

evidences and marks of truth, as may entitle it to be received. But neither may it be accompanied by such marks of falsehood as should condemn it to be rejected. There is many an hypothesis in this intermediate situation—capable neither of proof nor of disproof—and yet logically, we think, of important use in Theology.

17. We confess ourselves to have been charmed and impressed by this adventurous speculation. Yet it is against our whole philosophy of evidence, whether in Theology or in any other subject, to sustain the beauty of a speculation as a substitute for its tried and ascertained truth. Our respect for the findings of experience so overpasses our relish for the fancies of human ingenuity—we are so impressed by the sacredness of that limit, which divides the knowable from the unknowable—we feel so much how daring and illegitimate it is to pass beyond, into that forbidden territory which, in the absence of observation or testimony, we can only people at best with specious imaginations of our own—that our best object in presenting these views of Leibnitz on a theme so transcendental as the origin of evil, would be to effect any positive conviction in their favour. It is for a different purpose from that of dogmatizing any into his opinion that we have now brought it forward. We do not want them so to estimate its proofs as to pronounce that it is true. It will be quite enough for us that we cannot so dispose of its plausibilities as to pronounce that it is false. Even in this ambiguous condition, it will be found to be not without its use—and though in itself but a