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Art. I.—AMERICAN METHODISM IN 1876.*

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IN 1776 the whole Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America was composed of twenty-five ministers and five thousand members, in eleven circuits, on the Atlantic slope. In 1781 it crossed the Alleghanies, and laid the foundations of the "Old Western Conference," which extended from the Northern lakes to Natchez on the Mississippi. Its first General Conference was held in Baltimore in 1784, at which Francis Asbury was ordained its first bishop at the age of thirty-nine. There were then about eighty preachers and fifteen thousand members. Thirty-two years afterward, when this remarkable man died, in 1816, the church numbered over seven hundred itinerant preachers and more than two hundred and eleven thousand members. Soon after Washington was inaugurated as President of the United States, Bishops Coke and Asbury read to him the congratulatory address of the General Conference, which was then in

* Proceedings of the General Conference held at Baltimore, May, 1876.

Art. VIII.—RECENT GERMAN WORKS ON APOLOGETICS.*

By HENRY B. SMITH.

IT is only within a generation that Apologetics has become recognized as a distinct department of theology, and treated as an organized whole. And it is chiefly in Germany that its distinctive nature and definition, its method and relation to other branches, have been fully discussed. Planck, in his *Introduction to the Theological Sciences*,† first assigned to it a definite place in the sphere of theology, putting it, however, strangely enough, under the head of exegetical theology.

Schleiermacher, in his epoch-making treatise, entitled *A Short Exhibit of Theological Study*, published in the first volume of his Complete Works,‡ first assigned to Apologetics the leading place in the organism of the different departments of theology—as a preparatory discipline for all the rest, and having to do with the fundamental principles of theology. In this sense it is equivalent to fundamental theology; and has for its object the investigation of all the ideas, facts, and truths which logically or historically precede the system of theology proper, or Christian dogmatics, strictly so called. This is a broad and comprehensive view of the subject; but, as thus defined, it neglects too much what has always been considered as the chief object of Apologetics, that is, the specific defense of religion, especially of the Christian religion, against objections—the vindication of the absolute and final authority of Christianity as the highest and best system of truth for man. Accordingly, few have followed Schleiermacher in giving so wide a scope to Apologetics; though almost all recent writers find a specific position for it in the encyclopædia of theology. Tholuck (in his *Vermischte Schriften*, Bd. I., p. 149, sq.) and some others denied that it could be treated fully, as a whole, by itself; for the general reason, that all the doctrines, facts, and truths of both natural and revealed religion, have, and must have, their apologetic side; they can all be assailed, and must all be defended; but this, they say, should be done in detail, rather than by grouping all to-

* See our REVIEW for July, p. 479, where the titles are given of several recent German works on Apologetics.

† Planck, *Einleitung in die theologischen Wissenschaften*, Vol. I., §§ 271–362.

‡ Schleiermacher, *Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums: Sämmtl. Werke*, Abthlg. I., Bd. I., § 39.

gether. In any case, the materials with which Apologetics has to do must be taken from some or all of the other departments of theology. And if its office be to reply in detail to all the specific objections, and to establish the truth of the assailed positions, of course it is an endless work, and would defy all attempts at a proper classification. But it is not to be, nor has it been, so understood. Very generally stated, it may be said that Apologetics comprises what has previously been published under the two great heads of natural theology, on the one hand, and of the evidences of Christianity on the other. And the chief problem and question has been to bring these two under one department, or under one definition; also including the general principles and questions that come up in the modern philosophies of history and religion, as well as the substance of the investigations contained in the introductions to the Old and New Testament. The facts of ethnology, and of primeval and prehistoric history—even the investigations of natural science, and the principles of anthropology, and of ethics, have also come to constitute a part of the materials of which Apologetics must make use.* So that we have here manifestly a pretty broad field; and the question is, whether it can be fairly and profitably cultivated with a scientific unity of idea and design.

Another, though a somewhat secondary question, is, to which division of the general encyclopedia of theology shall Apologetics be allotted. Nobody would now think of following Planck in putting it under exegetical theology. Only a part of its materials can be claimed as giving it a position under historical theology; but it comprises much more than this, especially when we bring into view the modern and urgent conflicts of Christianity with materialism and pantheism. It must then come under either systematic or practical theology, or have a place by itself.

Dr. Delitzsch,† in his *System of Apologetics*, assigned it to practical theology, since it has to do with the practical work and progress of the church (as has preaching). It cannot well be put under any one department. But Dr. Delitzsch's own treatment of the subject is quite like that of a work on systematic theology; it is made up almost wholly of dogmatic material.

Dr. Düsterdieck,‡ in his able articles on this question, also contends

* See PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, July, 1876, pp. 494-6.

† *System der Christlichen Apologetik*, 1869.

