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I. CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.¹

You have called me to the discharge of most responsible duty and exalted service in this honored school of sacred learning. I sincerely pray that your call and my acceptance may unite in being an outward expression of the mind of the Spirit and of the will of God in regard to the way in which Christ's cause may be served and his name honored by means of this institution. Having hope that such is the case, it will be the earnest and undivided effort of my life, so long as I remain in your service, to perform the duties of this high office to the best of my ability, ever seeking the needed wisdom and promised grace which Christ's servants may claim.

You have also informed me that a short time prior to my election the scope of the chair whose work is committed to my trust was so enlarged as to include the entire field of Christian apologetics. This, in my judgment, is a very important change, and it makes exceedingly useful modifications of the work pertaining to this chair possible. Its incumbent will now be in a position to deal with several great topics not embraced in the field of the relations of science and revelation; and he will at the same time be able to construe many things which emerge in the discussion of these relations under the category of Christian apologetics. In this way the work of this professorship may be made wider in its scope and more systematic in the treatment of its materials than was possible under its former designation.

¹ Inaugural address by F. R. Beattie, on the occasion of his installation as Professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., May, 1890.

In view of the fact just stated, it has occurred to me that there is here suggested a suitable theme upon which to base the words that it is my privilege to speak on this occasion. That theme may be thus stated: CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS: ITS FUNCTION, SCOPE AND SPIRIT. Discoursing upon this theme, I shall endeavor to give a mere outline of what seems to me to be the import of the task placed in the hands of the modern Christian apologete.

If the exegete be the professed interpreter of the Scriptures, and if the theologian be the systematic expounder of the doctrines of Christianity, the apologete will be the acknowledged defender of the Christian system, while the preacher may be exegete, theologian, and apologete all in one. The defence of the Christian faith is a divinely imposed duty of the church. Paul regarded himself not only as the herald of the cross whose great aim was to preach Christ crucified and Christ risen, but he also claimed that "he was set for the defence of the gospel." Before Jew and Gentile alike, Paul was ever ready to convince gainsayers and to defend the truths of the gospel and the honor of his Lord with a courage and fidelity which put to shame much of the commending and defending of the gospel of Christ in modern times. In like manner Jude exhorts Christians "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints"; and Christ's appeal to his miracles as proof of his divine mission confirms the position that his followers may always make the same appeal in defence of the gospel.

In the very nature of the case there will ever be need for this defensive work. So long as the evil heart of unbelief remains in men, and so long as the enmity which refuses to be subject to God's holy law operates in human life, there will be such a natural antagonism to the Christian system as will always render its defence and vindication most necessary. Even though apologetics cannot change the heart or generate true faith—divine grace alone can effect these things—yet it is of much practical use in removing bandages from the eyes of the understanding, and in rolling away stones from the doorway of the tomb of faith, that the soul dead in trespasses and sins may hear the voice of the Spirit and live.

Much as apologetics has been needed in all ages, there, perhaps, never was a time when its defences were more necessary than at the present day. True, this is an age of intense religious activity of a practical kind in evangelistic and missionary labor, but it is also a period of skeptical questioning and scornful doubt in regard to many of the great verities of the Christian faith. Even the reality of the supernatural, which, in its various manifestations, is the inner fortress of the Christian system, is under fire from several quarters, and the conflict promises to be sharp and decisive. In this conflict the Christian apologete will require his very best weapons, and he must use them with the utmost wisdom and courage.

Christian apologetics, as a department of theological study, has to deal with the great questions which lie at the very foundations of the Christian system. It must present the grounds upon which Christianity claims intelligent acceptance, and set forth the evidences which justify a well-founded belief in its contents. The Christian apologete, as the accredited defender of religious faith, must face the problems of the existence of the divine Being, of the nature of man and his relation to God, of the Scriptures as a supernatural revelation, of the unique personality of Jesus Christ, of the reality of sin and its guilt, of the nature of redemption as the remedy for sin, and of the momentous issues of the eternal world. Such are some of the things which the apologete must deal with and defend.

And are these not questions of immense import? Is Christianity true, and are its claims to be divine valid? Is there a personal God who made me and all things? Am I under such moral relations to God that I cannot shake myself free from responsibility to him? Are the Scriptures not only true, but also an authentic and authoritative revelation from God? Must I believe, save at my terrible peril, what the Bible says concerning the dire effects of sin on my being and its dread results on my destiny? Have I good reason to accept the statements of Scripture in regard to salvation from sin, and that, apart from a saving interest in the divine Redeemer, I am without God and without hope in the world? Is there a future state of reward and punishment for

men with unending existence therein, either of unspeakable joy or of unutterable woe?

Simply to ask such questions is to reveal the tremendous issues alike for the individual and the race which are wrapped up in the destinies of the Christian faith. If Christianity be true, and its redemption so necessary for man's present good and future welfare, the duty of examining its grounds with the utmost diligence is imperative. And even if the Christian system be false and its divine claims turn out to be invalid, we should inquire most carefully into the reasons given for this conclusion, lest we be found guilty of the folly of casting lightly away the priceless treasures of that Christian faith which has so long had such a deep hold upon the living experience and dying hopes of such multitudes in all ages.

Everything of interest and value in the blessings of religion, both for this life and for that which is to come, is staked upon the results of such inquiry. Even though it be quite true that the reality of the facts and truths of Christianity is not ultimately dependent upon man's vindication of them, yet the acceptance or rejection of these facts and truths determines their practical effect on man's life and destiny. A great mistake will be made, therefore, if we undervalue the benefits of a reasoned defence of the truths and claims of the Christian system. If it be an extreme opinion that the contents of Christianity can be fully measured by human reason, it is also an extreme opinion which holds that the truths of the Christian system are incapable of reasoned defence and vindication. If there be a God, the human mind rightly demands reasons for believing in the reality of his existence; and if Christianity be a matter of supernatural revelation, the mind of man very properly calls for the evidence which renders it credible. If evidence be the measure of assent, and if rational belief rests on valid reasons, the position stated must be true, and Christianity is capable of a reasoned defence and vindication at the hands of the Christian apologete. The view that Christianity cannot be defended by arguments or supported by evidence must lead either to a mysticism, which makes the subjective consciousness the test of revealed truth, or to an agnosticism, "which first throws the

intellect into bankruptcy and then pensions us on an allowance of faith.”¹ In these circumstances our theological seminaries do well to provide for such instruction in Christian apologetics as will present in reasoned and systematic form the grounds, the evidences, and the defences of the Christian faith. In this age of severe sifting of opinions, of complete recasting of systems, and of the disturbing of old foundations, the services of the Christian apologete, wisely rendered, may be of much value to the rising ministry of the church who must act their part in this busy, restless age. The intellect needs its helm, faith requires her anchor, and hope must set her sails for the voyage upon which Christianity seems now to be entering; and if the apologete can in any measure help to train men to guide the good ship safely on her way, his work will indeed not be in vain in the Lord.

