

which the scientific method can prove to be true, and that which it can demonstrate to be false, amongst the views, opinions, doctrines, and statements which in the present state of knowledge are not within the pale of science, we must necessarily place many religious views and beliefs. Let this point be made quite clear. I do not for one moment say that religious views and beliefs cannot be either proved to be true or demonstrated to be false by the scientific method. The scientific method fails to touch them either one way or the other; they are outside its jurisdiction.

How then, you will say, can there be any conflict between science and religion? I do not admit that there can be, and my reasons for saying so will, I trust, be apparent presently. The only conflicts that have ever arisen, or can ever arise, between science and religion, so-called, are when either has stepped out of its true province. When religion has stepped out of its province and meddled with science, as when it was made an article of creed that the earth was immovable, or when, in the name of religion, it was contended that there were no antipodes, or that the sun and moon stood still, it entered upon ground where demonstration from observed facts suffices to prove the proposition false. And when science, in the mouth of one of her ungente followers, proclaimed that Christianity was a scourge which had destroyed three civilizations, the statement simply proved that a man trained in science may sometimes be very unscientific.

Even now there are sincere devout men who, without understanding even what it means, will dispute the truth of the Survival of the Fittest; yet these same men would not question the truth of the multiplication table. The survival of the fittest may be very disagreeable to the unfit. That ten times ten make 100 may be very unsatisfac-

tory to the man who cannot earn more than ten shillings a week; but both are true nevertheless,

It was in an age thus unscientific, uncritical, unaccustomed to testing truth, that the Christian Church arose. What wonder that around the simple gospel preached by Jesus and His disciples there grew up a vast accretion of human error. The people around Him looked for signs and wonders, and were rebuked by Him in unmistakable terms. Few years elapsed before we find the Apostle Paul contending with Judaizing teachers, to whom he gave place, no not for an hour. And in spite of the astonishing energy of his efforts to bring back into spiritual lines the gross materializing tendencies of the time, error grew apace. Ecclesiastical systems arose; greed of power and pride of place crept in.

Men of great intellect, men of real devotion, too, sought to glorify God by wisdom of their own. They translated into formal propositions the Oriental metaphors of Paul, and buried the pure Gospel under a heap of tradition, half Jewish, half scholastic. Then arose the bitter controversies of the third and fourth centuries. Councils of bishops anathematised one another. They altered the Canon of Scripture to fit their preconceived purpose, accepting one epistle and rejecting another according as it suited their notions of what ought to be orthodox. Historic accuracy was of little or no account: the test of genuineness was whether the contents squared with their own narrow opinions. Casuistry and worldliness advanced hand in hand. Such a sickening exhibition of envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness, as is presented by the rival Councils in the fourth century has rarely been equalled. And out of it all came the system of ecclesiastical domination; the formal adoption of the orthodox creeds; the supremacy of the clerical order. Already in the fourth century the simple teaching of Jesus was well nigh forgotten and out