

sis, and to some systems of the interpretation of that book they are no doubt in opposition.

4th. Not long since it was confidently asserted that the sciences of philology and ethnology, in opposition to St. Paul and the earliest records, prove that all men had not sprung from one common stock. That position has now been practically abandoned, and it is admitted that all discoveries in these fields of enquiry point to a common origin of the race. Scientific thought is moving on its own independent lines in the direction of what seems to be the teaching of H. S. All that is contended for now is that the changes that have taken place in bodily structure, mental habits and language require a much longer period than the assumed Scriptural chronology seems to allow.

5th. The science of Biology, with its now widely accepted doctrine of evolution, has awakened widespread doubt in many minds. That theory, as you know, represents all living things as the result, not of creative will, but of natural growth and expansion. The law of this growth and expansion is supposed by one class of thinkers to be an inherent property of matter; by another class, to have been imposed by God upon matter, or to be the outcome of the truth that in God we live and move and have our being, and that by him all things consist. The attitude of the scientists will differ as heaven from earth according as he assumes the one or the other of these positions to be true. It is well for us, however, to remember that evolution is still an unproved theory, not an ascertained fact. A theory, too, against which objections lie that seem to me, on scientific grounds, to be absolutely fatal to its claims.

6th. In addition to this, however, it is maintained that there is an irreconcilable difference between natural science and the Scriptures in their general view of the operation of God. The one refers everything to His agency; the other proves everything that it touches to be the result of natural causes.

7th. It is maintained that the conclusions to which all true forms of philosophic thought naturally lead are opposed to the teaching of Scripture as to the character of God, His mode of operation, and the morality which he is there represented as enjoining or at least sanctioning.

8th. It is maintained that the objections which grow out of a critical study of history are absolutely overwhelming. These objections divide themselves into two main branches. The one confines itself to a critical examination of Christianity taken by itself, the authenticity and genuineness of the Sacred Books, and the origin and growth of its doctrines. Strauss and Bain lead the way in these assaults. Their theories and arguments have been circulated among the people by Renan, whose book has been translated into every language in Europe, and by many popular writers in Germany and in England. Of the thorough searching examination and confutation of their statements and theories, which may be found in the replies of Neander, Tholuch, Uilman, Ebraud, only a few theologians have yet heard. The other division of this assaulting army confines itself to a critical examination of Christianity as compared with other religions, and it claims to have discovered that they are strangely alike in their origin and history; that there is nothing in Christianity down to the most minute details in the life of its Founder, that does not find its counterpart in some previously existing system.

Such in the main, as far at least as I have been able to ascertain them, are the producing causes of modern doubt. The cumulative force which they have acquired, by being all presented at the same time, will be easily understood. The doubts and difficulties which, taken together, they have produced are many and great. The different divisions of the assailing force are well drilled, and in their own conviction, at least, securely posted. They can no longer be passed by as of no consequence, or sneered out of existence. The thinkers who, on one or other of these grounds, are urging what seem to them grave if not insuperable difficulties in the way of faith, must be met by thought, and not by being prayed at or preached at, or by being commanded to believe or exhorted to repent. In short, if religion is to conquer modern doubt, it must not fear to face and attempt the solution of its problems, it must, without shrinking, challenge a comparison of its solution and thesis. And it must do so in the spirit that appeals to reason, prepared to abide by the decision. Now it is a great strength and encouragement to us to know that in undertaking this task faith is doing no new thing. It has done it before, and can do it again. Dr. Pusey said that some time before his death, he had not met with any recent objection to Christianity with which he was not familiar fifty years ago. And yet the new work is not a mere repetition of the old. Human thought, as knowledge progresses, is ever changing—widening with the progress of the times. Our religious belief cannot be separated from our conceptions of the universe; as the latter grows larger and truer, so the former must be transfigured and exalted that it may live and thrive in the true light.

