

discrepancy between the two records, or there is an old plant-bearing formation yet undiscovered,"—a forlorn hope, we take it. There is the further difficulty between the first and second chapters, which must be familiar to our readers through the Colenso controversy; this our author does not mention.

On the whole, these are objections of detail, and do not mar the general narrative. With regard to the existence of trees out of their geological order, Dr. Dawson's suggestion seems not unduly strained. Vegetation of a very low kind may have existed on the land in the third age, as we know it did at a very early period and it may be that, in the history, the general subject was mentioned *en bloc* at the time of its first appearance. Or as we should prefer putting it, the *æons* or periods, instead of absolutely succeeding each other, overlap.

Whether these difficulties besolved or no, Dr. Dawson is right in saying that the points of agreement under the circumstances are so wonderful as to be inexplicable by the suggestion of guesswork. There are here several prominent ideas, perfectly unique, and entirely original with the author of *Genesis*. The unity of God, the unity, order, and purpose of creation by Him, and the gradual progress of organic nature from lower forms to higher. So far as the lower animals are concerned, the text plainly hints at creation by development in obedience to law; and that this is no mere modern shift to get over a difficulty is proved by the fact that St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, as well as other Fathers and Schoolmen, gathered the doctrine therefrom centuries before evolution was dreamed of as a scientific hypothesis.

We should like to have made a few remarks on the concluding chapter; but we have already occupied too much space. We close, therefore, with a recommendation to all who feel stirred by the formidable problems of the day, to read this little volume, as an introduction to a deeper acquaintanceship with the serious questions at issue.

ENGLISH PORTRAITS. By C. A. Ste. Beuve. Selected and translated from the "Causeries du Lundi." With an Introductory Chapter on Ste. Beuve's Life and Writings. London: Daldy, Isbister & Co.

We confess to a feeling of sympathy with a man who tries to introduce Ste. Beuve to English readers. In the first place he must himself appreciate Ste. Beuve, or the idea would not have occurred to him; and that is a point in his favour, as it shows that his literary taste is good. In the second place, the task he undertakes is likely to be far more laborious than glorious. Ste. Beuve is an extremely difficult author to render into English; and, when the rendering is done, how many are there that will care for it? In his own country, Ste.

Beuve was highly thought of as a critic, and may almost be said to have had for years no rival in the region of criticism; but he was never what could be called a popular writer. And in England, or on this continent, it is only the few who can find a real interest in the delicate, ingenious, and elaborate essays that were the result of his life-long activity. The type of the English essayist adapted for popularity is Macaulay. Here you have bold and vivid portraiture, logical sequence, firmly-drawn conclusions. You see the point you start from, you know whither you are being carried, and have perfect confidence that you will not be carried too far. Macaulay's positive and dogmatic spirit seeks no collaboration on the part of the reader; throws upon him no burden of doubt, no responsibility for a decision; but simply asks an attention which it is really easier to grant than to refuse to so vivacious, enthusiastic, and withal so instructive a pleader. Very different is the mode of the French critic. With him criticism is simply seeing every object in the light, and from the point of view, best adapted for enabling us to grasp its essential qualities. He did not practise his art for edification, or with the view of adding strength to any set of opinions or principles; he had nothing in him of the spirit either of the advocate or of the prosecuting counsel. He did not feel that he was responsible for things *being* as they were; his business, he held, was to try to *know* them as they were, so that he might judge them as far as possible with comprehension and sympathy. To those who are not themselves in a hurry to pronounce final opinions, who are more anxious to understand than to attribute praise or blame, his essays, especially if they can be read in the original, will be full of interest. He always leaves the characters he is discussing plenty of room to breathe; he neither smothers them with praise, nor does he, after the boa-constrictor fashion of certain critics, throw around them the coils of a merciless logic from which there is no escape. He can be keen upon occasion; but he takes no pleasure in the "back-breaking" criticism for which his countrymen have invented a name.

We have left ourselves we fear but little space in which to discuss the merits of the present translation. It includes critical biographies of Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Chesterfield, Benjamin Franklin, Gibbon, Cowper, and Pope, and also an appraisal of "Taine's History of English Literature." This selection, which has been made, we cannot doubt, more with the view of interesting English readers than of exhibiting the great critic's powers to the best advantage, is the justification of the title given to the work of "English Portraits." It would be a mistake to expect any translation to reproduce the peculiar merits of a writer like Ste. Beuve, so far as these are connected with style. The present translator might,