‡ In *Jahrbücher f. deutsche Theologie*, 1866, on the Idea and Encyclopædic Position of Apologetics.

for practical theology as the proper rubric under which Apologetics is to be put, on the ground that Apologetics, etymologically, is the theory of apology, just as homiletics is the theory of sermonizing, and so comes under the head of practice and art, rather than of system or theory. But this seems to be too narrow a view of its nature and functions. It does not merely tell us how all vindication is to be conducted; how Christianity is to be scientifically defended; but it also defends it; and not only defends it, but tries to establish its truth and authority. As Baumstark (*Apologetik*, p. 29) well remarks: "Apologetics, as the scientific proof of the absolutism of the Christian religion, as a whole, cannot be assigned to a single division of the system of theology, but is to prepare the ground for the whole of theology. Hence it has its place in the introduction to the whole system, as proposed by Schleiermacher." It is treated of by Pelt in his *Encyclopædia* under the general caption of the "Doctrine of Theological Principles; or, Fundamental Theology." The objection to this is, that its materials are so largely taken from church history, exegesis, etc., that it must needs come after these. It would seem, then, that we must either make a distinct head for it, introductory to all the departments of theology, or else assign a place (as Hagenbach does) introductory to systematic theology. The latter is, perhaps, the most convenient arrangement for teaching, even though it be not free from all logical objections.

To return to the general idea of Apologetics. It was defined by Sack* (in the first really important and systematic work on the subject after Schleiermacher's scheme was propounded) as that branch of theology ("theological *discipline*") "which treats of the ground of the Christian religion as divine fact." He distinguishes between the *ideal* and *real* sides of Christianity; and assigns the former (the ideal) to systematic theology, while the latter (the real) is the proper subject of Apologetics—having to do with the *actuality* of Christianity; so preparing the way for dogmatics. This seems (as Baumstark says, p. 2) to separate the ideal and the real too much; and Apologetics, as a matter of fact, has to do with a good deal more than the external history of Christianity. And Sack himself concedes, that "the ideal side, or the doctrine, can never be considered without relation to the real, historical basis; and that, in Apologetics, though the main subject-matter be the real side of Christianity, yet this can never be treated without reference to the ideal element." His further treatment of the materials of Apologetics is, in fact, rather doctrinal than historical; for

* K. H. Sack, *Christliche Apologetik*. Hamburg, 1829. 2d Ed., 1841.

his chief headings are "Redemption," "Life," and "Perfection;" and these subjects are taken from Christian theory and life, rather than from Christian history.

The Roman Catholic divine, Drey,* in his work, entitled *Apologetics as the Scientific Evidence of the Divinity of Christianity in its Manifestation*, defines Apologetics as "the Philosophy of the Christian Revelation, and of its History." He is the representative of a class of German Catholic divines who felt the influence of the philosophy of Schelling, in its later form, in its opposition to the Hegelian logic; and who were led to lay the chief stress on the positive historical elements of the Christian system. Christianity, they said, is primarily historical fact; and theology should also be historical and positive in its fundamental character. Yet it can not be merely historical; it is rather a philosophy of the history—a scientific shaping and defense of the Christian church and religion. To this definition and treatment of the subject it has been well objected, that it brings the whole of Apologetics under the head of the philosophy of religion; it ceases to be a part of theology, and becomes a branch of philosophy. As a philosophy of religion, Drey's work contains valuable materials, shaped with learning and ability. It handles a part of the theme, but does not give a clear and full view of the whole of the science. Apologetics includes, to a certain extent, the philosophy of religion; but it has also a wider as well as a more specific scope.

Of the *Christian Apologetics on an Anthropological Basis*, by Pastor Christian Edward Baumstark,† only the first volume has been published. It differs from the other works on this subject chiefly in its method, as indicated by the title. The author takes the ground (on the *Method of Apologetics*, pp. 3–36), that while the historical method has been chiefly followed, the psychological is the only satisfactory and final one. The historical method tries to show that the Christian religion is, and by its history is proved to be, the true religion for man. The psychological method, on the other hand, starts with the individual, and shows that Christianity completely corresponds to the religious capacity and the religious needs of man. It is a merit of Baumstark's work that it emphasizes the latter point, and vindicates its necessity. But the fact is, that every apologetic work must, in some way, more or less consciously combine both methods.

* Apologetik als Wissenschaftliche Nachweisung der Göttlichkeit des Christenthums in seiner Erscheinung. Mainz, 3 Bde., 1844-1847.

† Christliche Apologetik auf anthropologischer Grundlage. Bd. I Frankfurt a. m, 1872.

Even in the oldest apologetic literature, as Baumstark concedes, we have examples of both—the *Præparatio Evangelica* and *Demonstratio Evangelica* of Eusebius, and the *De Civitate Dei* of Augustine, standing more on the historical ground; while the psychological method predominates in Tertullian's treatise, *De Testimonio Animæ naturaliter Christianæ*, and in the *Clementine Homilies*.

On this psychological basis, the general scheme of Apologetics, as propounded by Baumstark, is the following: First of all, in opposition to materialism and pantheism, he proposes, by "anthropological investigations," to evince and exhibit man's native religious capacities and endowments; then to show how far this natural religious basis reaches, and where this development has its limits, which require to be supplemented by a special revelation. Thus the foundation is secured which bears up all the rest. In the second part he reviews the history of the non-Christian religions—those "outside of" Christianity—to see whether, and how far, this native religious bias is manifested in them, and whether they can, and do, satisfy man's religious cravings. The third part is to give the proof, that man finds in Christianity alone the full satisfaction for his religious needs. The first two parts are well and fairly treated in the first volume of this work; the third part is not yet published. The utmost that seems to be possible, or accomplished, by this "anthropological method," is to prove that man is a religious being; that religion is a necessity of human nature; and that in the Christian religion man's religious longing and needs find their highest development and satisfaction.