But what a task does this impose upon us who by our office are set as the defenders of the citadel, the guardians of the Faith. To be able to meet the difficulties that are oppressing many honest souls, and to remove their doubts, we must make ourselves familiar with their producing causes. And to do this it will be necessary for us, not indeed to become practical experimental scientists in all the field of modern research, for that would be impossible, but to make ourselves acquainted with the results of scientific discoveries, and the theories that have been based upon them.

Without this we shall not be able to sympathize with the doubter or to win his confidence; most of all, we shall not be able to point out, as may unquestionably be done, the utterly baseless character of many of the theories that now pass current as scientific, or to show the utterly unsupported assumptions, upon which many of the doubts and difficulties that are being felt really rest. To accomplish this result it is not so hopeless as at first it looks. And yet it is no easy task. It involves study, downright, hard, systematic study too, on the part of the clergy and other leaders of public thought. But that is a most essential part of our solemn ordination obligations. In my judgment there never was a time when men of ability, men of study, men of learning were so deeply needed for the ministry of the Church, as now. There never was a time when we who are in that sacred office were called with so loud and imperative a voice as we are now, to give ourselves to study. It is the paramount duty of the hour. It comes before everything else except the exercise of the devotion al life. The priest's lips should keep knowledge. And now that the bonds of authority are everywhere being loosed, now that there are men in the Church and in the neighbourhood who are doing all they can to teach the people, not that the clergy are to be highly esteemed in love for their works' sake, but that they are to be highly suspected and watched, for no other reason than that they are the ministers of Christ; now that knowledge of every kind is being so rapidly and so universally diffused, we have need to take heed that many of our people do not outstrip us in knowledge, and that we do not fall under their contempt for our lack of information, our inability to understand their difficulties or to help them out of their doubts. And yet, as you will readily infer, it is not knowledge alone that is needed—that may satisfy our own minds. But our office, as it is conceived of by the English Church, and, I think, rightly conceived of, is above everything else, the office of teachers. And we must not only set ourselves to know, but we must set ourselves to teach our knowledge to the people. Teach them again, in the first instance, positively what are the grounds of our belief in the existence of God, and of the truth of the Christian religion. This will itself remove most of their doubts, and it will form an entrenched citadel into which they may retreat when pressed hard in the field, and be safe from the most furious assaults of the foe. And then we must be ready as far as possible, not only to give a reason for the faith that is in us to every one that asketh us, but to give a reason also why there should be no unfaith in them, by being prepared to solve their difficulties and remove their doubts.

But I can fancy some hard worked town clergyman or country missionary asking in dismay: Am I then to withdraw my own mind and the minds of my people from the practical and devotional aspects of Christ's religion, and occupy them with its controversial and apologetic aspects? Instead of preaching the Gospel of Christ, am I to occupy myself in setting forth and answering scientific doubts and difficulties? I say, God forbid! The great remedy for modern doubts and difficulties is just that which was the remedy for ancient doubt and difficulty, and that remedy is just this: Preach Christ, and Him crucified. It was this that won the world at first. Before this Greek philosophy and barbarian superstition fell. "*In hoc signo vinces*" is as much the talisman of victory to the Christian preacher to-day, as it was to the Great emperor in the year 315. The great mass of men have no great power of reasoning, and are not greatly influenced by purely intellectual considerations; but they have hearts to feel, and those hearts bear witness to Christ, and are won by him. God has written and engraven His law upon our hearts. He has given us moral and spiritual perceptions. He has planted a conscience within us. And that conscience and those perceptions, even in the untutored mind, recognize in Christ, when he is set forth as the crucified among them, that which responds to their own cravings, which embodies and unfolds that of which they have been helplessly striving to form some adequate conception. The cross of Calvary. The offering up of the spotless Lamb of God has met that sense of unworthiness, of sin, and of the need of forgiveness and grace, which lies deep down in the hearts of all men; and so through the ages it has drawn all men to Him. And yet, when I say that the preaching of Christ is, after all, the best way to meet and quell the doubts and difficulties of