Before proceeding further some simple explanations are necessary. The term *apologetics*, as also the word *apology*, is derived from the Greek verb *απολογεῖσθαι*, which means “to defend one’s self,” or “to plead one’s own cause.” The word *apology*, now often used in the sense of “making reparation,” primarily means “a defence,” “a pleading” or “an answer.” The technical term *apologetics* denotes the systematic defence of a person, or the scientific pleading of a cause. As applied to matters of religion, Christian apologetics is the science of the defence and vindication of Christianity, or of the pleading of the cause of theistic belief, of the Bible, of Christ, and of Christianity.

This technical use of the term is of comparatively recent origin. In ancient literature we find the term *apology*, but not *apologetics*. In the *Memorabilia* of Socrates, Xenophon uses the term *apology* in describing his defence of his master. In the New Testament the term *απολογία* occurs several times. In Acts xxii. 1 it is translated *defence* in connection with Paul’s speech made on the temple stairs. In 1 Cor. ix. 3 it is translated *answer* in relation to the response given by Paul to certain accusations made against him and the cause he represented. In both these cases, however, the underlying idea is that of defence or vindication.

¹ President Patton, in *Inaugural Address*, 1880.

In early Christian literature the term *apology* is used by Justin Martyr, who was put to death about the year 166 A. D. Justin wrote two *Apologies* for Christianity, in which he seeks to remove certain objections and misconceptions from the religious beliefs and practices of the early Christians, and at the same time to explain the contents of the Christian system in such a way as to commend it to the Roman Emperor and people. In like manner much of the Patristic literature was apologetic, and consisted in defences against Judaic tendencies, pagan philosophy, and heathen polytheism. In mediæval ages the polemic features of the Christian literature were prominent, and the apologetic fell naturally into the background. In modern times apologetics has by various reasons been brought to the front again, and so we find the missionary and apologetic features of apostolic ages reproduced in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

But even at the present day, so far at least as the English tongue is concerned, it can scarcely be said that we have a systematic apologetics in any single treatise, which disposes the materials of defence in systematic order about the entire fortress of the Christian system. The field of course is very wide, and we have many excellent treatises on special topics in it, but these treatises are *apologies* rather than *apologetics*. In saying this I do not undervalue in the least the splendid work done by the English apologists of the last century, with Butler at their head; nor do I disparage in any way the invaluable results of recent labors in the fields of theism and of the evidences of Christianity. I simply mean that the treatises in our own tongue are particular apologies intended to ward off at special points certain definite attacks made upon Christianity, and not thorough-going and systematic defences of the Christian system against all possible assaults.

The Germans during recent years have given us several professedly systematic treatises in apologetics. Those by Sach, Delitzsch, Baumstark, and Ebrard deserve mention. Still the formal and elaborate mode of treatment followed by these authors, together with certain serious defects both in regard to the method of discussion and the materials employed, render these systematic treatises less suitable for the English-speaking student than might at

first be expected. Ebrard's work is perhaps the most satisfactory of them all.

With these explanations made, we are now prepared to discuss the *function* or aim of Christian apologetics. This is clearly a very difficult question. What is Christian apologetics? What purpose is it to serve? The diversity of opinion on these points will be made very evident by the recital of some of the definitions of apologetics given by able writers. Schleiermacher says that "apologetics is a preparatory discipline having to do with the fundamental principles of theology." Häunell defines the science as "the common ground of the church and theology." Drey, an able Romish writer, says that "apologetics is the philosophy of the Christian revelation and its history." Sach regards apologetics as "that branch of theology which treats of the ground of the Christian religion as divine fact." Lechler, again, defines apologetics as "the scientific proof that the Christian religion is the absolute religion." Baumstark is more definite, and says that "apologetics is the scientific defence of Christianity as the absolute religion." Finally, Ebrard, in a brief and compact statement, says that "apologetics is the science of the defence of the truth of Christianity."

In view of such a diversity of opinion it seems a hopeless task to attempt to make plain what the function of Christian apologetics really is; and, in the face of such learned opinions as those quoted, it may appear somewhat bold to propose another definition. Still, it is evident that some fuller description of the import of apologetics is needed, if its true function is to be understood. The following descriptive definition is suggested, with this object in view: Apologetics is that branch of theological science which presents a reasoned defence and vindication of the essential truth, the supernatural origin, the divine authority, and the inherent sufficiency of the Christian system of doctrine, worship, morals, and redemption as the only adequate religion for mankind, together with the systematic refutation of all antagonistic systems.

This description of apologetics indicates in general that its function is to meet all attacks made upon Christianity, and at the same time to fortify it on every side with sure defences. It may

be too much to claim with Ebrard that a complete apologetics should anticipate all possible objections against the Christian system, and provide for their entire refutation; still, Christian apologetics should be more than mere desultory dealing with objections and attacks made from time to time. We need not only these particular defences, but we also need a *theory* of defending—a plan of campaign. We require not only separate apologies, but we also need an apologetics which shall constitute such an orderly systematic presentation of the grounds and contents of the Christian system as shall serve at once to confirm the faith of the believer, and baffle the assaults of the antagonist. In this way will the native strength and glory of Christianity be best exhibited, and its defences will always be at hand for the most effective use.

Looking now a little more closely at the definition of apologetics just given, its three-fold office will be observed. Each of these must be briefly noticed.

In the first place, Christian apologetics discharges the office of *defence*. The Christian system seems doomed to suffer fierce and determined assaults. The reality of sin in the human heart, and the antagonism of enmity engendered thereby, will ever be a fruitful source of opposition to Christianity, so that the apologete will always be required to stand as sentinel on guard about the citadel of religious truth, and to defend the fortress of faith. As the attack is made he must sound the alarm and ward off the foe. As new weapons are forged against Christianity the apologete must construct new defences, or turn old ramparts into new breastworks; and as the assault is made now at one point and now at another, he must with sleepless vigilance and effective weapons be ready to do valiant service as the defender of the faith.

In discharging the office of *defence* the apologete has a weighty task. Does the attack come in the guise of a learned naturalism, seeking to destroy the throne of the supernatural, and to trample the crown of Deity in the dust, he must vindicate the reality of the supernatural. Does the assault don the garb of the philosopher, and approach with the assumed humility of the agnostic, in order to cast doubt upon the possibility and reality of man's knowledge of God, then the apologete must present a true doctrine of

cognition, which makes knowledge the friend of faith, and philosophy the servant of theology. Or does the movement against Christianity advance with the instruments of a false historical criticism in its hands, to undermine the real historical character of the Scripture narratives, then the apologete must wrest these instruments from the grasp of those who would unfairly use them, and show that this unfair use of historical criticism would bolt the door against the historian in every field. Or, again, is the assault armed with the weapons of science, falsely so called, found in the field or formed in the laboratory, then the apologete must be prepared to drive back the foe, capture his weapons, and turn them into armor for the defence of Christian faith. And if in any of these cases the anti-Christian onset is bold and blasphemous, full of hate and rage as well as heedless of sense and reason, the apologete must stand unmoved, ready to resist unto blood; and if at times he seems to be fighting in a losing cause, he must simply stand still and see the salvation of God, and to his great surprise he may behold the horse and his proud rider cast into the sea.

