

Catholic Church. This position, whatever its defects may be, has at least this advantage, that it deals with a compact phenomenon, with an organised and unified body of thought.

In this country, on the one side, the religious problem has been attacked and treated by writers of all shades of opinion, possessing all possible qualifications; but none of their theories or discussions have combined in distinct schools of thought centred around prominent names. Each writer has generally been content to state his view independently, disregarding usually historical continuity and the opinions of friends as well as opponents. The historical and critical treatment of the problem has thus been very inadequate.<sup>1</sup> To note that this is to a large extent owing to the preponderance of extra-academic thought and learning is only to repeat what I have had frequent occasion to mention in other fields of thought and research.

In trying, therefore, to attain to some clearness as to the progress of philosophic thought on religious matters one is almost compelled to follow the better defined lines on which such thought has marched in Germany. These

<sup>1</sup> This is fully confirmed, even in stronger terms, by the author of, so far as I know, the only history of our subject written in the English language: "The century now behind us has teemed with new ideas and fresh methods, and in some quarters it is closing in a mood of depression through our failure to secure a commanding and dominant result for Philosophy of Religion after so much mental activity has been applied to it. A survey of the past and a comparison of the methods which compete for

our acceptance in the present may be the remedy needed by the tendency to Agnosticism, on the one hand, and the apparently chaotic advocacy of incompatible systems on the other." (Alfred Caldecott, 'The Philosophy of Religion in England and America,' 1901. Preface.) A glance at the body of the work and at the number of separate headings under which the different writers are classed is the most impressive proof of the correctness of the contention.