The most important and, on the whole, the ablest of these recent German works is the treatise of Dr. J. H. A. Ebrard,* *Apologetics; The Scientific Vindication of Christianity*, 2 Parts, 1874-5. The author is best known outside of Germany by his *Scientific Criticism of the Evangelical History* (3d edition, 1868, 1241 pages), at first written in reply to Strauss's life of Jesus, but afterward extended in scope so as to exhibit the unity and harmony of the four Gospels in a thorough and satisfactory manner. Bleek assigns it a very high place among the works on that subject. Ebrard's *Dogmatics*, too, in two volumes, gives a comprehensive outline of systematic theology, chiefly from the Reformed point of view, though his Calvinism is of a moderate caste. It is one of the more useful works for students of theology, and has been used as a text-book in some of the Reformed institutions. His *Apologetics* has still higher claims to attention, as showing the results of wide

* Apologetik. Wissenschaftliche Rechtfertigung des Christenthums. Von J. H. A. Ebrard, Dr. phil. et theol. 2 Theile, Gütersloh, 1874-5.

and protracted studies, and making an excellent attempt to collect the somewhat heterogeneous materials of this new *disciplina* into a systematic form. He says in the preface to the first part :

“For several years I have had a growing conviction that the coming ministers of the gospel must enter more thoroughly into the investigations, questions, and principles of the natural sciences, if they would be in a condition to contend victoriously against the anti-Christian tendencies of the times.” “These considerations determined me, in the winter of 1872-3, to deliver a course of academic lectures, to which I gave the only partially adequate name of Apologetics, in order to fit it into the *Schema* of the traditional departments of theology. My hearers were theological students. I could, likewise, have wished that there might have been an equal number of students of medicine; for I well know the severe internal struggles through which a young man, educated as a Christian, must pass when he enters upon the study of medicine or the natural sciences.” He adds, that though he has always to some extent pursued the study of the natural sciences, yet for the purpose of these lectures he engaged in renewed investigations, and he claims that in the present work he stands upon the basis of the assured results of present scientific investigations—distinguishing between what is certain and what is merely hypothetical; and examining with special critical care the consequences drawn from these hypotheses in respect to supersensuous or supernatural subjects. He further claims, that this criticism of the hypotheses of naturalists is not made from the standpoint of an abstract, *a priori*, metaphysics. “Whoever will take the pains,” he says, “to read my book, will at once discern that my philosophical method is realistic throughout; I start from *observed facts*, and go forward step by step with painstaking care; I endeavor to lay at the basis of my investigation the *complete series of the facts*.”

In the Introduction to this work, Dr Ebrard proceeds to an examination of the main preliminary questions as to the nature, scope, and place of Apologetics as a scientific vindication of Christianity. To bring these questions fairly before our readers, we can not do better than to give a translation, with slight abridgments, of the whole of this introduction.

INTRODUCTION TO EBRARD'S APOLOGETICS.

§ 1. *Apologetics or Apology*.—In giving this work the title of *Apologetics*, according to modern usage, and not *Apology*, as the fathers of the church called it, I am not without justification. And yet, before we ask, What is Apologetics? we must examine and decide the pre-

vious question, Whether there is such a science as Apologetics? According to the verbal interpretation, Apologetics is the science of the ἀπολογεῖσθαι, that is, the science or *disciplina*, which examines the nature of defense (or vindication), that is, the essential characteristics of the apologetic procedure, and thence deduces the correct method. According to this Apologetics is related to Apology, as is theory to practice; that is, it is a relation analogous to that of homiletics to preaching, of liturgics to worship, of catechetics to catechising, etc. But here we encounter a fact which makes us hesitate, and demands a more thorough analysis. For while in the above-named theoretical departments of theology we always sharply distinguish between theory and practice, doctrine and application, so that homiletics never goes over into homilies, nor liturgics into liturgies, we never, on the other hand, see, nor can we conceive of, an Apologetics which does not go right over into and become an Apology. In the military art the theory of the defense (*e. g.* of a country or a fortress) is clearly distinguished from the act of defending; in the sphere of Christian theology, Apologetics is never limited to the theory; it does not merely tell us what the defense should be, but it is the scientific vindication itself.

§ 2. *Apologetics a Science.*—It is not difficult to see the reason of this. The above noted separation of theory and practice has no place whatever excepting in the sphere of ecclesiastical *action*, where theology becomes a practical art. The rules of such ecclesiastical action are derived from theological science, but they cannot, without practice, be so appropriated as to become a capacity or an art. It is wholly otherwise in the defense of the truth of Christianity. It may, indeed, find a place within different branches of church activity—for example, we may have Apologetics in sermons and pastoral care, in catechizing, in the work of foreign and domestic missions, but Apologetics as such does not come under any of these ecclesiastical acts, it forms no part of church action, but it is essentially a *scientific* work.

