

of the number and minuteness of the difficulties in the way of conviction, the daunting certainty that not even the most learned of men can survey, much less grapple with, the multitude of the considerations which may be fairly and honestly said to bear directly on the truth or falsehood of the Christian creed.

Libraries may be collected on but one aspect of the question ; philology, scholarship, critical learning ask to be heard on one great class of questions ; philosophy, psychology, physiology put in their claims to a hearing on another ; then comes science with its claim to establish the *à priori* improbability, or if it be very rash it will say, impossibility, of the Christian story ; and then, finally, the student of mythologies, and of the various superstitions of the different savage tribes, claims to have his account of the matter heard, in order that the believer may learn from it a legitimate self-distrust. Amid this wilderness of evidence of all kinds, the man of culture not unnaturally gets dazed and paralyzed by all these cross-claims on his judgment, and so it happens that in his mind culture tends to outgrow Christianity. In relation to all aspects of it he finds in himself a number of half-matured thoughts and half-finished trains of reasoning, and his mind becomes a mass of suspended judgments and postponed investigations. Is it or is it not likely that, in this sense, culture will outgrow Christianity? It can hardly be denied that in our own age culture has frequently outgrown the *political* doctrines of all ages, the *economical* doctrines of the last age, and the *social* convictions on which the cohesion of society rested ; and that in many cultivated minds, nihilism, socialism, anarchism, have been the result, while, in a very much larger number of cultivated minds, a deep despair of ever attaining to certainty solid enough to

convince the multitude, has superseded all the old and firmly established convictions. Will not the same process unsettle still more effectually religious conviction? Will any clear guiding belief grow out of the crowd of suspended beliefs in which the tournament of controversialists has ended?

We should be disposed to think that culture would very quickly outgrow Christianity, if Christianity did not positively prevent men from sitting still only to imbibe culture. If life were limited to the study of theology, the study of theology would soon become impossible. But as Christianity was from the very first mainly a gospel for the poor and for those who were not poor only so far as they found themselves unable to separate themselves from their fellow-men, so Christianity now will outgrow culture, because it supplies the one kind of food requisite to turn culture from a solvent of all action into the light and safeguard of wise action. Just as the great German thinker, to whom Professor Upton alludes at the end of his lecture, found in the imperative demands of the *practical* reason the real key to the insoluble riddles of the speculative reason, so we may say that all great thinkers have found in the needs and urgencies of the practical life the solution of the insoluble difficulties of religious thought. Professor Upton himself contends that it is the witness in us to the force and urgency of something deeper and higher than ourselves in the act of resisting sin or straining after duty, which proves to us the reality of God, and renders impossible the view of the idealist that we are merely following the beckoning of our own spiritual fancies. Well, that is very true ; but it would hold, we think, of the claim of Christianity on us in a sense which Professor Upton appears to ignore, when he makes light