A second office of Christian apologetics consists in the *vindication* of Christianity. This may be regarded as the positive side of the work of the Christian apologete. He must not be content with merely driving back the foes of Christianity, and leaving it free from objection and safe from attack. This might only show the skill and courage of the defender, and not exhibit the inherent power and worth of Christianity. Hence, the second office of apologetics, that of vindication, is necessary to set forth in order the sure grounds, the abundant evidences, the excellent contents, and the grand results of Christianity. This method of fortifying the citadel of Christian faith by defences from within is of immense apologetic value. In this way the inherent majesty, worth, glory and divinity of the Christian system will be unfolded in a manner which will at once inspire its adherents with courage and hope, and strike its opponents with terror and dismay. Moreover, it will also be made evident, not only that Christianity is capable of defence, but also that it is well worth defending.

Here the apologete has noble work. He will unfold the Christian idea of God, as a Being possessed of all perfection, as self-ex-

istent and uncreated, as the personal and intelligent Creator, as the almighty and righteous Judge, as the merciful Father, whose tender mercies are over all his works, and as the gracious Redeemer, who has provided a complete remedy for sin of such a nature that divine justice is vindicated and sinful men justified, sanctified and saved. In this way Christian theism will be vindicated. The apologete will also open the sacred literature of the Christian system, and will find it speaking for itself in a way which at once reveals its divine origin. There he finds inspired historians relating events which happened when the nations of antiquity were young; he hears prophets filled by the Spirit uttering with faith and fidelity God's messages to men; he is captivated by the sacred poets singing in the loftiest strains the world has ever heard; he reads with ever deeper wonder the proverbs and parables, and he pores again and again over the simple four-fold story of that transcendent life of Jesus of Nazareth till it brings him to the gloom of Calvary, to the hope of the empty tomb, and to the glory of the ascension scene. In all this he finds himself among a literature unique and unrivalled. The apologete will further show something of the remarkable personality and beautiful life of him who is at once the living head and central figure in the Christian system. He will show us that there is but one Jesus of Nazareth, and that there can be but one. Guided by the apologete, we will look at that life from the cradle to the cross, and see what a wonder it was in that degenerate age; we will listen to his teachings, and in the light of his own time we can only ask, "Whence hath this man such wisdom?" We will consider his mighty works, his moral heroism, his self-forgetful devotion to his Father's will with amazement; we will reflect upon his sacrificial death, upon the miracle of his resurrection, and the mystery of the ascension, and find ourselves amidst the most remarkable events that have ever occurred in human history. Then, as the apologete unfolds what Christianity does for men in this life and in the next, as he describes in graphic words how it has spread and what it has endured, as he depicts what it has done to make the home sacred and to secure civil liberty, and as he announces the marvellous results of recent missionary labor everywhere, the value of the second office of

Christian apologetics—that of vindication—is most forcibly illustrated.

The third office of apologetics is that of *refutation*. By means of this office the apologete must in turn attack the systems opposed to Christianity; and his work here will not be complete till he has refuted antitheistic and anti-Christian theories of every kind. He must enter on an aggressive warfare, and only lay down his arms when the last enemy is driven from the field. As the Israelites of old were commanded to drive out the Canaanites from the land, and leave none save at their future peril, so the apologete must feel that he has a divine right to the whole of the promised land embraced within the borders of the Christian system. In modern times there is much of this aggressive work to be done, for there are not a few invaders making raids upon the Christian domain. Atheism need not long engage his attention, for while there are many practical atheists, there are but few who venture to maintain a reasoned atheism. As the devils believe and tremble, so bad men can scarcely help doing the same thing. Then materialism in its manifold forms, and pantheism in its several subtile phases must be put to flight, while the united forces of positivism and agnosticism, of pessimism and secularism, must be defeated by the weapons of refutation. At the same time, false ethical systems and erroneous scientific theories must be disarmed, while rival systems of religion and non-religious social theories must be brought to terms of unconditional surrender.

This, then, is the three-fold function of Christian apologetics. It defends Christianity from assault, it vindicates its inherent adequacy, and it refutes all opposing systems. These three offices are often interwoven in the actual work of the apologete. If Christianity be vindicated it is thereby defended, and if it be fully defended false systems will be so far refuted. Still the function of apologetics may be clearly presented in a three-fold way: *Defence, vindication and refutation*.

While discharging his high duty, the apologete must entertain proper conceptions of that Christian system which he professes to defend. His estimate of Christianity must accord with the lofty claims which it makes, otherwise he may prove an unworthy de-

fender. The Christian system must be regarded as far more than a complete philosophy, or a perfect code of morals. It must not be viewed merely as one of several religious systems, all of which are partially true. The general definition of apologetics already given sounds the key-note upon this point. In regard to doctrines, worship, morality and redemption, four things are to be held fast. First, the essential truth and historical reality of the Christian system, with its sacred literature, must be rigidly maintained against all mythological and rationalistic views regarding the contents of Christianity; secondly, that the Christian system is of supernatural origin and prescription must be argued at length against all naturalistic and evolutionary theories as to its origin and growth; thirdly, the apologete must contend earnestly for the divine authority of the Christian system, which binds its demands upon the consciences of men in such a way that they cannot be repudiated save at the extreme peril of mortal and immortal interests; and fourthly, the apologete must be prepared to justify the bold claim that Christianity is in all respects inherently sufficient to be an adequate religion for man, even sinful man. Its claim to universal dominion must be made good by showing its entire adequacy to meet its claims. That Christianity is thus complete, and that it endures no adversaries and brooks no rivals, is a position which the apologete must make good, and no lower ground dare he take and be true to his trust as the acknowledged defender of the faith.

Having thus explained the three-fold office of Christian apologetics, a rapid survey of the wide domain in which the materials of discussion chiefly lie must now be made. That domain may be divided into three great sections: First, there is what may be called fundamental or philosophical apologetics, where the great debate is between the theistic and anti-theistic theories of the universe; secondly, there is what may be termed historical or evidential apologetics, where the gist of the controversy is between the supernatural and anti-supernatural views of the Bible and Christianity; and thirdly, we have what, for want of a better term, we may designate polemical or irenical apologetics, where the main topics of discussion relate to the bearing of modern scientific research upon a divine revelation such as the Bible sets

forth, and upon a supernatural system such as Christianity is. A very brief sketch of each of these sections of apologetic discussions may give some idea of the *materials* which must engage the attention of the apologete in the discharge of his high office.

Entering the first section—that of fundamental or philosophical apologetics—we find ourselves at once upon the field of the older natural theology, as it has been enlarged by recent theistic discussions, and by expositions in the philosophy of religion.