It is only a scientific vindication of the truth of Christianity which deserves to be called a defense (an Apology), for the last end or aim of the so-called *Apologetics* is not to impart a capacity for action, but knowledge, viz., a recognition (knowledge) of the truth of Christianity. The name Apologetics does not seem to be exactly fitted, or it is only half fitted, to denote this. What the word exactly denotes, that is, the *science of defense* in general, would be only a very empty and formal *discipline*. For as to defense in the abstract, nothing more can be said than what might be embraced in a very few formal and general conceptions. Every defense is determined by the character of the object to be defended;

a fortress is to be defended otherwise than a chessman, a mathematical theorem otherwise than a philological thesis, and both of these in a different way from an ethical postulate. Christian Apologetics now has for its object the defense of Christianity; for, according to usage, by Christian Apologetics we do not understand instructions as to how any given object may be defended in a Christian way, but instruction in the way in which Christianity is to be defended. "Christian" here designates the object and not the quality; "Christian Apologetics" is equivalent to "Apologetics of Christianity," that is, it is the *Science of the Apology of Christianity*.

§ 3. *Nature of Apologetics*.—And thus we are led to conclude that there is, at least, a relative justification for retaining the designation "Christian Apologetics." Between it and a mere "Apology" there still remains a difference, though a flowing one. For, Apologetics considered as the *science* of the defense of Christianity is to be distinguished from a mere Apology as such, in both its principles and method. There are apologies, oral or written, which are designed to reply to some definite objections made against Christianity, each of which may require something special in the method; thus Justin Martyr directed both of his Apologies against a series of definite single attacks. Such a defense may be *admirable as an Apology*, and on this very account, one-sided and *inadequate as Apologetics*. Christian Apologetics must then be distinguished from mere Apology by the fact, that its procedure and method are not determined by casual attacks made at some particular time, but by its deriving its *method of defense*, and consequently the defense itself, from the *essential nature of Christianity*. Every Apologetics is Apology, but every Apology is not Apologetics. Apologetics, in fine, is that science which infers from the *inmost nature* of Christianity what classes of attacks are in general *possible*, what different *sides* of Christian truth are liable to be attacked, and what *false principles* are at the basis of these attacks. *Apologetics is the Science of the Defense of the Truth of Christianity*.

NOTE.—Hännell (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1843, 3) defines Apologetics as "the science of the common ground of the church and of theology," but this is no definition, for this ground is Christ, and Apologetics would then be the science of Christ. The definition of the Roman Catholic theologian, Drey (in the work above cited), represents Apologetics in a way which is *formally* false, as "the Philosophy of the Christian Revelation and of its History." Philosophising about some *given* object (as about revelation in general), and even about an object of faith, is, indeed, possible (this is indirectly denied by Baumstark—see below), and it can also take on an apologetic character, and every true Apologetics must also proceed philosophically, not empirically, so that for substance Drey's definition is not so far from

the mark; but in form (formally) it is incorrect, because instead of developing the idea of Apologetics, it only names one of the means of which Apologetics has to make use. Lechler's definition is better, viz.: "the scientific proof that the Christian religion is the absolute religion." (*Ueber den Begriff der Apologetik*, Studien und Kritiken, 1839, 3.) Only this says too little, for Apologetics is not merely the evidence, but the *science* of the evidence of the truth of Christianity. Then, too, the idea of the "*absolute religion*" introduces something foreign to the object, just as in the title to Drey's work the phrase "*divinity* of Christianity" is too specific. For the question is simply this: Is what Christianity says of itself true or false? If this is decided, everything else about its absoluteness or divinity follows of course. Chr. Ed. Baumstark ("Christl. Apologetik auf anthropologischer Grundlage, Frankf.-a.-m., 1872") contests the position that "Apologetics is the science of Apology," and defines it as "the scientific defense of Christianity as the absolute religion." Apologetics, as we have seen, comes to this, and I have, therefore, put the two as equivalent in the title of my book, but this is not a *definition*. Baumstark himself afterward recognizes the fact, that Apologetics, in distinction from an Apology, has to defend Christianity not merely on one or another side, but on all conceivable sides. This can be done only when Apologetics deduces from the very *essence* of Christianity the *possible* attacks upon it, and thus becomes the science of the defense of the truth of Christianity.

§ 4. *The Twofold Office of Apo'logetics*.—Christianity, according to its own original and documentary declaration in the Holy Scriptures, is the redemption of man by the eternal, living, and personal God, achieved in time and ever advancing to completion; it is man's redemption *out of* an abnormal state and relation to God, opposed to the will of God, and the true nature and destiny of man himself, and *into* a normal condition and relation to God, corresponding with the divine will and man's nature and destination. Thus Christianity, according to its own testimony, is (*a*) not a relative truth, or stage in the knowledge of the truth, having only a relative worth, but it is *eternal and absolute truth*, yet it is this truth, (*b*) not in the form of mere teaching or doctrine but in the form of *fact*, of *actual realization*. Christianity is an historical act of redemption in time; it is *historical fact*, but it is act and fact, having *eternal and absolute contents*. In the person of Christ "the truth" (ἡ ἀλήθεια) appeared personally; in history "the life" (ἡ ζωή); in Christ's passion and resurrection, the eternal normal relation between man and God is reinstated in and by a temporal act; and so, too, the conversion of the individual to Christ, and faith in Christ, are the filling of the soul in time with an eternal substance. If Christianity now be such an intimate union of temporal historical acts with the eternal substance of truth, it follows directly—that the attacks upon Christianity must be aimed either against its *eternal substance of truth*, or against the *temporal facts*. That is, either the *eternal truths* in Christianity can be assailed, or its *historical character*.

