

powerful mind stored with unusual erudition. They see her laying down the law on many crucial points—*e.g.*, the possibility of miracles, the results of historical criticism, the varying evidential value of testimony—and they see too that her views on all these things are stated to have been overwhelmingly convincing to the candid mind of the hero of the story. And so there is danger, real danger, *under certain conditions*—which I will deal with before I conclude this paper—of their being carried away.

But when with sober mind we examine the real force of the argument, we discover that hardly anything remains but this, that the late Professor Green, of Balliol (if not unintentionally misrepresented), did hold, and that the authoress does hold certain convictions, and that that should be enough for the readers. The argument then is as follows:—

The convictions of Professor Green and Mrs. Ward must be warrant enough for the readers of *Robert Elsmere*.

The convictions of Professor Green and of Mrs. Ward are such as are displayed in the later career of the hero.

*Therefore* the conscientious and thoughtful reader must give up his orthodox Christianity and embrace an ardent but most shadowy theism.

I have in the above syllogism said nothing as to the Squire's convictions, or those of Robert Elsmere, because they only represent those of the authoress; whereas the convictions of Professor Green and Mrs. Ward are solid facts; and his, at any rate, few wise people can afford to altogether despise. Something of this kind of thought appears very prominently in one place in the story (p. 536 of the one volume edition), where the hero is standing by the open grave of Mr. Grey [*i.e.*, Professor Green], and meditates on "the triumphant outbursts of the Christian service." "'Man's hope,' he thought, 'has grown humbler than this. It keeps now a more modest mien in the presence of the Eternal Mystery; but is it in truth less real, less sustaining? Let Grey's trust answer for me.'"

I do not blame that tendency to rest on the authority of great souls. Doubtless Mrs. Humphry Ward has been greatly