

II.—A NEWER CHAPTER IN THE "WARFARE OF SCIENCE."

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"It does move, tho," said the persistent Galileo, as in seeming to pry the physical, he actually pried the intellectual, world off its indolent foundations. Two hundred and fifty years of rapid flight since that day have carried us far through newly opening galaxies of fact, and newly gathering nebulas of theory, making us more expectant and exigent as our appetite has been whetted by swiftly multiplying novelties. When invited to regale ourselves upon a "new chapter in the warfare of science," therefore, it is somewhat aggravating to find beneath the uplifted cover one more rehash of the antique "Galileo Case." Is it possible that the daily renewed larder of nineteenth-century science can supply no fresher dainty; that we must be reduced to a stale bit of the "funeral baked meats" of a dead issue of the seventeenth? Does the erudite "instructor of the foolish" really believe that the world does move, after all?

But there is a later article, on "The Retreat of Theology in the Galileo Case." This surely looks more promisingly toward modern issues: for a "retreat" two and a half centuries long must supply material for a long chronicle of aggressive movements on the part of the assailant, and successively new devices to cover the retiring steps of the assailed. The discussion, unhappily, fails to travel far in the direction whither the title looks. The story is all told, substantially, in the solemnly reiterated assurance that theology has been compelled reluctantly to abandon the Ptolemaic theory, and that "to science remains the victory." There is one novelty here, at least: the implication that Ptolemaism was the especial property or under the especial custody, if not the actual invention, of theology. Ptolemy was not a Hebrew, nor was Aristotle, on whose authority the astronomic dogmatists of the day confidently rested. If so reliable scientific authority as that of Professor Tyndall may be trusted, it was not the Mosaic, but "Aristotle's closed universe," that "fell with a crash" under the blows of Copernicus and Galileo. Copernicus, as his own pen clearly stated, supposed himself to be attacking a peripatetic, and not a theological, dogma, and from the peripatetics he anticipated and actually experienced the fiercest antagonism. If we must needs characterize the conflict, as our author is so eager to do, by the affiliations of its chief participants, we must reverse his application of terms: it was the old science that "retreated," and "to theology remains the victory." For the Ptolemaists were Aristotelians, and Copernicus and Galileo both devout adherents of the popular theology, the former being a priest. It is only a slipshod interpretation of the facts, how-