NOTE.—The definition of Apologetics given by Sack (*Christl. Apologetik*) is one-sided, viz.: “that branch (*disciplina*) of theology which shows that the ground of the Christian religion is a divine *fact*.” In accordance with this he goes on to say that the office of Systematic Theology is to develop “the ideal side,” or the eternal truth of Christianity, while Apologetics treats of Christianity as actual fact. Sack was probably led to this one-sided definition by the fact, that when he wrote this work, the attacks (of De Wette, and then of Strauss) were almost exclusively made against the historical character of Christianity. Had he written in reply to the modern assaults of materialism upon the existence of life, of soul, of personality, of design (teleology), and of God himself, his definition could hardly have been so partial. But yet he might have remembered the French Encyclopedists! But his chief error consisted in his starting out from the attacks for the moment in vogue, instead of deducing the idea of Apologetics from the essential nature of Christianity.

§ 5. A. *Defense of the Eternal Truth of Christianity. Difference between Apologetics and Polemics.*—The eternal contents of Christianity are attacked when the truths which it teaches or takes for granted are *denied, and represented as falsehoods*. The attacks which Apologetics has here to repel are directed *against these truths as such*, and thus Apologetics is distinguished from Polemics. The office of Polemics is that of contending against tendencies which do not deny the truths as such, but only call in question the connection of these eternal truths with the facts of Christianity, or present them in a perverted form.

NOTE.—The *Rationalismus Vulgaris*, as well as Socinianism and Pelagianism (like Ebionitism before them), do not deny the historical character of Christianity, do not declare it to be a myth; nor do they deny such eternal truths as that there is a God, that there is a law of God, a moral law for man, and that the transgression of this law is sin. Nor do they deny that Christ came to deliver men from sin—that is, to redeem mankind.

But they call in question that mode of conjoining the historical facts with the eternal truths which are taught by revelation in the primitive documents of Christianity. Thus they deny that the eternal substance of truth was in Jesus Christ personally made manifest; that he freed men from guilt by his expiatory sacrifice, and that deliverance from guilt must precede deliverance from sin, etc. They reduce salvation to mere teaching or example, to a sharpening of the law. This is a *perversion* of Christianity, ἀλλοτρίωσις, not a direct denial.

Analogous to these Ebionitistic tendencies, only in the opposite direction, are the Docetic heresies; analogous to the legal heresies are the Antinomian—they are *perversions*. The office of Polemics, as well as well of Dogmatics, is to contend against and to refute these perversions of Christianity.

On the other hand, Apologetics has to establish the truth of Christianity against such assaults as have grown up in those systems of speculation which are outside of Christianity, or are opposed to it, and which attack and deny the eternal truths of Christianity as such. When, for example, materialism maintains that the soul and thought are mere functions of the ganglia of the brain; when materialism and pantheism

maintain that there is no immortality, neither eternal happiness nor eternal misery, and that consequently the whole *presupposition* of the necessity of redemption is from the outset deception or superstition; or when these systems maintain that the freedom of the will is a mere seeming, and that every man at every moment acts from necessity as compelled by his nerves and the ganglia of the brain, etc., that the difference of good and evil is determined only by custom and convenience, that there is no ethical law binding in itself, and hence no sin; or that there are in nature and in the order of the world no works of design, and consequently that there is no Creator:—all of these cases are denials of Christian truth as such, here the ground is taken away from under the feet of Christianity, and it is about these questions that Apologetics is to be employed. It has for its office to investigate such attacks in a philosophical manner, and to inquire how they are to be scientifically refuted.

§ 6. *Illustrations and Limitations.*—It is a matter of course that Apologetics cannot bring to these investigations any axioms borrowed from revelation and theology, but can only appeal to the facts of self-consciousness and of native rational knowledge *belonging to man as man*. We do not prove *idem per idem*; this were illogical and objectionable. To take for granted a knowledge of Christian truth, to *presuppose* a consciousness shaped by Christianity, and then to analyze that consciousness, this is not Apologetics. Considered on its practical side, the object of Apologetics is to give instructions to the practical theologian, to the minister of the church, and in general to every Christian and member of the church, how he is to defend the truths of Christianity against those who still stand aloof from the faith, against non-Christians and gainsayers. Not as though an unbeliever or scoffer can be converted to Christianity by means of deduction and proof (somewhat as Pastor Blendinger, in Franconia, tries to compel the Jews to see the truth of Christianity by demonstrations inserted in the *Nürnberg Korrespondent*). Repentance alone leads to true Christian faith, such repentance as comes home to the anguished conscience from an inward conviction of the holiness of God's law, and as leads one to ask, what must I do to be saved? But besides scoffers and unbelievers, there are also those who are weak in the faith and wavering, and who are in danger of being led wholly astray by such audacious toes; and for their sakes it is necessary to oppose the fallacious arguments of unbelief, and to do this on such grounds and with such evidence, that these opponents can have nothing to say in reply. Consequently it is necessary to come down to *their* ground, to their arena, to ignore all axioms borrowed

