

of life, death, and immortality; of evil, sin, and redemption, which are now freely and largely discussed by philosophical writers in all the three countries, did not in English and Scottish philosophical literature find any exhaustive treatment. They were relegated, after the example of Bacon, to the separate domain of Theology or Divinity,¹ where they received adequate treatment on the basis of historical tradition. This was either confined—as with the Nonconformists and Presbyterians—to the Scriptures, which were interpreted, but not criticised, in the light of Reason, or it was the combined authority of tradition and the Church which prescribed the correct canons for explanation and interpretation of the Scriptures. To the English mind the doctrines of the Christian religion, taught in a more or less orthodox spirit, and the unique historical records connected with its mysterious origin, presented themselves quite as much

¹ See a remarkable passage by George Ripley in his *Introductory Notice to Jouffroy's Philosophical Essays*, pp. 23, 24, quoted by Robert Flint in his *Philosophy of History in France and Germany* (1874, p. 4): "There is a little book," says George Ripley, "which is taught to children, and on which they are examined in the Church. If we read this book, which is the Catechism, we shall find a solution of all the problems which have been proposed; all of them without exception. If we ask the Christian whence comes the human race, he knows; or whither it goes, he knows; or how it goes, he knows. If we ask that poor child, who has never reflected on the subject in his life, why he is here below and what will become of him after death, he will give you a sublime answer, which he will not thoroughly

comprehend, but which is none the less admirable for that. If we ask him how the world was created, and for what end; why God has placed in it plants and animals; how the earth was peopled; whether by a single family or by many; why men speak different languages; why they suffer, why they struggle, and how all this will end,—he knows it all. Origin of the world, origin of the species, question of races, destiny of man in this life and in the other, relations of man to God, duties of man to his fellow-men, rights of man over the creation,—he is ignorant of none of these points; and when he shall have grown up, he will as little hesitate with regard to natural right, political right, or the right of nations: all this proceeds with clearness, and as it were of itself, from Christianity."