

ings, we ought to present the various Christian doctrines as near as possible to the truth, as seen through the translucent mind and pure heart; but remembering, that the only true teacher is Jesus himself,—and that it is by seeing Jesus that the soul is made fitter to see him better; that it is by the Gospel history that the spirit works in purifying the soul, so that at last the transfigured Son of God stands before the illuminated mind of his disciples. It is only by companying with Him, by hearing His words, by considering His sweet innocence, His dove-like purity, His unwearied labour, His self-renunciation, His meekness under suffering,—that, with Peter, we are at last led to exclaim—"Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God."

We have thus, starting from the basis which scepticism itself allows, arrived, by, as we believe, a fair enquiry, at an intelligent affirmation of the supernatural character, Divine nature, and marvellous works of Christ. Perhaps some of you may think that I might have better employed my time than in rehearsing and discussing objections against our faith, with which the great body of the Christian people are not troubled. Probably, however, such a view will be found to underrate the advances which scepticism is making among the ranks of, especially, the educated classes. In the workshops of our cities among our artizans, the theories I have brought before you are subjects of common conversation. Scientific men ignore Christianity. A portion of the periodic press makes its daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly attacks upon it. Scepticism is in the murky air of our cities; our steamboats carry it on the seas and rivers; our locomotives through our towns and villages, and the rural homestead often feels the infection of doubt, and denial of whatever is sacred. It is of importance that those who have been set apart to defend the faith should be especially conversant with the attacks which have been and now are being made upon it. The ostrich hiding its head from the pursuer, is no proper example to follow. Ignorance is a shield through which the shafts of the enemy reach the heart. Knowledge is a

better buckler. He that would gain the battle, must be able from a commanding height to survey the whole field. It is as necessary we should know what and where the enemy's forces are, as the position and powers at our disposal. To contemn the enemy is often to lose the field. On the other hand, ignorance often so magnifies the foe as to induce retreat and bring disaster. He possesses poor courage who is afraid to look both truth and error in the eye. We need to know what Christ's enemies say of him, with their own lips, and to deal fairly with their own words. To misrepresent them is bad policy and worse morals.—Christ listened to Satan and answered him. He was not afraid to stand before the judgment seat to be judged fairly; nor is he now afraid. All he wants is that his disciples should not forsake him and flee, but stand by him, and with the words of truth defend him. He cannot speak now, but by us. Let him not be crucified among us, as he often has been since Pilate gave sentence against him. We may shrink and cower like the disciples, while Jesus again bears his cross, and because we hide our heads in ignorance, think that all goes well with him and with his cause. We may be debating who shall be greatest in the kingdom, like the Jews when the battering rams of Titus were shaking the solid walls of Jerusalem. Let the people be at rest, but it is not good that those to whom the leadership of Christ's armies is entrusted should sleep through the whole night, while attacks are made. We ought also to make such enquiries for our own sakes. It may be more comfortable to be at ease, free from the cares which enquiry and discussion impose, as well as from the doubts they may originate; but it is not good for an intellectual soul, were no general issues at stake. "Never are the truths of salvation properly received by us without the free exercise of our own mental powers." The reception of dogmas from authority never produces right faith. Even the faith which has sprung up in the soul from the evidence of Jesus in his own Gospel, will bear all the more and better fruit from the stirring of the soil at the