from Christianity itself, so as to lead the objectors *e concessis ad absurdum*; to make it evident that their own assumptions and inferences are false and perverse even on the ground of their *own premises*. For this reason the Apologetics of Christianity in its first division, where it defends the eternal truths of Christianity, has to begin wholly with the general facts of human consciousness and the assured results of the study of nature. It has to ask whether those truths and doctrines which are *presupposed* by Christianity agree or are in conflict with the facts of nature and of natural consciousness, viz.: Such truths as the existence of a living holy God, the reality of a moral law, and the freedom and responsibility of the will; the fact that man is in a state of opposition to the law, and his incapacity to save himself. The subject then of the first part of Apologetics may be thus stated: *The eternal truth of the substance of Christianity, as measured by the facts of nature and of human consciousness.*

§ 7. B. *Defense of the Historical Character of Christianity.*—The other side of Christianity is its *historical character*. The redemption through Jesus Christ is a fact which occurred nearly two thousand years ago in the land of Judea. The assaults of anti-Christianity are also directed against the historical character of Christianity, especially against its *historical documents*—the biblical writings. The foremost attack is against the historical character of the *contents* of these writings, of which (as Strauss says, in his “Life of Jesus for the German People,” 1864, Preface, p. xiv) we must get quit; next, against the *credibility* of these writings; and then—as the means of contesting their credibility—against their *genuineness* and their *antiquity*. The investigation of these points, under the unfitting name of “Introduction,” or under the more fitting title of “Criticism of the Writings of the Old and New Testaments,” forms a special part of theology—a very extended and comprehensive branch, which, taken strictly, is throughout of an apologetic character. But yet, in all its details, it does not properly come under Apologetics. Not merely for the reason of convenience, since its very comprehensiveness would carry it far beyond the proper limits of this science, but for another—an internal reason, viz.: that such a “criticism” properly makes an “apology” (see § 3), and is not Apologetics, because it necessarily has to follow up and examine the objections, views, and hypotheses made at special times.

§ 8. *Historical Character—continued.*—Apologetics also examines the historical character of Christianity, and the attacks upon it, but in another way, under broader and more general points of view. It must

inquire into the possible points of attack, and develop the mode of defense in accordance with certain general principles. The historical fact of redemption presupposes the reality of another historical fact, viz : of a rebellion, in time, of the will of the creature against the eternal moral law and will of God. Christianity—biblical, revealed Christianity—stands and falls with this preamble. The exact opposite of biblical Christianity, on this point, is found in pantheism and materialism. Pantheism looks upon moral evil, not as the opposition of the creature's will to God ; not as a fall and corruption—in a word, not as sin ; but, like its father, the devil (Gen. iii : 5), as a lower good—a process of development not yet completed, and even as a necessary means of transition to the good itself ; and consequently holds that no Saviour is needed, excepting humanity redeeming itself ; and the same is true of materialism, which teaches that humanity is developed out of an apish state. According to Pantheism, we find, in the history of mankind, only a constant progress from mere undeveloped to developed, and hence better, conditions. Whether this be really so is to be determined by investigating the *History of the Race*. As, in the first division of Apologetics, we appeal to the facts of nature and of consciousness, so, in the second part, our subject-matter is the *General History of Culture and Religion*, as well in civilized nations as in savage tribes, in order to find an answer to the question, whether it is a fact, that in the history of the human race there is a constant progress from the lower to the higher, or whether it is not historically established, that there is an incessant counter-tendency, viz.: a constant lapse and degeneracy from a higher to a lower state.

§ 9. *Historical Apologetics—continued.*—When we come to the study of Christianity as a historical fact, in its organic connection with the general history of religion, we encounter two remarkable phenomena. On the one hand, there is the historical proof of a fall of the human will from the divine ; of a perversion of development into degeneration, as is seen in the documentary evidence of a lapse from primitive monotheism into polytheism, and a tendency to an ever-increasing savagery. But, along with this, we also find the striking fact, that precisely in that Semitic race, in which sin was first raised to a satanic degree of corruption, and the relation of religion to morals was not only glossed over, but perverted into a gross and fearful immorality, the Godhead being worshipped by lasciviousness and murder—in the midst, now, of this very race, a single branch, notwithstanding all its inclinations to the same corruption, did, nevertheless, manifest the very opposite tendency ; so that we find in it a knowledge of the holiness, and consequently of the unity and personality, of God, as well as a

