

question for all mankind. Let it be shown that, in the nature of the case, this is impossible. A mathematical demonstration, or a scientific ascertainment, may be placed beyond the reach of rational doubt; but historico-moral truth never can. It must appear more or less probable, more or less certain, according to the moral condition of the mind that deals with it. There is, therefore, no reason to be disturbed by the fact that skepticism is always possible, and has always something to say for itself. There has never been a time when it could not be said, "Some doubted."

The Lord Jesus Christ distinctly recognized the painful fact, that there is a condition of mind and heart in which men cannot hear His words as the very words of God. Only he who is of God hears God's words. The sayings of Christ had the same sound for all on whose ears they fell, but not the same force or value. There was in them an element of trial. They tested, and they still test, the hearer's susceptibility of moral impression. They announced universal benefits; but it has never been claimed for them that they can win universal acceptance, or that they can render doubt impossible. Perhaps it might save some empty declarations to let this be distinctly understood.

Euclid could convince every man who had the brains to follow him through a geometrical demonstration; but St. Paul could not convince every man who had the brains to follow him through a Christian discourse—and for this reason, that moral and religious teaching requires, for its appreciation, something more than brains. With what admirable candor St. Luke has put on record the partial failure of this Apostle's ministry, both at Athens and at Rome! These were the very cities in which the success of the gospel was, perhaps, most to be desired, with a view to its influence over the world. The one was the old capital of intellect; the other the great seat of political and military power. Yet it is frankly confessed in the Acts of the Apostles, that in those cities, not only some doubted, but some disbelieved and mocked. So it was in the beginning of the gospel, is now, and probably shall be till the coming of our Lord.

3. *Be quite frank with the people about the formation of the Bible.*

Harm has been done by a kind of timid reticence in the pulpit on points of Biblical criticism which the congregation had a right to know, and by a way of quoting the volume of Holy Writ in churches as though it were, throughout, a book of the same age and the same value. The information with which scholars have long been familiar regarding the construction of the Canon, the disputed authorship of certain books, and passages of books, and the whole conception of historical progress and perspective in revelation, have been timidly, if at all, taught from orthodox pulpits. But it constantly happens that a private Christian learns, perhaps, from a source unfriendly to the pulpit, and in exaggerated terms, that questions are open, and open among the preachers, of