At the very outset the attention of the apologete is arrested by a preliminary question of vital importance. That question concerns the reality of human knowledge and the office of faith in matters of religion. This may by some be regarded as but a distant outpost of the Christian system, still a moment's reflection will show that this question is one of the keys which hold secure the citadel of Christianity. An erroneous theory of knowledge or a false view as to the office of belief will be dangerous, if not disastrous, to the interests of the Christian system. A true psychology, carrying with it a sound ethical theory, and a valid philosophy of belief, are like great pillars resting on the rock, and upon these the apologete may build a bridge that will afford a pathway of intelligent commerce between the creature and the Creator. There are warnings all along the history of philosophy and religion which cannot be ignored in this connection. As we see Locke's moderate empiricism bearing the bitter fruit of atheistic materialism in France, and producing nothing but the blighted leaves of skepticism in Britain; as we notice Kant's critical rationalism running on through Fichte and Schelling into absolute idealism in the system of Hegel; and as we observe Hamilton's Philosophy of the Infinite pressed into the service of agnosticism by Spencer, the importance of a true theory of knowledge is strongly emphasized. In like manner, when we notice how the faith philosophy of Jacobi was unfairly used by Schleiermacher in the interests of subjectivism, and by the pietists on behalf of mysticism; and when we find the fundamental beliefs of our nature exalted above the moral and religious truths of divine revelation as they are by modern rationalism, the demand for a sound philosophy of belief becomes imperative.

On the field of psychology the apologete must reject all purely empirical theories of human knowledge. Whether it be a crude sensationalism, which denies altogether the *a priori* element, and explains all knowledge from the contents of sensation; or whether it be those more refined associational theories which admit a modified *a priori* factor, but explain it as the *product*, not as the *condition* of experience; or whether, again, it be those recent evolutionary systems which allow a certain *quasi* reality to the *a priori* conditions of cognition, but account for these by the law of heredity, which first gathers up and then hands down as an accumulating legacy the results of habit or experience, till in due time these results assume the qualities of necessity and simplicity, empiricism must be carefully guarded against. The great facts and transcendent truths of Christianity pertain to the supersensible world, and the door of cognition must be left open so as to give the human mind access to that region. Any theory of knowledge which shuts that door leaves us out in the bleak, trackless wilds of nescience touching the high truths of religion, and the result will surely be that, even though an irrational and unintelligent faith may hold on to these truths for awhile, that faith may first be perverted, but will finally pass away.

The apologete must also guard against purely idealistic theories of knowledge. Whether it be a thoroughgoing subjectivism, which admits no sort of knowledge of anything outside of the mind and its various states; or whether it be a pure phenomenalism, which allows the mind a knowledge of external objects, but asserts that these objects are purely relative and phenomenal, not real and abiding; or whether, again, it be a constructive idealism, which gives to the objects of knowledge only such objective reality as the act of knowledge itself endows them with, all such theories must be carefully canvassed by the apologete. Any theory which shuts cognition up within the barriers of the subject, or blocks the avenues of objective knowledge, binds consciousness as a helpless prisoner in the castle of solipsism, in whose dreary silent depths he can know neither the world, nor other men, nor God.

The apologete is thus no idle spectator of, but must be an active participant in, the debates now going on in regard to the

theory of knowledge. If he capitulates to the empiricist idealist on the field of psychology, he will be compelled, sooner or later, to surrender to the skeptic or the agnostic in the realm of religion. His first care, therefore, should be to take his stand securely on a sound psychology, which gives a place to the *a priori* element in human knowledge, and regards experience merely as the *occasion*, but not as the *source* of cognition. Such a theory will give abiding reality to the fundamental laws of thought and to the essential conditions of existence in the external world, and will find these correlated in cognition in such a way that the reality of neither is destroyed, and yet the knowledge of both is assured.

So on the side of the philosophy of belief equal care must be taken. Any theory which sets faith in antagonism over against reason, and tells us that we must believe what absolutely contradicts reason in its fundamental principles cannot be admitted. Any view which separates the sphere of faith from that of knowledge in such a way as to shut them off entirely from each other, and which says that we may believe what reason can give no evidence for must not be adopted. And any doctrine which so exalts faith above knowledge as to make it the sole instrument in matters of religion must be carefully guarded against. A true doctrine here will hold that faith and knowledge are supplementary to each in every sphere, but especially in that of religion. As all knowledge has at its roots an element of faith, so all true belief is rational, and rests on evidence. Knowledge and belief may follow different pathways, but they move in parallel lines, and both lead to certitude.

Having taken good ground in regard to these questions, the apologete is prepared to enter upon the wide field of theistic discussion. Theism may be treated either as a theory of the universe or as a doctrine of the divine existence. The former will lead to a theistic cosmology and the latter will result in a natural theology. Embracing both, theism may be defined as the doctrine which affirms the existence and continued operation of one infinite personal God, and presents this affirmation as the only adequate solution of the origin and constitution of the universe.

Theism on its positive side has to face two great questions. The one may be termed the psychology of theism and the other its ontology. The former will unfold the nature and origin of the idea of God in the human mind, and the latter will announce the reasons for believing in the existence of a Being corresponding to that idea. In dealing with the first of these questions, the apologete must make a careful analysis of the theistic elements of the human constitution, when such facts as these will be unfolded: A cognition of deity as the intellectual element, a belief in the existence of God as the faith factor, a sense of natural dependence and finiteness, a feeling of moral responsibility, and an instinct or sentiment of worship. He will then be able to show how it comes to pass that men can apply theistic predicates to natural objects, can frame the theistic hypothesis regarding the universe, and are capable of learning of God by means of a divine revelation.

When the apologete turns to the question of the *origin* of the idea of God in the mind of man, he has a delicate and difficult task to perform. Able and persistent efforts are made at this point by evolutionary psychologists and ethnologists to explain the origin and growth of the religious constitution and theistic endowment of man in a purely empirical way and from elements which are not at first theistic or religious, and the apologete must be prepared to combat intelligently all such theories. He must show that the view which originates belief in deity in the craft of priests or cunning of kings really takes for granted the thing to be proved. Then the positivist who discovers the origin of theistic belief in fetichism must be refuted by showing that, before savage man can call a stone or a carved image his God, he must have the notion of deity already in his mind. Then Herbert Spencer, who seeks to explain existing theistic belief by means of ancestor worship, growing out of a peculiar ghost theory, must receive some careful attention, as representing a great school of sociologists. The apologist, with equal care, must examine those subtle, idealistic, evolutionary theories of the Hegelian and Neo-Hegelian philosophy, which attempt to explain the origin of man's knowledge of God as a sort of God-consciousness, wherein man's knowledge of God is virtually God's knowledge of himself. At

this point special care is needed, for while the apologete may admit that man knows God because he is made in his image and likeness, he must be careful not to leave the door open for the entrance of a latent pantheism, which would surely reduce the numerical distinction between man and God to zero. The influence of primitive divine revelation in generating and perpetuating theistic belief and the knowledge of God must be carefully estimated. While the apologete must most cheerfully admit that supernatural revelation does much to give the well-defined knowledge of God which is found in Christian lands, and does everything to acquaint us with the provisions and conditions of the gospel, still he must distinguish carefully between the genesis of a belief and its perpetuation, and he must specially avoid taking any position which seems to assume that the consciousness of man was, prior even to primitive revelation, atheistic and non-religious. He must maintain that man, made in the image of God, was theistic by creation; and, because theistic in his very constitution, he was capable of receiving and being instructed by objective revelation whenever given. So, in regard to the part that education, tradition, reasoning or reflection has played in producing and developing the idea of God among men, the apologete must exercise great care. That tradition and education have much to do with perpetuating and purifying the theistic idea must be acknowledged freely by the apologete; yet, as he traces the tradition back, or reflects upon the conditions of education and reasoning concerning God, the query always arises: How did the tradition itself at first arise, and how is education or reasoning possible if men were originally devoid of the theistic capacity or of any knowledge of God? This is a delicate and difficult point of much interest.