clear recognition of the curse and misery of sin, and of the necessity of an expiation; and this, too, for hundreds, yea, thousands of years—after every time of disturbance breaking forth anew. The object of our investigation is to ascertain whether this historical phenomenon can be explained in the sense of pantheism, and with the factors of naturalism; or whether we are not obliged, with the Scriptures, to recognize and confess a series of revealed acts of the living God redeeming man from the debasing progress of sin and corruption. And when, in fine, among the same Semitic people, we find the historical ground upon which Jesus Christ appears as the Redeemer of the world, then, too—apart from all special researches about the age and origin of the individual gospels—we have the double facts of the Lord's Supper and the Sunday observance, ever testifying to the historical reality of his death and resurrection; and also the testimonies of the Pauline epistles, bringing positive evidence of the supernatural character of his person. And further, Christianity can be tested in history, not merely by the advent of Christ and his entrance into the series of sinful humanity, but also by the effects it has produced upon history itself. It is not difficult to adduce the proof of the heavenly fruits of Christianity in history. And there is also the weighty fact, that every form of corrupt Christianity which has been drawn into the service of sin, and intertwined with lies, has produced much more abhorrent and pestilential corruption than were ever found in heathendom alone; and this, too, heightens the evidence for Christianity—just as the mouldering corpse of a man spreads much fouler taints than the carcass of a beast. Here, too, the history of religion, considered in the light of God, becomes, throughout, an apologetic—not of what is now and then called Christianity, but of what Christianity is in the Holy Scriptures. Hence the object of the second part of Apologetics may be given in the phrase—*Christianity as a historical fact, in its organic connection with the general history of religion.*

§ 10. *As to the Form.*—The character of Apologetics, in distinction from Apology, is secured when positive investigations are made the starting point, and the refutation of opposing theorems follows on after. This appears in the First Part of our division of the subject; here, in the *First Book*, we inquire after the facts of natural consciousness and of objective nature, in a systematic order; before, in the *Second Book*, we refer to the theories and systems opposed to Christianity, and expose their internal contradictions. In this Second Book of the First Part, too, where Apologetics manifestly becomes Apology (see above, § 1), it is distinguished from a bare Apology (in the sense of § 3) by bringing within the sphere of its examination, not

only such anti-Christian theories as spring up at the present time, but also all classes of theorems, in systematic grouping, which *can be* directed against any, or all, of the fundamental doctrines and presuppositions (*præambula*) of Christianity, in all the forms in which these have appeared *until now*. The future shapes of these theories it cannot, of course, conjecture in detail; and so far forth Apologetics, like every human science, is not complete, but growing in and with the times. The last holds true also of the Second Part of Apologetics in our division. The materials here used for the history of religion have been chiefly collected, in recent times, by the labors of Max Müller, Spiegel, Dunker, and others. Such an investigation as is given in this Second Part was not possible a generation ago. In ethnography, and the religious history of the savage races, our knowledge is still fragmentary. Here the first canon of investigation must be, not to fill up the gaps by airy hypotheses, but to restrict ourselves to deductions from what is surely attested. Thus the error will be avoided which is now so plainly in vogue on the side of the opponents of Christianity.

This Introduction to Ebrard's Apologetics gives a sufficiently full and fair view of the way in which this department of theology is now generally treated in Germany, and of the questions raised in relation to its extent and method. Understanding Apologetics in his sense and usage of the term, his treatment of the subject, in the body of his work, is full and able, more satisfactory on the whole than any other single treatise. We can give only a very general sketch. As already stated the whole material is divided into two parts. The First Part, comprised in the first volume, is entitled *The Eternal Truths of Christianity Measured by the Facts of Nature and of Human Consciousness*. This is divided into two Books, the first of which contains the *Positive Development*; the second, the *Examination and Refutation of the Systems Opposed to Christianity*.

Under Book First, after some general statements as to the nature of Christianity, and what is pre-supposed in it, there are three divisions of the subject matter. (1) *The Ethical Law and its Author*, pp. 17-222; (2) *On Sin*, pp. 223-281; (3) *Redemption and its Necessity*, more concisely treated, pp. 282-314. In the first division, the fundamental questions of ethics, of psychology, and of natural theology are discussed at considerable length. The facts of human consciousness, in respect to the world, to the human soul, and to the moral law are clearly analyzed and made the basis for the refutation of anti-christian theories and speculations. Man's dependence upon nature is fully granted,

while his self-conscious independence is clearly vindicated. The whole of nature is viewed as a complex of laws filled with marks of design. Man's knowledge of God is shown to be natural and necessary. The author of the vast system of designs in nature must be a self-conscious being; there is no real contradiction between an absolute and a personal being. The correct form of proof of the existence of God is not to be found by asking "whether the Absolute *exists*, but rather by asking, *In what form does the Absolute exist?* Is it an abstract aboriginal unity, or an unconscious primitive force, or self-conscious Spirit?" (p. 199.) God, it is then shown, is essentially ethical; God is love; the moral law is the highest law.

In the Second Division the existence and nature of sin are considered. In opposition to the skeptical theories, it is shown that it is not physical but moral, not from necessity but by an act of freedom, involving the race, and also implying personal responsibility. Its origin is in the beginning of the race and the divine relation to it is one of permission and not of efficiency. It is all, however, subject to the divine disposal and government; nature itself, in fact, was arranged from the beginning in view of the possibility of sin.

