeliever in Christianity as dependent upon the real Divinity of its Founder and in the Bible as the Rule of Faith. However sorely we may regret the publication of this book, we can bring no charge of inconsistency or of ambuscade against its writer.

Both friends and foes have pronounced this book one of the most powerful and dangerous assaults that have been levelled against Christianity in modern times. There is truth in the appraisal, even if we do not rate the intrinsic force of the blow as highly as some have done. The lucidity and

¹ *The Seat of Authority in Religion.* By James Martineau. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1890.