The true view as to the *origin* of the theistic belief must distinguish between the way in which men in Christian lands *now* come to believe in God, and the way in which the belief arose in the mind of the *first* man; and it will assert that the idea of God is not innate in the sense that it is at first a fully formed idea or knowledge of God, but rather that theistic belief springs up naturally as the *a priori* constituents of the human mind are developed

under the conditions of religious experience. Thus by a native constitutional impulse from within the soul, rather than by any non-theistic influences from without, is the genesis of the idea of God to be explained. This view will further maintain that on the metaphysical side the final explanation of the origin of the idea of God is to be found, as Descartes hints, in the postulate of the *existence* of God. The native theistic belief of the human soul thus constitutes an abiding witness within, to the actual existence of God without the soul; and in the last analysis this belief may be regarded as God's testimony in the psychological sphere, to the reality of his being in the ontological realm.¹

Turning to the *ontology* of theism, the apologete has to do with arguments for the existence of God, or the reasons for believing in God. At the outset he must grasp clearly what his task is at this point. What is meant by the proof of the divine existence, and in what sense can the existence of God be proved? Are those right who, following the Kantian criticism, say that the divine existence cannot be proved? If they are not right, wherein is their error? Here the apologete will be wise to take strong middle ground, showing that he does not undertake to prove the existence of God by a strict deductive or demonstrative mode of reasoning, and yet asserting that the theistic proofs are of real logical value in establishing the objective validity of the native belief in God. The apologete will not undertake to prove the existence of a God of whom he is entirely ignorant, or in whom he has no simple belief, but he will show that the native constitutional belief in the divine existence is a logical and rational belief, which rests on good reasons and is supported by strong evidence. The apologete will also show that the theistic proof consists of many branches, and that these must be viewed cumulatively. It is a cable with numerous strands, and not a chain made up of many links. Its argumentative force does not depend on the strength of its weakest proof, but on the combined result of all its lines of proof bound together in one complex inductive process, which may be termed the theistic inference.

¹ President Patton: *Syllabus on Theism*.

The apologete will find it difficult to classify the theistic proofs in a satisfactory way. The old division into *a priori* and *a posteriori* is good only so far, for many of the proofs embrace both factors. The following classification, though not free from defects, may serve his purpose: First, Those arguments wherein the materials of proof are drawn from the nature and contents of the human mind, and which may therefore be termed *psychical*. Here the argument from the native theistic belief, as the bridge between the psychology and ontology of theism, ought to be first considered; and then the proofs from the nature of truth and the conditions of certitude, from the notion of a necessary or all perfect being and from the idea of the infinite, would naturally follow in order. A second general class of theistic proofs would include those which are based on the principle of *causality*. Here the apologete must hold by a true doctrine of causation, which gives a place to the elements of sufficient reason and efficiency; and then he may proceed to unfold the causal arguments, setting forth the arguments for a first cause of the universe in its totality, from the facts of order, system and law in the universe, and from the instances of adaptation and design observed everywhere. The third general class of proofs may be termed the *moral* arguments, where the elements of reasoning are drawn from man's moral nature and the conditions of the moral government under which he is placed. Here a sound ethical theory, in harmony with the theory of knowledge already insisted on, must be secured; and the notion of *right*, the fact of *obligation*, and the idea of the *highest good*, will give the lines of proof. In connection with these proofs, those from human history, and from the universal prevalence of religious belief in some form, may also be unfolded. As these many strands of proof are bound together in one they form a strong cable, which the force of unbelief cannot break, nor the logic of atheism ever hope to untwine or destroy.

Having established theism on the positive side, the apologete must next enter on an active campaign against anti-theistic theories. In doing so he will take with him the armor and weapons gained in previous discussions. He may engage his opponents in the following order, commencing with the weakest: First, he may

go forth against atheism in its various forms. So far as reasoned or dogmatic atheism is concerned he will have little difficulty, as it is a purely negative system, asserting nothing, explaining nothing, proving nothing, and satisfying nothing. In dealing with the practical atheist the apologete had better turn missionary and preach the plain gospel to him. Next, positivism, as one of the allies or retainers of atheism, must be combatted, alike in the form of pretentious Comtism, and in its more refined phases in England and America. Then modern agnosticism, which is often only atheism in fine clothes and called by a lordly name, must be confronted. It must be attacked at two points: first, its theory of knowledge must be impugned; and secondly, its anti-theistic claims must be rebutted. Then materialism with its heavy artillery and earthworks must be assaulted. At three points must the conflict be waged: first, against certain subtle forms of semi-materialism, that would first put everything into its conception of matter in order to bring everything out of it; secondly, against psychological materialism, which leaves God, perhaps, but blots out the human soul, and construes thought emotion and volition under the categories of matter and mechanism; and thirdly, against pure or scientific materialism, which announces the double verdict, no soul and no God, and reduces all forms of existence and activity to the terms of matter and force, the apologete must wage an uncompromising warfare which knows no defeat. Next, the forces of deism, which admits the existence of God, but regards him as the absentee landlord of the universe, must be encountered, and both its naturalistic and rationalistic wings must be routed. Then that great monistic system which has always been set in strong battle array against true theistic belief, and which is known as pantheism, must engage the undivided attention of the apologete, as it seeks either to lose the identity of the universe in God or to hide God away in the universe. Its four legions—Hindoo, Eleatic, Spinozistic and Hegelian—must be in turn attacked and overthrown. Then, finally, the scattering hosts of pessimism, secularism and socialism are to be warded off, while the flying mercenaries of spiritualism, who love good pay and do their fighting in the dark, are to be driven away by the weapons of truth.

Returning victorious from this long campaign, the apologete will be ready to enter the second section of the wide field in which his great work lies, that of historical or evidential apologetics. Here the great conflict is between the supernatural and anti-supernatural views of the Scriptures, of Christ, and of Christianity; and the Christian apologete must take his place as a leader on the side of supernaturalism.

