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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—APOLOGETICS IN THE PULPIT: ARE THEY NOT MORE HURTFUL THAN USEFUL AT THE PRESENT TIME?

NO. II.

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THE word Apologetics is so comprehensive and various in its meaning that the question before us is necessarily ambiguous. It would be easy to construct a plausible and seemingly conclusive argument on either side, and it will be difficult for any candid writer to answer the question just as it stands without appearing to be on both sides. If we restrict *apologetics* to its most technical sense, as defined by modern writers, and make it mean "the scientific representation of the grounds on which Christian theology, in so far as it is a part of human knowledge, rests and may be vindicated,"* we answer at once that apologetics have not now and never had any appropriate place in the pulpit. Or, if we go to the other extreme, and make the word *apologetics* identical with or akin to the word *apology* in its present popular use, we give the same answer. An *apology*, in its popular sense, is nearly synonymous with *excuse*, and always involves the acknowledgement of a real or apparent fault. Christianity as a whole and in all its parts claims to be, and, if its claims are true, it is, like its divine author, without spot or blemish, and therefore it needs and admits of no apology. But every scholar knows that the Greek word *apologia*, in its etymology and in its use by the early Christian writers, means neither "a scientific presentation" nor an excuse for some acknowledged fault; but it means a DEFENCE upon whatever grounds that defence may be based. Put that word into the question before us, and will any one say that any and every defence of Christianity in the pulpit is more hurtful than useful at the present time? We do not mean that the term *apologetics* ought to be abandoned because ignorant and narrow-minded people misunderstand it. Words are things! To repudiate every term which is defiled or per-

* Encyclopedia Britannica, Art. Apologetics.