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SERMONIC.

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF REJECT- ING CHRISTIANITY.

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*And if Christ be not raised, your faith is
vain; ye are yet in your sins.*—1 Cor.
xv: 17.

THERE are, in general, two kinds of doubters: those who wish to doubt, and seek materials to strengthen their unbelief; and those who would be glad to believe, but are perplexed with doubts that they do not cherish. It is impossible to assist the first of these. Their difficulty is not with the head, but with the heart; and Jesus Himself instructs His followers to pay them no attention, saying: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." So that whoever, professing to be a Christian, endeavors to convince a person who really does not wish to be convinced, does so without any authority whatever from the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he professes to represent. And, in fact, if we attempt to assist those who wish to believe, those who wish to disbelieve will

often distort, as they can do without the slightest difficulty, what we say to assist honest inquirers, to their own destruction.

There are many Christians who have waves of doubt sweep over their minds, especially when some person who has been supposed to be a man of unquestionable piety is exposed as one capable of the blackest sin and the foulest practices; especially, again, when some person who has seemed to furnish every evidence of the strongest faith begins to waver, and then makes a public recantation or change, and declares that, through his whole life, he had been under a delusion as to his supposed religious experience. It is no proof that a man has not faith that he doubts, though that seems to be a contradiction. The heart may be true to Christ and Christianity, while the head is disturbed. Many persons never doubt, because they never think. Some never doubt because—and this is the best of reasons—they have enjoyed deep religious experience, and have been busy in Christian activity. But it would not be logical to say that a man is very good merely because he never doubted, nor that he is not good merely because he

[The first several sermons are reported in full; the remainder are given in condensed form. Every care is taken to make these reports correct; yet our readers must not forget that it would be unfair to hold a speaker responsible for what may appear in a condensation, made by another, of his discourse.]