

ble, to be quite sure that no books are there which ought not to be there, and that no books are missing which ought to have a place in the collection. Hence the dogmatic theologian, before beginning to set forth in order the doctrines revealed in Scripture, must prove that the Bible is, or contains, a divine revelation, duly authenticated by miracles and prophecies attached to it as evidential adjuncts; that it is throughout so inspired as to be absolutely infallible, so that every statement it contains can be confidently appealed to in proof of doctrines; and that we have in the collection of sacred writings a fixed, certain canon, on no account to be added to or subtracted from. And to make the service of apologetic, as the handmaid of divinity, more complete, it will be well if the evidences of revealed religion be prefaced by some lectures on the evidences of natural religion in the form of proofs of the Being and the attributes of the God who is held to have specially revealed Himself in the Bible.

Such was the programme of the older apologetic, viewed as the handmaid of dogmatic theology, and having for its central object of defence the Bible. But now the centre of Christian interest is not the Bible, but Christ. The Bible is still held in high and reverent esteem, but it is not conceived to be vital to faith to prove all that Christians of a former generation believed to be true concerning the Bible. What is now felt to be of vital moment is to know truly Jesus Christ and to think and feel rightly concerning Him, and it is held to be possible to do this before arriving at final conclusions concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures and the many questions bearing on the canon. Hence the problems of the older apologetic, formerly supposed to be vital, are either altogether set aside, or postponed, or relegated to a position of subordination, and new problems come to the front. The great questions now are: Can we know Jesus Christ? How far are the memoirs of Him historical? What were His thoughts concerning God and man and their relations? How far is Christ's idea of God and man verified by all we know of the universe? What are the historical presuppositions of Christ's person and teaching, and how far are these presuppositions—an elect people, a sacred literature, a Messianic hope—objectively valid, and not merely subjective illusions?

That the hostile influences against which the apologist has to defend Christianity vary from age to age does not need to be proved. Speaking generally, the function of apologetic is to adjust faith to its intellectual environment. There may be no real antagonism between faith and its environment, but till the adjustment has been made there may seem to be, and the impression that there is, even though ill founded, may be as prejudicial as if it were well founded. Now, every one knows that the intellectual environment is incessantly changing, and that in the course of a generation the change may be very great. Seldom has there been a greater change than has taken place in our time. We have got a new way of viewing the universe as the product of evolution. We have got a new view of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament, the result of the mod-