

as the mode of attack changes; and the manner of vindication will be modified by the conditions to be met by Christianity from time to time. On this account the question discussed in this paper will always be a pertinent one. As new objections are raised, and as fresh difficulties emerge, the Christian apologete will find new work to do. In this respect, Apologetics differs very much from some other departments of sacred learning.

To give the scope of this paper some definiteness it will be necessary to limit the view we take of the subject before us. We shall confine our observation chiefly to the last twelve or fifteen years, and we shall endeavour to answer the question: What is new in Apologetics during this period? We may pursue our enquiry along various lines. Perhaps we may find our purpose best served by considering what is new in the *spirit*, in the *method*, in the *materials*, and in the *results* of Apologetical study during the period just named. In no case can we go into details at any length; very general outlines must suffice.

I.—ITS SPIRIT.

The *spirit* of Apologetic discussion changes from age to age. In early times it was very bitter. The attacks made on the Christian faith were the echoes of the persecutions. The defences were the product of the fight for life. In later times we find English Deism, and French Atheism, each with its peculiar spirit. The former sought to appear respectable, and claimed a place in good society. The latter was generally polite, but often profane. Many of the Apologists of this age were strong and capable in their defences. The mine which Butler opened has been successfully worked even to the present day, and it is by no means yet exhausted.

During the present century the rise of rationalism in varied forms in Germany and elsewhere, has not unfrequently transformed the work of the Polemic into that of the Apologete. Various theories, scientific, philosophical, and critical, were set forth by men within the Christian Church, which seemed to be really subversive of the unique nature and essential character of the Christian system. The general spirit of this controversy was that of patient scholarship, mingled oftentimes with great boldness of speculation. The supernatural was generally ignored.

During the last decade, so far as the conflict in the intellectual