

which have led to them and to gauge the amount of actual and undisputed knowledge by which we are guided, it will probably be found that the latter plays only a very small part, and that beliefs and convictions constitute the much larger portion of the considerations which have led up to them. The task not only of placing these convictions and beliefs in a clearer light, but also of bringing them into some definite and intelligible relation with the results of scientific thought, will therefore always present itself; and to many thinking minds it will be the most important function of philosophical speculation.

45.  
Attempts at  
reconcilia-  
tion of  
knowledge  
and belief.

The endeavours to fulfil this task, to reconcile Knowledge and Belief, constitute a large department of the philosophical thought of the century. They will claim our attention in the later chapters of this section, which will respectively deal with the time-honoured problems of the Beautiful (*Æsthetics*), the Good (*Ethics*), and the Spirit (*Philosophy of Religion*), further with the more recent problem of Society. A last chapter will deal exclusively with the several attempts towards a unification and systematisation of thought in which the nineteenth century has been particularly rich.

Perhaps we shall have to state that those endeavours towards a reconciliation of the scientific and religious aspects have not been very successful, and shall thus have to confirm a widespread opinion which looks upon such attempts with disfavour. But even if this should be the case, we shall be much impressed with the discovery that all through the century, and from apparently divergent points of view, the fact has been recognised