Contributed Articles.

CERTAINTIES AND UNCERTAINTIES IN BIBLICAL INTRODUCTION.

IN view of the wide diversities of opinion as to almost all questions connected with the literary origin of the books of the Bible, it is inevitable that any article professing to indicate the boundary between certainty and uncertainty should partake largely of the nature of a statement of the writer's own individual conclusions. It may be as well therefore to say at the outset that my general attitude on all such questions is conservative I am content in the main to abide by the opinions that have been most generally held in the Church as to the date and authorship of these books; not of course simply because they have been held by the Church, but because after examination I believe them in the main to be true, being supported by the most satisfactory evidence at our disposal. In several cases I accept of these with some modifications, or as being perhaps only partial statements of the facts, but yet as true or as having a clear basis of truth as far as they go.

I am conscious that it requires some little courage to hold this attitude in presence of the scholars of to-day, many of whom are ready to express pity and contempt for those they regard as held fast by a hide-bound traditionalism. But one is comforted for this on observing the trend of the more recent criticism. It seems not unlikely to prove the winning side after all. After more than a century of free investigation and a generation of pretty thorough radicalism, it is noticeable that scholarship is steadily coming back to old positions which it was thought had been left behind forever. Like a traveller it has gone far abroad to seek its fortune, and has had many an adventure, but now it shows a disposition to return to the quieter resting-places from which it had somewhat wantonly departed It is significant that almost every important question of New Testament criticism has been settled in favour of the traditional view, and it is largely because they have been so thoroughly routed in that portion of the field that radical and destructive criticism have concentrated their forces on the more exposed out-posts of the