Useful preparatory work may be here done by the apologete in the field of comparative religion, or, as it is sometimes called, the science of religions. Much that is new and useful to apologetics will be found here, and not a little of value to mission work will be learned regarding these false systems with which the Christian missionary has to deal. It must be kept in mind also that many anti-Christian scholars are working in this field, and covertly seeking by a flank movement to take the royal crown from the head of Christianity, to break it in pieces and distribute its fragments among all religions, leaving the Christian with perhaps the brightest jewel in her hand, but without a crown upon her head. The apologete must defend Christianity as the only religion worthy to wear a crown. In a critical and comparative way he will study the religions of Islam and Egypt, of Phoenicia and Canaan, of Greece and Rome, of Assyria and Babylon, of Persia and India, of China and Japan, of Western Europe and America, and of Africa and the Isles of the Sea. By a comparison of the results of investigation in this wide field with Christianity, many valuable conclusions may be reached. Thus it will be discovered that the earlier religious beliefs are more monotheistic and purer than the later in every one of the great ethnic religions. It will also appear that the further back religious beliefs and practices in different systems can be traced, the more are they found to resemble each other, a fact which points to a common origin and to a primeval revelation. The study of comparative religion will also reveal the fact that the law of development in merely human or natural religions is *steady deterioration*. The light of primeval revelation grows fainter and fainter till whole races become shrouded in darkness. But with Christianity it is otherwise. The Christian system, together with antecedent Judaism, reveals a line of

continual expansion and growth till the light became the noon-tide brightness of the gospel day. The only reasonable explanation of the facts is that all onward religious movement is the result of special divine interposition, and that the divine causality in the form of the supernatural has ever operated in the line of Judaism and Christianity. Hence the Christian system has gone on from one degree of strength unto another, while other religions are like streams which have wandered away from the channel of the supernatural until lost in the deserts of religious ignorance.

The apologete having discovered the supernatural as the peculiar possession of the Christian system, must explain its nature and manifestations. As to its nature, he will show that the supernatural is more than the merely supersensible or superhuman; that it is more than the hypermaterial, and other than God's ordinary modes of working in nature and of ruling in human history. The apologete must vindicate the reality of the supernatural as involving certain unusual or extraordinary modes of God's operation in relation to nature and human history which have religious ends in view. Then the great fourfold manifestation of the supernatural in the sphere of human history must be unfolded at length. First, the supernatural as manifested in *word*, which gives revelation as we have it in the Scriptures; secondly, the supernatural as manifested in *act*, which presents the miracle; thirdly, the supernatural in a *person*, which exhibits the Christ of history as the divine Redeemer; and fourthly, the supernatural as manifested in a *kingdom*, which sets forth the church as a spiritual commonwealth.

Discussing the first of these, the precise nature of revelation must be explained. The supernatural communications which the apologete must defend and vindicate are those contained in the Scriptures; and thus the Bible and supernatural revelation are to be regarded as synonymous from this view-point. Then the real historical character of this revelation and of its written record must be held fast, against all opposing or minimizing views. Critical and reconstructive theories of the religion and literature of the Old Testament, which makes Mosaism only a natural national growth among the Jews must be carefully scrutinized. Advanced

Higher Criticism, with all its pretensions to high scholarship, must be met with equal and more reverent learning; and no view which destroys the historical integrity of the Old Testament Scriptures as the inspired record of a real supernatural revelation, and regards these Scriptures as merely the product of the natural development of Jehovism among the Israelites, can be allowed to stand. So in the New Testament, those legendary, mythical, and tendency theories of the narratives which rationalistic criticism advances must be driven entirely from the field by sober criticism.

Connected with revelation, the modern apologete will find a difficult question, which demands his serious consideration and vigorous defence. That question is the fact of *inspiration*. The complete discussion of this question belongs to the systematic theologian; still the apologete has his work to do defending the true doctrine and refuting some false views. The apologete must maintain that inspiration is more than natural genius or lofty intuition, and more than the mere effect of the Spirit of God upon the persons who received the revelation. He must also hold that inspiration is more than mere divine guidance in regard to the moral and spiritual elements of the Scriptures; and he cannot be content with any theory which gives us merely inspired *men*, but not an inspired *Bible*, or which professes to give us an inspired *Bible*, but not from inspired *men*. A true doctrine will argue in favor of the inspiration of the men as authors of the books, and of the Bible as the production of inspired men, so that the Scriptures constitute a perpetual revelation from God to men of successive generations. Then, further, the apologete must defend a doctrine of inspiration which is plenary, though not purely mechanical; which is dynamical, though not of degrees; and which is verbal so far as the autographs of the inspired books are concerned. This gives us from God, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, a revelation which is permanent, infallible, and authoritative.

Dealing with the second form in which the supernatural is manifested, the apologete must consider the Miracle in certain aspects. The true character of the miracle, as an event in the course of nature, not effected by the ordinary causes operating in

nature, but produced by direct divine agency, in order to attest the supernatural mission and message of him who works it, must be vindicated. The relation of the miracle to the uniformity of nature and to the divine agency must be explained in accordance with this idea of its nature. Above all, the position that the great purpose of the miracle is to attest or witness to the divine commission and communication of the person who performs it must be held fast, especially against the view which maintains that before the miracle can attest any doctrine to be of divine origin that doctrine must first have commended itself to human reason and conscience as good. Then objections against the doctrine of miracles must be answered. These will come from three main quarters—first, from the scientific, where certain false views of the uniformity of nature prevail; secondly, from the philosophical, where wrong opinions in regard to God's relation to the universe are held; and thirdly, from the critical or historical quarter, where erroneous positions are maintained in reference to the nature and office of reliable human testimony. The apologete will have some hard battles to fight on this field; but, as in the case of inspiration, he must hold his ground and defend the true nature and function of the miracle in the Christian system.

Discussing the third branch of the historical manifestation of the supernatural the apologete passes to a study of the Christ of history as the divine Redeemer. Here the field of apologetical inquiry is very wide, but our present sketch can be but brief. The real historical character of the Christ of history must be made good against all mythical and non-historical theories. Then the fact of his resurrection must be established in opposition to those who claim that his body was stolen, or that he did not really die on the cross, and of those who regard his appearances during the forty days as visionary. Then not only the historicity of Christ, but also his divinity, must be firmly settled against all naturalistic views. From prophecy fulfilled in him, from his miracles and teaching, from his moral perfection and exalted claims and corresponding character, an overwhelming cumulative argument may be framed. The character of Jesus could not have been invented, and the record of his life cannot be fiction. The only explanation of

the facts is the reality of the life, the teaching, the miracles, and the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. This may be made the Gibraltar of the Christian system.

The apologete will in the last place find the supernatural manifested in a kingdom, which is the church. He may here describe God's three kingdoms. First, his natural kingdom in the material universe; secondly, his moral kingdom in his moral government; and, thirdly, his spiritual kingdom connected, so far as man is concerned, with redemption, and embracing in a certain way God's moral kingdom. This spiritual kingdom is that which Christ claimed as his, and which he said was not of this world. The complete discussion of this fruitful theme belongs to another department, yet the apologete can render useful service by showing that the church is not a mere human institution, but is one of the forms in which the supernatural is manifested age after age. The apologete has a noble theme at this point. He may show that the church is supernatural in its origin, for God is its author; that it is supernatural in its Mediatorial King and Head, who is Jesus Christ; that it is supernatural in its constitution and laws, which are found in the sacred Scriptures; that it is supernatural in its executive, who is the Holy Spirit; that it is supernatural in its conditions of citizenship, which all root in regeneration; and that it is supernatural in its culmination in the kingdom of glory.

