

A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC

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A Christian apologetic by Wilford L. Robbins

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WILFORD L. ROBBINS

**A CHRISTIAN
APOLOGETIC**

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Handbooks for the Clergy

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VICAR OF ALLHALLOWS BARKING
BY THE TOWER

A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC

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BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE subject of Apologetics is one with which the majority of Christians concern themselves only under protest. They are not interested in it; it seems to them unattractive and lacking in inspiration. The very word, Apology, suggests an atmosphere of strife, argument and counter-argument ceaselessly battling around a theme suited rather to serene contemplation than to the turmoil of polemics. Hence it comes that the subject is relegated, as a rule, to the theological class-room; it is regarded as one of those technical preparations for professional work, which has little to do with the more pressing problems of practical Christian life. And it must be confessed that, under these influences, Apologetics have become to a great extent formal and perfunctory, until dreariness of treatment goes far to justify the aversion which is commonly felt for the subject. Meanwhile, it is well to examine, a little more closely, the causes which have combined to produce so widespread an indifference.

It is certainly a humiliating confession, but probably mental and moral inertia have much to do with the unpopularity of Apologetics. It is hard work to examine the rational ground of one's religious convictions, to thresh out honestly the arguments for and against one's faith. And much unquestioning belief, as well as much soul-disturbing doubt, springs from no more dignified source than unwillingness to undergo the exertion incident to painstaking inquiry.

Others, again, who are not obnoxious to the charge of laziness, shrink from Apologetics because of a certain half-formulated fear. If an examination of evidence be instituted, is it not a little doubtful whither the process may ultimately lead? They believe now, asking no questions; but they are aware that many objections to Christianity have been raised, and that these have been accounted cogent by men of distinguished intelligence. Were it not rashness, then, to embark on so problematical a venture? It is not always easy to characterise this mood justly; according to circumstances, it may signify cowardice, or simply prudence. To tremble before the possible verdict of facts may easily pass into conscious insincerity; but, on the other hand, no one is under obligation to expose himself to danger unnecessarily. The plain man may easily be fooled by specious arguments; is it not