

positively, and then the anti-Christian systems are refuted. In the positive development the Absolute—God—is taken to be self-conscious spirit, and distinctly ethical in His nature. The moral law thus emerges, and in relation to this law the doctrine of sin and the need of redemption is unfolded. The discussion here is profound and satisfactory, and the reality of the supernatural is ably vindicated. In refuting anti-Christian systems, the teleological theory of the universe is vigorously upheld, and the defects of the mechanical theory are pointed out, while the assumptions of the various forms of evolution are mercilessly exposed. Materialism and Pantheism in their latest phases are also carefully examined. The criticism of the subtle pantheism of Hegel and other German writers is exceedingly satisfactory.

Turning to the second main division of the treatise, the historical character of Christianity is presented in relation to the general history of religion. This section of the work is also divided into two parts, the one treats of the religions of men, and the other of the revelation of God.

The former of these topics is exhaustively dealt with, and this discussion is perhaps the chief merit of the work. We know of no abler and sounder treatment of the great subject of the comparative study of religions than is found in the 500 pages devoted to it by Ebrard. He deals with the same general facts as Comte, Müller, Spencer, and J. Freeman Clarke, but the way in which the facts are handled, and the deductions therefrom, manifest a far deeper philosophical insight on the part of our author than on theirs. The religions of India, Persia, Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome, as well as the religions of the ruder tribes of Asia, Europe and America, are sketched with much skill, and with great wealth of learning. To those living in this new continent his discussion of the religions of the Indian tribes of America, possesses much interest, as several new points are brought out.

This discussion is a most satisfactory refutation of all those modern theories of naturalistic evolution, which undertake to give the explanation of the origin and growth of religions. Ebrard shows most conclusively from the facts of the case, that religion cannot be merely a natural development from fetishism and polytheism, up to monotheism and Christianity. On the other hand, he shows that in all these religions, even the most corrupt, there are traces, more or less distinct, of a primitive monotheism, and that the development has been downwards rather than upwards. Christianity is shown to differ generically from the merely natural religions, and to contain a supernatural element, which affords the germ of its upward development. Naturalism will have to invent new weapons before it can, with any hope of success, attack the fortress Ebrard has built. Comte's fetishes, Spencer's ghosts, and German myths are alike laid low.

The concluding pages of the work treat, though only briefly, of revelation and redemption, but we cannot follow the discussion any further. On the whole we consider this the ablest, soundest, and most complete treatise on Apologetics that has yet appeared. A good translation into English would be a great boon, and the scholar who accomplishes this will render good service to the literature of Apologetics, in opening up to English readers such a valuable and instructive book. To theological students the work would be of immense service, as affording a scientific vindication of the grounds of our common Christian faith.

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