

question has been asked by men, almost as if against their will, a question which must be answered.

But while the answers have been many and various—many of them but echoes of the answers of the men who lived in the days of the Christ—the answers of those who have tried to explain, or explain away what they could not understand—the answer of Christendom has all along been one and the same. In her creeds, in the decisions of her great councils, in the writings of her recognized leaders, it sounds forth clear and distinct, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Ridgeway.)

But perhaps you say, while it is true that Christendom has answered thus, it is equally true that many learned men throughout the ages have answered quite differently. And how comes it that so many brilliant scholars, so many intellectual giants have refused to acknowledge the Divinity of Jesus Christ? I have only time now to offer a few hurried explanations which you may think out for yourselves.

In the first place is it a fact that such a number of deep thinkers are unbelievers? We hear of those who are, for the matter is blazoned abroad by their followers; but if we could take a census of the cream of intellectual thought in the present day, I am sure we should find an overwhelming majority in favour of Christianity. Has not the Church of England her scientists, her philosophers, her theologians? Does not the Eastern Church contribute her share? Do we not find them among the Roman Catholics and the various protestant bodies.

Again, a man may be a wise philosopher or a great astronomer—a brilliant lawyer or a keen financier—a successful general or a clever writer and yet have given very little attention to the study of the fundamental truths of Christianity. Yet because of his intellectual attainments in his own profession, he gets the credit for deep research in theological matters when perhaps he has dismissed the whole affair after the most superficial enquiry. But you reply, those eminent men you have so frequently quoted in these lectures, Mill, Renan, Strauss, Hume, Ewald, Channing, Huxley and others. What of them? They surely have studied the subject deeply? While refraining from all judgment of individuals, it is permissible, I think to suggest certain causes which may result in confirmed and hostile unbelief.

I. Often the blame has been, not so much on the side of the doubter, as on the side of the professing Christian. False and harsh views have been taught which have caused men to revolt from the recognized forms of religious belief, and often where the teaching has

been correct, the life has been inconsistent. If Christ were preached in all His grace and power, and men and women professing His name did but live His life, there would be less scepticism in regard to Christianity.

II. *God Blindness.*—An inability to discern spiritual things; just as some people are afflicted with color blindness, and while perfectly clear sighted with regard to everything else, cannot distinguish one color from another. We know that there are brilliant classical scholars who are unable to do the simplest sum in arithmetic correctly, while clever mathematicians often appear incapable of learning languages. This we do not consider a merit but a defect. May not a defect exist in some men with regard to spiritual matters.

III. *The dwelling upon and enlarging of minor difficulties.*—The geologist considers that the Pentateuch contradicts the revelation of the Rocks—the astronomer that it does not tally with modern discoveries in his science—the evolutionist that it is opposed to his theories and therefore must be wrong—Hebrew scholars question the authorship of the various books of the Old Testament—scientists are inclined to disbelieve in miracles; and from these difficulties they work upward until at length they come to deny the Divinity of Christ. Now, as was pointed out in one of these lectures, the truth or falsity of Christianity is not bound up with any of these or similar questions. The all important point is "what think ye of Christ?" Was He superhuman? Was He God manifest in the flesh? This is the first matter to be decided, and if it is decided in the negative the Christian Religion is destroyed down to its very foundation and beyond hope of restoration. Inspiration, prophecy, miracles all come to naught in the general collapse; and the discussion of these questions is rendered useless by the overthrow of the Corner Stone—the Rock on which our Faith is built—the Godhead of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But if it is decided in the affirmative then it will help to explain many difficulties before incomprehensible. Other difficulties will doubtless remain, for we cannot know all things here, "we see through a glass darkly," but some day all mysteries will be cleared up, and "we shall know even as we are known." Until that time comes, let us say in all faith, when doubts or difficulties assail us, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and therefore I will wait patiently and confidently the explanation of all that I cannot understand now." If this were done there would be very few agnostics in the world.

IV. *Bias.*—If a man is convinced that he is right and sets to work to prove his convictions, he is very liable to ignore or belittle all evidence not favourable to his case. This, of