

things concerning himself." "Reach hither thy finger and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing."

Manifestly, apologetics have a right in the pulpit. They are not to be wholly excluded from God's house, on God's day, by God's herald. Their legitimacy is beyond question. The proof is from analogy, from the very nature of the case, and from divine and apostolic example. The Master hesitated not in his public proclamation of the new dispensation, to Thomas, to other doubting disciples, and to challenging and assaulting unbelief, to appeal to the evidence and to build about His truth appropriate defenses.

But with the legitimacy of the pulpit presentation of Christianity's evidences vindicated, it still needs to be considered whether the actual presentation has not been so ill-judged as to make pulpit apologetics harmful, rather than helpful.

Unfitness of pulpit apologetics as to *occasion* is a way of harm. Clearly that pulpit is at fault which builds defenses where there is no actual attack, and no prospect of any. To meet a challenge before it is issued is courting a tilt with the adversary, that we may show our prowess. It is helping the devil start a conflagration, that we may throw holy water on the flames. Ordinary men and women do not come to the house of God to be fed on the refutation of skeptic-skeptics even of whose existence these ordinary men and women have not so much as dreamed. Surely not at the flock within the fold is the minister to cast "the bristling missiles that ought to be hurled at the wolves without." To answer from the pulpit a shot fired at tremendously long range through some bi-monthly periodical that nobody in all the parish reads but the minister, is to manufacture an enemy that may never appear, instead of meeting and routing the enemy already at the gates. This sort of apologetics in the pulpit is more hurtful than useful.

Unfitness of pulpit apologetic as to *quantity* is another way of harm. It is overdoing the business. To give it the bulk of Sabbath discussion is to convey the impression that after eighteen hundred years of opportunity to vindicate itself there is not a truth of Christianity that does not still need to be proved; that its centuries of sifting and trial, and conflict and victory, have established nothing whatever. Doubt of ability to hold the fort will surely be born of constantly building fortifications for defense. This pride of demonstration, which so prevalently characterizes some preaching, turns the "herald" into an "advocate," and the sanctuary into an arena of *ex-parte* debate. It allows nothing to be taken for granted. It concedes nothing to the self-evidencing power of truth, and nothing to the adaptation of the gospel to the deepest need of man, and nothing to the human conscience. It seems to think God can have no place in the world except by a process of reasoning, and that no truth of God can stand except as it is propped