The result of the work of the apologete in this second great section of the field will be the defence and vindication of the supernatural, and the refutation of all anti-supernatural views of the Scriptures, of Christ, and of Christianity.

At this point the work of the apologete might be considered complete. Still, the vast advances made during recent years in the various branches of scientific research make further important demands upon his services. It will be necessary for him, therefore, to enter on the third great section of apologetical discussion, and consider certain vital questions which arise in the debates between physical research and Christian faith. The scope of the chair to which I am called gives a prominent place to the treatment of these questions, and its incumbent must at different stages deal

carefully with them. No complete sketch of his work can be given here, but only a few points of apologetic interest will be noted.

In entering this field the apologete will often be called to act in a judicial capacity touching the questions in debate between science and religion. He must define the limits of each carefully, and will be no party to a declaration of war between them. Sometimes, perhaps, the apologete has been too sensitively afraid of scientific inquiry, and sometimes the scientist has been too much prejudiced against religion. It may be true also that if some theologians knew more of science, and some scientists had more religion it would be much better for both. From true science and sound philosophy religion has nothing to fear. It is "vain philosophy" and "science falsely so-called" that are dangerous. False science in the hands of a bad man may be a great evil, and in the hands of even a good man it may be misleading; true science in the hands of a bad man may be perverted, but in the hands of a good man it may be full of blessing.

Entering on his work here, the apologete must carry with him the results of previous inquiry: First, he will regard the universe and study its facts from the vantage-ground of theism. As a scientist he will hold by theistic belief, being assured that a man need not become an atheist or an agnostic in order to pursue scientific inquiry. Nay, more, he will find that theistic belief helps rather than hinders science, and he should not be surprised to know that the man who is a sincere believer in Christianity will, other things being equal, be the best student of nature. Secondly, the apologete will also carry with him into these discussions his firm conviction as to the reality of the supernatural and its various manifestations. He will allow no negative or naturalistic views of nature to dominate him in his inquiry. As a scientist and as a Christian, he must stand on the ground of theism and supernaturalism.

The apologete should further assume that there must be inherent harmony between science and religion, so far as they deal with the same topics. If the apologete holds the theistic theory of that universe wherein the facts of science lie as the *ordinary*

products of God's hand; and if he maintains the supernatural view of revealed religion, wherein the facts of Christianity lie as the *extraordinary* products of God's hand, he may rightly assume harmony between science, which treats of the former, and religion, which deals with the latter, so far as they cover common ground or deal with the same facts. If there should be apparent discrepancy or announced opposition between science and revealed religion, the apologete may be sure that either the scientific conclusion is in error, or the interpretation of Scripture is incorrect. But even in this case, the apologete should scarcely regard it as the main duty of his office to be constantly defining the *modus vivendi* between the results of physical research and the doctrines of the Christian system, under the assumption that they are in essential opposition. A better knowledge of nature and a truer understanding of Scripture may banish the apparent antagonism. Thus the rising sun of advancing day, and the gentle breezes from the eternal hills, will scatter the mists from the valleys, and then more clearly will the true and hitherto hidden relations of nature and revelation shine forth.

Only a hint or two can be given in regard to the topics which arise for discussion in this field. In the department of Physics the debate gathers round two great centres—one is that of *matter*, and the other that of *force*. In regard to the former, science cannot tell us what its *ultimate* nature is, and as little can philosophy. As to the origin of matter, science can only lead us on to I point where we must choose between the eternity of matter and a doctrine of creation. The latter best meets the demands of the problem, for it is no harder to conceive *eternity* when connected with a personal God than when it is associated with crass matter. an regard to force, modern science, by its doctrine of the transmutation and correlation of many forms of physical force, is revealing a unity which before long bids fair to postulate a supreme personal will energizing in the forces of nature as the best explanation of the problem.

Then, in the department of Biology, several great problems connected with life and the development of its various forms arise. As to the nature of life, it will appear that, though related to

physical force and chemical action, yet its nature cannot be fully explained by physics and chemistry. Then, as to the origin of life, the apologete will show that all materialistic, cosmical and environment theories do not go to the root of the problem, and that spontaneous generation is now an exploded hypothesis. Science will here show that the question of the origin of life leads back and back till the postulate of a living God as the source of life is the only satisfactory explanation of the phenomena. Then as to the development of living things in their relation to each other, and the origin of different species, we find much debate and great diversity of view. The great question here is: Are all existing forms of vegetable and animal life derived or descended from a single germ, or from several primordial forms, or is each distinct type or separate species a creative product at first. Biological evolution seeks to explain the problem by means of a theory of descent, with various laws of variability, selection, competition, inheritance, etc., and to show how all existing living forms may have been developed by slow degrees during long ages from a few simple primitive vegetable and animal forms. No outline of the debate on the scientific side of this question can be given now, but it may be merely stated that the apologete, in the light of the facts of the case, will be justified in holding the position that the theory of descent, as the explanation of the origin of distinct species of living things, is not yet made out on the side of science, and that at the present day scientists are receding from the extreme views held some years ago. The apologete having defined biological species in a proper way, may firmly rest in the conclusion that the resources of the theory of descent have not yet been shown to be adequate to explain the origin of such species from other species. This being the case, the apologete may patiently wait till further evidence is adduced in favor of that theory, before he begins to ask what changes must be made in his interpretations of Scripture, and to what extent must the doctrines of the Christian system be recast. At the same time, he should be careful in his use of the terms which anti-Christian scientists use in an anti-Christian sense, and he should distinguish clearly between facts and hypotheses, so as not to be misled by unproved hypoth-

eses which are often too hastily taken to be established truths of science. In like manner, he must with equal care refrain from condemning unnecessarily any useful working hypotheses in the sphere of science, so long as they are regarded as mere hypotheses and kept in their proper place, and are in no way brought into conflict with Scripture statement.

So also in the department of Anthropology questions of great interest arise. First of all, the question of man's relation to the brute on the biological side meets the apologete. Here the conclusion may be adopted, that if the theory of descent cannot explain the origin of one animal species *out of* another, much less can it hope to explain the human from any animal species on the side of biology. In addition, many other topics, such as the unity and distribution of the races of men, their antiquity and primeval state, and the pre-Adamite theory, must be here considered. The questions of man's antiquity and his primitive state, as related to biblical statements, are the most important topics in this field at the present day.

