

—I will go my priest, or I will go to some one who has studied the matter more than I have, and I will state my difficulty and will ask what Christianity has to say in refutation of it; for it is only reasonable to suppose that this same difficulty must have been presented to others just as intelligent as myself, and yet they remain Christians.

But, alas, this is seldom done. Instead, the difficulty is dwelt upon, and in the dwelling becomes magnified; other difficulties are searched for and all too easily found, the fundamental truths of the gospel are disregarded, Communion is discontinued, prayer is neglected, and the whole superstructure of Christianity (though fair enough to look upon) is held to be reared on a rotten foundation, which must crumble before the shocks of research and learning. The clergy, too lazy to work, fatten on the spoils wrung from the ignorant and uneducated by the propagation of myths and mysteries, while the people, only too glad to be gulled, swallow all that is told them without ever questioning the facts or examining the evidence.

It is with the hope of helping some who are troubled with doubts concerning "the faith as it is in Christ Jesus" that I have undertaken this course of lectures, and it is my desire to treat the subject as simply as possible. The great difficulty with the majority of books written on Christian Evidences is, that they are in a language "not understood of the people." They are written by scholars for scholars. They presuppose that the reader is acquainted with the works of Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Huxley, Max Muller and the like. They take for granted that he has a fair knowledge of logic, moral philosophy and metaphysics, and so they are over the heads of persons of ordinary education, who have not the time or the inclination to go deeply into the matter. If such read these books, they can make little or nothing out of them, and concluding that there is therefore nothing to be made, they become more confirmed than ever in their error. Now, I by no means profess that the whole thing is as easy as A. B. C., for it is not, but I do think if one will only approach the study with "pure eyes and humble heart," giving it his earnest and prayerful attention, asking God to open his eyes that he may see the wondrous things of His Law, that God will reveal

Himself to him and dispel his doubts and establish his faith. But we must look to God for guidance, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he learn them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. II 14.) But one may say, how can I pray to a God in whom I do not believe? I answer if you earnestly desire light, you can pray conditionally without doing violence to your present convictions. Say, "If there be a God, I beseech Him to guide me to a knowledge of Himself," and please God your prayer will be answered in due time.

But not only to unbelievers and doubters do I address myself in these instructions, but to those also who are, as yet, firm in the faith, that they may be ready, as St. Peter says, always to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear, (1 Pet. III XV) for it is much better to be ready armed for the fray which is imminent, than to wait until the attack is begun, before searching for the weapons of defence. As I said just now, scepticism is rampant all around us, if it has not yet effected an entrance into our own hearts, and sooner or later, the question must force itself upon every thinking, reasoning person "Why am I a Christian? It is useless even if it were right, to tell people that they must not read articles against Christianity, that they must not listen to the arguments of unbelievers, they cannot help doing the one or the other, since if one reads at all, it is next to impossible to avoid meeting with doubts expressed in one form or another; if one mixes with his fellows at all, he must at times come in contact with doubters of different sorts and perforce hear their opinion. Nor need he fear to do so if he will only take the trouble to learn why he believes in God, a Redemption, a future existence since there is nothing antagonistic between reason and faith. On the contrary, faith is not worth having unless it be based on rational convictions. It may be a very easy way of getting out of difficulties to say 'I am a Christian because my father was one before me, it suits me, and I have no desire to change;' but it is hardly a satisfactory foundation for our faith, and we cannot wonder if that faith gives way at the first shock. "If such people were con-