

# THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

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## APOLOGIA PRO FIDE.<sup>1</sup>

### I.

I AM a member of no church and a participant in no Christian communion; nor have I ever been such. This is perhaps strange in view of the fact that I was reared under Christian influences and that all my traditions are those of what is called the Christian civilization, of which, indeed, I am a student and in an humble way an expositor, for by profession I am a teacher of the history of the philosophy of the western world. Nor have I been insensitive to these influences and traditions. The writings of Patrist and Scholastic churchmen and of the Christian philosophers arouse in me a keen and sympathetic interest; I am deeply stirred by the spectacle which the Hebrew Scriptures present of a whole people struggling through a millennium toward a spiritual, a Messianic revelation; and I am reverent before the nobility of the Gospels. In another mode, I am moved by the outer symbols of Christianity; for I cannot raise my eyes to the image of a saint or view depictions of the passion of Christ without a quickened heart, while even such unadorned tokens as the palm or the cross, or the sight of a Gothic spire, command from me an instinctive genuflection of the spirit. I have attended many forms of Christian service, and in all of them, from the most formal and ritualistic to the simplest, I have found in myself a sense of propriety of presence, of fellowship if you will, utterly different from the aloof curiosity with which I have ob-

<sup>1</sup> Read as the president's address at the annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association held at Cornell University, December 30-31, 1919.