Entering the department of Geology, which is so full of interest, the apologete is brought face to face with the cosmogony and geogony of Genesis, and must here handle wisely some difficult questions. The relations of Genesis, Chapter I. and Chapter II., the meaning of the first and second verses of Chapter I., their relation to the rest of that chapter, the Chaos in its relation to the subsequent Cosmos, the Hexæmeron or six creative days in themselves and in their relation to geology, and the Noachian deluge, are all great inquiries. The meaning of the six creative days is the broadest of all these questions; and here the apologete, while he may perhaps have the best reasons for holding to some general form of the *period* theory, yet should be unwilling to shut the door, either on the side of exegesis or geology, rudely in the face of the *literal* theory in some of its phases, for there are difficulties with both classes of theories.

The apologete may properly conclude his work in this department with some discussion of Creation and Evolution. A brief statement of the biblical doctrine of *creation*, as a great truth to whose threshold science at many turns conducts us, must be given.

Then certain explanations touching the term *evolution* and its use may be made. Its meaning may be explained and its various applications may be set forth: First, as it denotes the derivation of the finite from the infinite. This is found in some old emanation theories, and appears in the Hegelian philosophy. This may be termed *dialectic* evolution. Secondly, the term evolution is taken to denote the mode according to which the universe passes from its primitive unorganized state to its subsequent organized condition. This is represented by the Spencerian system, and is properly designated *materialistic* evolution. Thirdly, the term is applied to the process by which one living animal or vegetable form has been originated, and thus new species accounted for. This is Darwinism, and may be appropriately termed *biological* evolution. It will also help to clear the atmosphere of the discussion if the apologete will point out some important distinctions, such as that between evolution and development or progress, between evolution and growth, between evolution and birth or generation, and between evolution as a process and as a causal agency. The defects of certain analogies here, such as that involved in the statement that "the ontogeny of the individual is the type of the phylogeny of the species" must be signalized by the apologete.

In conclusion, I can only utter a word or two in regard to the *spirit* in which apologetical inquiry should be pursued.

In the first place, the apologete should be animated by a spirit of *confidence* and *candor*—confidence in the truth and strength of Christianity and candor in defending it. He must have faith in the good cause he defends, and impartiality in its defence. He must be careful never to leave the impression that Christianity has its weak points, and is in serious need of reasoning and pleading in its behalf. Being convinced of the abiding strength of Christianity himself, as he walks about Zion and tells her towers and marks her bulwarks, he should ever remember that the Christian system does not depend ultimately upon the cogency of his reasoning on its behalf, but is far stronger than his ablest advocacy of it can possibly be. In like manner, he should be very careful not to adduce uncertain speculations, or present doubtful arguments in its behalf, lest, when an antagonist has set aside such

speculations or refuted such arguments, he may hastily conclude that he has destroyed Christianity. At this point the apologete must be careful, confident, and candid in all his reasonings and pleadings.

In the second place, the spirit of the apologete must be *earnest* and *reverent*. The questions with which he deals are the most important that can engage the attention of the human mind, and the issues involved are of vast moment. No flippant spirit, no half-hearted manner, no irreverent word is fitting such a discussion. Think of the problems: God, the universe, man, sin, revelation, Christ, redemption, death, judgment, heaven, hell. Shall the apologete not feel, as he stands in the outer court of the temple of revealed religion, ready to defend the fortress of faith, that the place whereon he stands is holy ground? He should discharge his office with uncovered feet and bowed head, and he should not allow even the raillery of the enemies of Christian faith to tempt him to forget the solemnity of his service to the cause of truth.

In the third place, the apologete should avoid all *bigotry* and *prejudice*. Bigotry makes a man narrow and prejudice obscures his vision. This is true in the spheres of science, of philosophy, and of religion alike; and the scientist and philosopher are as much in need of exhortation in this matter as the theologian. But the apologete must be specially careful at this point, lest he be the means of wounding religion in the house of her friends, by showing a spirit of bigotry and prejudice which narrows his vision and weakens his hands. This does not imply that he is to have no strong convictions in regard to religion, or that he must be prepared to throw overboard at the mere bidding of the skeptic his belief in the Christian system only to recover it by argumentation from unsanctified hands. He is not to cast aside the heritage of religious truth to which he has fallen heir. He is to treat the skeptic as an invader who is to be driven back, not as a claimant who has any rights which deserve recognition. The apologete holds the citadel, and he must not make treaties with the skeptic at all.

In the fourth place, the apologete must conduct his work in a *practical* spirit. Defence, vindication and refutation in relation to the Christian system are not to be conducted for their own

sake. The apologete is not to be a mere speculating theologian, but an earnest worker in the interests of religion. The apologetical arena is not a tournament scene, where the combatants meet for tests of skill; it is rather a battle-field, with momentous issues depending on the outcome of the conflict. The apologete is not a soldier of the cross on parade duty merely, but he is a soldier in the active service. And after all his useful work is done, he must remember that the grace of God alone can renew the hearts of men, and that the Holy Ghost is the irresistible *apolegete* as well as the promised *paraclete*.

Finally, the apolegete should be actuated by a spirit of *loyalty* to the symbolic standards of the church in which he serves. If he serves in the Presbyterian branch of the household of faith he should hold fast by the views of Scripture truth exhibited in her Catechisms and Confession. Wearing the uniform of Presbyterianism, the apologete should be proud of it and loyal to her blue banner. Adapting Thornwell's words, he need not be ashamed of the *Confession of Faith*, of the men who formed it, of the men who adopted it, or of the martyrs and confessors who sealed its doctrines with their blood. The Calvinistic system which it states is a strong system, which has been the inspiration of heroes, of sages, of martyrs and philosophers; it is a faith which has founded states, immortalized kingdoms, and redeemed countless thousands from the thralldom of sin.¹ But the apologete in the Presbyterian fold may not only be proud of his position and loyal to the standards of his church; he may also rejoice that he occupies the strongest apologetic ground afforded by any doctrinal system when he holds firmly by the Calvinistic creed. Not only is that system the truest exhibition of all Scripture, and the best commentary on a genuine religious experience, but it also affords the strongest ground which the apologete can occupy in discharging his office. It puts him on the highest and strongest ramparts of Christian faith, with the battlements of the divine sovereignty behind him, with electing love on his right side and irresistible grace on the left, and the best apologetic weapons in his hands. Who holding any other doctrinal position can do as effective apologetic work as

¹ *Inaugural Address*, Oct., 1857.

he? And for coming conflicts just such a vantage-ground will be needed. "Infidel science will rout everything excepting thorough-going Christian orthodoxy, and the fight will be between a stiff thorough-going orthodoxy and a stiff thorough-going infidelity. It will be Augustine or Comte, Athanasius or Hegel, Luther or Schopenhauer, John Stuart Mill or John Calvin. Arianism gets the fire from both sides; so does Arminianism; so does Universalism."¹ These words, penned fifteen years ago, are true to-day; and by them the Christian apologete receives a warning which, from the Calvinistic standpoint, is a word of cheer to encourage him in the discharge of his duty. May the Presbyterian Church ever be true to her doctrinal trust, and faithful in her apologetic service!

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¹ H. B. Smith, *Apologetics*, p. 194.