Man, thus shown to be essentially a moral being, the subject of a moral law, and having transgressed that law, stands in need of redemption, which is considered in the Third Division. Man is unable to redeem himself, redemption comes only through the divine work of the God-man, which is grounded in the mystery of the internal relations of the persons in the Godhead. The Gospel is no human invention. The divine act of redemption corresponds to the human need. The incarnation and its miracles are conceivable and not irrational. The Second Book of the First Part is devoted to the examination and refutation of the anti-Christian systems of philosophy. (Pp. 315-443). The author treats: 1, Of the mechanical system, or the denial of the organic life-power; 2, Of the denial of final causes, design in nature (which he calls Aposkopiology); he here ably vindicates the teleological theory of the universe; 3, Of the Darwinian theory, which is thoroughly and acutely discussed; 4, Of the denial of the freedom of the will, and on moral statistics, where the positions and assumptions of materialism are candidly and fully exposed; 5, Of the Pantheistic philosophy, examining the systems of Spinoza, J. G. Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Von Hartmann, and Schopenhauer. He has evidently made a thorough study of these anti-Christian theories, and shows their inconsistency not merely with Christian doctrines, but also with the recognized facts of nature and of human consciousness. This work is as thoroughly done as his limits would allow.

The Second Part of Apologetics in Dr. Ebrard's arrangement presents Christianity as a Historical Fact in its Organic Connection with the General History of Religion. It is divided into two Books, respectively entitled the Religions of Men, and the Revelation of God. The first of these occupies some five hundred pages of the second volume, while the Divine Revelation is sketched in sixty-eight pages. Perhaps the best and most thorough portion of the whole work is contained in the author's elaborate investigations under the former head, comprising, as it does, the results of the latest ethnographic and linguistic studies by the most eminent scholars of Germany and other countries. Dr. Ebrard according to his own account prepared himself by protracted and extended study for this most important and difficult task, going through the writings of W. Von Humboldt, Buschmann, Schott, Von der Gablentz, and others, collecting the facts from all attainable sources, and combining the whole in a narrative and argument of convincing force. We do not know where to find a more weighty reply to the assumptions and theories of those writers who persist in claiming, according to the unproved hypothesis of a merely naturalistic evolution, that the primitive religious state of mankind was the lowest and most debased form of polytheistic idolatry, and that the higher religions have been developed out of these base rudiments. Dr. Ebrard shows conclusively that the facts all lead to another conclusion, that gross idolatry is a degeneration of mankind from antecedent and purer forms of religious worship. He first treats of the civilized nations of antiquity, the Aryan and Indian religions, the Vedas, the Indra period, Brahmanism and Buddhism; then of the religion of the Eranians, the Avesta, and the Parsees; next of the Greeks and Romans, the Egyptians, the Canaanites, and the heathen Semitic forms of worship, including Phœnicians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. His Second Division is devoted to the half-civilized and savage races, in the North and West of Europe, in Asia and Polynesia (Tartars, Mongols, Malays, Cushites); then of America, including a minute examination of the relations of the different races here to the Mongol, Japanese, and old Chinese immigrations. This part of the work is of special interest, and contains many ingenious suggestions and speculations as to the connection between Asiatic and native American culture.

In summing up the results of these conscientious and prolonged investigations, the author claims that he has shown that there "is not anywhere the least trace of an upward and onward advance from Fetichism to Polytheism, and from Polytheism to a gradually dawning knowledge of one God; but that, on the other hand, it is definitely proved that among all the nations of the heathen world there has been

a fall and degradation out of an earlier and relatively purer knowledge of God ;" that even among the most abject and debased "there are reminiscences of an earlier worship of one invisible creator and ruler of the world." He also holds and maintains, that he has proved "the essential unity of the human race, and the unity of its primitive traditions, that is, the truth of its early history," as given in the Scriptures, and confirmed by the testimony of different races and nations. In their dispersion from the original centre of the race (the western part of Central Asia, in the Euphrates Valley), all the people and tribes "carried with them the memory of one God, who, in the beginning, revealed himself to man; of one sin of the first parents, in the eating of the forbidden fruit through the influence of the tempter upon the woman, and of the entrance of death as the consequence and punishment of sin; of the brother's murder, and of three brothers who invented the metallic arts, etc.; of a race of giants; of the flood; of the ark, and the mountain, and the birds sent from the ark; of the rainbow and the promise; of three sons from whom descended all the peoples; of a revolt against God, the building of the tower, the confusion of tongues, and the sundering of the nations."

But we must needs stop in our analysis and extracts from this very able, comprehensive, and timely work. It is a vigorous, learned, and high-toned contribution to our apologetic literature—well worthy of being reproduced in an English version. Before materialism and pantheism can win the day, they have got to disprove the positions and refute the arguments of such works as this. Their earth-born theory is of little avail against such an array of facts—facts of history, facts of nature, and facts of human consciousness.

In the concluding Book, headed "The Revelation of God," Dr. Ebrard sums up the results of all his investigations, and then treats, first, of the "Redeeming Acts of God," in his revelation under the old dispensation and in the incarnation; and, second, of the "Effects of Redemption" upon the individual, upon society, and upon races and nations. This is less fully treated than some other parts of his great theme, and leaves much to be supplemented. It might well be the subject of another volume.

The *System of Christian Apologetics* (1869), by Dr. F. Delitzsch, the eminent orientalist, of Leipsick, differs so much from that of Dr. Ebrard, and is handled in such an original method, that it may profitably be reviewed by itself at some future time.