

27.
Apologetic
literature in
England.

theless forms an important feature in the development of English thought, if not also of English science. It is the apologetic literature, those works which deal with what have been termed the "Evidences." In the absence of any scientific theology based upon accurate historical research and philosophical criticism, such as has existed with many good and some evil results since the end of the eighteenth century in Germany, the need was felt for defending or interpreting those answers to the great problems of Nature, Man, and Life, which seemed bound up with the Christian belief, or suggested by the sacred writings. The teaching of science had not become, as in France, a purely secular occupation; instruction was not separated from education; apologetics had not become doubtful through the bad faith and duplicities of cynics like Voltaire, nor ridiculous through the puerilities of shallow writers such as Campe in Germany. Many serious minds were occupied with the growing discrepancies between scientific and popular religious teaching, and believing they could discern the drift of the former, they made various more or less successful attempts to effect a reconciliation between the moving and developing conceptions of scientific thought and the fixed and unalterable ideals of religious belief. Such attempts must be doomed to failure, or at best they offer an individual solution, interesting only if it happens to be the inspiration of a poet or if it represents the creed of one of the few great and soaring intellects which appear once or twice in a century. The conviction is gradually gaining ground that scientific and religious thought emanate from two separate centres,