

fectly orthodox; and yet in some ages of the world it has seemed a novelty, and has occasionally struck devout persons as almost blasphemous.

Forty years ago the majority of religious people were surprised and somewhat shocked when a book was written to recall them to a recognition of the thorough humanity of Christ. It appears that the generation of that day had let this aspect slide out of its field of view, its attention being focussed upon another. Consequently, when "Ecce Homo" was published, it was received with a chorus of disapprobation, broken only by a few judicious utterances in its favour from leaders of thought: one of these—a notable article in "Good Words" by Gladstone—having a great influence in making the book more widely known and better appreciated.

Nowadays the pendulum has swung so far in the direction advocated by this book that it is difficult to realise the shock experienced when an historian set to work to deal with the life of Christ as he would deal with any other history, and to make an attempt to trace the career of the "young man of promise," spoken of in the originally anonymous and much-criticised brief preface, on the basis of the bare facts as deducible by historical methods from the documents themselves, without explicit attention to the mass of subsequent tradition and theoretic gloss which the Church had inevitably, and to a great extent rightly, superadded.

The attempt thus made by Sir John Seeley was singularly able; and, being undertaken in a reverent and scholarly spirit, has achieved much towards the improved mode of thought on these subjects now prevalent. The book was admittedly somewhat one-sided, but it was amply justified by the needs of the time. Nor is it at all out of date now. In the treatment of any great subject, vivid attention to one aspect at a time is all that average human beings are capable of; but he is a poor reasoner, or has a pitiful intellect, who is thereby blinded to the existence of other aspects equally worthy of attention in their turn.