modern days, I do not mean what usually passes for the preaching of Christ; I do not mean mere declamation about Christ; I do not mean the preaching of some Christ, who was born, not of the Virgin Mary, but of our own imagination. I mean the preaching of the Christ of God. The holding Him up, the exhibiting Him before men as He is set forth in the H. S., and in the creeds of the Catholic Church—as the Son of God become for us the Son of man. Not the proclamation of certain doctrinal subtleties, but of Christ Himself, the Crucified, the Ever-living, Ever-present Head and Lord of our Being. Christ as He is exhibited in the worlds which He spake, in the works which He did, in the miracle which he performed, Christ as He is seen in history, as He is seen in the lives of the saints, as He is known in our own experience. It is that, Christ in you, which, like an electric spark, goes straight to the hearts of men, and flashes light into all its darkened chambers. And so the best, the most effective way to meet modern doubts is to preach Christ earnestly, ye who are called to preach, and to live in Christ earnestly all of you, to be yourselves His living epistles. You will remember that the doubter in their startling book entitled "Modern Christianity,"—a civilized heathenism—is won to Christ, not by arguments, but by one a priest of the Church, who realized in his life what the religion of Jesus requires us to be, who spared not himself, but was in labours most abundant, and who made men feel that as soon as he saw them he lifted up his heart in prayer to God for them, and the ideal is a true one. It is this exhibition of Christ that will reach the heart and conscience and satisfy the reason of the world. He is the one only ideal of humanity, the perfect and pattern man, who possesses a divine power of attractiveness which can penetrate to the innermost depths of the human heart, and exercise there a mighty moral and spiritual power. Mr. Lecky, himself a now believer, in his "History of Morality from Augustus to Charlemagne," says: It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has filled the hearts of men with an impassioned love, and has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions; has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the highest incentive to its practice, and has exercised so deep an influence, that it may truly be said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of all the philosophers and than all the exhortations of all the moralists that ever lived. This has indeed been the well-spring of whatever has been best and purest in the Christian life; amid all the sins and failings, amid all the priest-craft and persecution and fanaticism which have defaced the Church, it has preserved in the character and example of its founder an enduring principle of regeneration." Every statement of this passage is capable of abundant verification. Christ embraces in Himself all philosophy, all morality, all law, all that is truly human and all that is Divine. He is the great Miracle of the universe; the one all perfect revelation of man to man and of God to man; in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. His life and character, seen, contemplated, realized, are themselves an incontrovertible proof of the supernatural, the divine, and will lead all honest hearts to a belief in the Incarnation. For they will feel that if he was not the Son of God, He was nothing but a Jewish peasant; and they will feel that the ignorance, narrowness and prejudice which this supposition necessarily implies, are utterly inadequate to account for the production of a character which, in its wisdom, goodness and holiness surpasses all the attainments, not only of all wise men, philosophers and saints, but which stands, at an infinite distance, above the loftiest conception of human genius. Therefore, while we use all diligence to enable us to meet doubters on their own grounds, to explain their difficulties and to remove their doubts, let us hold up Christ—Christ the crucified, Christ the risen, Christ the ascended, ever-living, ever-present Lord.

Prof. Clark, of Trinity College, Toronto, remarked that in the very able paper to which they had listened yesterday afternoon, they had been reminded of the necessity of sympathizing with the doubter. He quite coincided with that counsel; but he thought it was equally necessary and desirable, in these controversies, that they should sympathize with believers; and there had been a lack of this considerateness towards Christians who might not agree with ourselves in the paper to which he had referred. They had been warned not to attempt the defence of untenable positions, lest their guns should be turned against themselves; but there was an opposite danger of withdrawing our battery so far back as to endanger the safety of our own army. Most of us would rather have our guns turned against ourselves than so work them as to destroy a portion of the army of God. While he agreed with very much which the first speaker (Dr. Kramer) had said, he could have wished that other types of Christian thought had been dealt with a little more tenderly. It was easy to speak of the "maukishness"—that, he believed, was the word employed—of the Evangelicals, and the narrow-