

the lie to God's goodness, and they were at a loss on what theory to explain the facts. Old Testament saints with great difficulty, if at all, found the solution of the problem ; but the interest and pathos of their recorded utterances on the subject lie in the manly, sincere way in which they grappled with the difficulty—not blinking facts, or taking up with pious looking but artificial explanations. Think of the Book of Job, for example. The value of that book lies not in the light it throws on God's ways, but in the desperately earnest search for light. It is an example of religious thoroughness worthy of all admiration. How many preachers try to explain the drift of that old book to their hearers, or have ever tried even to master it for themselves ! Is it supposed that nobody needs help on the problem of the book now ? Are there no people to-day asking, Is God really good ? Is there such a thing as a moral order in the world, a righteous, Divine government in human affairs ? What if, while we are discoursing on our developed theology of justification by faith and atonement by the blood of Christ, not a few of our hearers have no ears to hear because their minds are preoccupied with the elementary, fundamental problems of theism ? Have we nothing to say to them ? Must they pass from church to church and hear in succession all the prominent preachers of a city, and yet never get a single word that is helpful to them ? I pity them if the case be so ; I pity more the church which is so poor in prophets who can speak a helpful word to weary men walking in darkness even in regard to the being and character of God. I thank God that when, in bygone youthful days, I was in this plight, there were not wanting wise men to whom one could go with good hope of getting some light. How young men, tormented with doubt, flocked to their church, and with what joy they went away !

Bible apologetic is not confined to the Old Testament. There are valuable, profoundly significant apologetic thoughts in the New Testament. The whole Epistle to the Hebrews is an apologetic effort to make Hebrew Christians, fondly attached to Levitical institutions, see the glory of Christianity as the final eternal religion, because the religion that effectually deals with sin and effectively brings men into true, perfect fellowship with God. Then who does not remember Paul's way of showing how the law might be useful for a time, and yet be doomed to eventual abrogation, by comparing it to the tutors and governors under which the heir of an estate is placed till he reach his majority ? What is that but an apologetic thought ? And there are many such thoughts in Paul's epistles by which he sought to defend his conception of the Gospel at what might appear assailable points.

Even our Lord had to turn apologist now and then. One of the assailed points in His teaching and public action was the new, wondrous view He asserted, both by word and deed, of the priceless value of human souls even at the worst. He had to defend Himself for loving and consorting with "publicans and sinners." The words He spoke in self-defence are

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