

The history of the concept of liberty, for which the world had long to wait, and of its slow development, is in some respects analogous to that of Christianity itself. The same may be said of the idea of toleration, which is still far from being acclimated even in Christian lands. Forces, such as are represented by these words, have in the world a mighty, but not an immediate effect. "Sudden effects in history," says John Stuart Mill, "are generally superficial; causes which go down deep into the future events produce the most serious parts of their effects only slowly, and must have time to become a part of the familiar order of things."

Sir William Hamilton points out that one of the strongest intellectual instincts of man is to unify knowledge. This instinct tends both to credulity and scepticism. *Every great discovery has to fight its way to recognition.* The philosopher just named mentions the fact that not a physician in Europe above forty years of age is believed to have admitted Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood. The wider the truth the more difficult its acceptance. It is not only Lamas, such as the one whom Mr. George Kennan interviewed, who are at this late day in doubt in regard to some of the elementary truths of astronomy. A recent number of the *American Missionary* tells of a white preacher in Tennessee, who publicly stated that he was prepared to *demonstrate* the proposition that the sun revolves around the earth. Doubtless such scepticism seems to most of us imaginary, but it is, on the contrary, to some minds very real.

Before the acceptance of a new truth there must intervene a period of painful doubt, or of such a degree of "hospitality to truth" as to accept either of two contradictory propositions, according to circumstances. The race of teachers who are prepared to "teach round or flat, according as parents prefer," is not extinct.

That *sentiment* is one of the strongest forces in human affairs is as well known as any truth in physics. Consider the history of the theory and practice of vaccination. Why is it that in certain parts of Canada there is almost as fierce an opposition to this valuable preventive of a deadly disease, as if the method was by baptism with oil of vitriol? The objection does not rest upon reasoning, and cannot be overcome by reasoning. It is sentimental. It is in part sentiment which makes the introduction of the practice of cremation so slow and difficult. Earth burial can be shown, as it has often been shown, to be full of peril to the living, but for all that, how many of us want to be incinerated? Why does the metric system have such uphill work in getting itself into use in a country where the currency has always been based upon decimals? Why can we not introduce spelling reforms into literature or good ventilation into public buildings?

If it is true that the greater a truth, the slower it makes its way, this proposition must also hold true of the widest generalization of all—the existence of only one God. An idea of God so comprehensive, so far-reaching, and so revolutionary as that taught by Christ, is not likely to