

now would be so imprudent as to ask such a question, even were there any so unfortunate as to think it,—which I trust there are not. And this change we, the British Association, have in no small degree helped to produce. We have carried far and wide through the land the light which before beamed only from a few scattered points; if our meteor-like presence be short, it is also bright,—and as the meteor is remembered when the stationary lamp is unheeded, so I trust that of the tens of thousands who have felt our influence few will forget the impression which it made on them, and fewer fail to feel that this impression ennobled and exalted their understanding. It is evident that science now has a far more powerful hold on public opinion than when we began our course. No other proof is needed of this than the fact that many new branches of it are finding their way into the course of University instruction. Without referring to the recent changes in those of this island, I rejoice to say that in my own—that of Dublin—within the last year, Chemistry, Thermotics, Electro-Magnetism, and others, have been made a portion of the under-graduate course; while one of our own valued members has introduced into primary schools a manual of Zoology, of which the spirit is as good as the substance is attractive. But there is another evidence, not less satisfactory, in reference to this our third object, and I name it with pleasure,—the prompt and liberal attention which our Government now pays to the requests of the Association. It is true that we have never applied to it except for matters of paramount importance and unquestionable usefulness; but in times past it would have been no easy matter to force a conviction of this on the guardians of the Treasury; and we may therefore feel assured, not only that they personally take an interest in what we bring before them, but also that the whole nation sympathizes with us;—for some of these concessions are of no ordinary magnitude. The completion of the Ordnance survey of Scotland—the enlarging the scale of part, perhaps all, of that of England—and the adding lines of level to that of Ireland after it was apparently completed—are very formidable items in a budget. At our demands the Observatories from which such splendid additions have been made to our knowledge of Magnetics and Meteorology have been established far and wide throughout our dominions:—a precious gift, not only for itself, but for what it has produced. The example was followed, on their usual princely scale, at four stations by the East India Company, (always, be it said, munificent patrons of science,) and still more extensively by Russia—with what success must be fresh in the memory of those who were present at the Magnetic Congress. We obtained the Antarctic Expedition of Ross, so fertile in its geographic fruit—so invaluable for the wide extension which it gave to the domain of terrestrial magnetism. We procured the expenditure of large sums for the reduction of the Greenwich lunar observations, and for publishing the Catalogues of Lacaille and Lalande,—and much more which I need not recite. Yet,—and we well may reckon it a sign of progress,—not a single voice has been

raised in opposition to these grants. It seems as if our country recognized in us its scientific representatives,—as if we were like the Saxon prototype of its great council: its *Witena-Gemot*—its assembly of the Wise.

And may we deserve that name; for let me remind you that science is not necessarily wisdom. To know, is not the sole nor even the highest office of the intellect; and it loses all its glory unless it act in furtherance of the great end of man's life. That end is, as both Reason and Revelation unite in telling us, to acquire the feelings and habits that will lead us to love and seek what is Good in all its forms, and guide us by following its traces to the First Great Cause of all, where only we find it pure and unclouded. If science be cultivated in congruity with this, it is the most precious possession we can have—the most divine endowment. But if it be perverted to minister to any wicked or ignoble purpose—if it even be permitted to take too absolute a hold of the mind, or overshadow that which should be paramount over all, the sense of duty, the perception of right—if it does not increase in us the consciousness of an Almighty and All-beneficent presence,—it lowers instead of raising us in the great scale of existence. This, however, it can never do but by our fault. All its tendencies are heavenward;—every new fact which it reveals is a ray from the origin of Light, which leads us to its source. If any think otherwise, their knowledge is imperfect or their understanding warped or darkened by their passions. The Book of Nature is, like that of Revelation, written by God, and therefore cannot contradict; both we cannot read through all their extent, and therefore should neither wonder nor be alarmed if at times we miss the pages which reconcile any seeming inconsistency. In both, too, we may fail to interpret rightly that which is recorded; but be assured, if we search them in quest of truth alone, each will bear witness to the other,—and physical knowledge, instead of being hostile to religion, will be found its most powerful ally, its most useful servant. Many, I know, think otherwise; and because attempts have occasionally been made to draw from Astronomy, from Geology, from the modes of the growth and formation of animals and plants, arguments against the divine origin of the Sacred Scriptures, or even to substitute for the creative will of an intelligent First Cause the blind and casual evolution of some agency of a material system, they would reject their study as fraught with danger. In this I must express my deep conviction that they do injury to that very cause which they think they are serving.

Time will not let me touch further on the cavils and errors in question; and besides, they have been often fully answered. I will only say, that I am here surrounded by many matchless in the sciences which are supposed so dangerous, and not less conspicuous for truth and piety. If they find no discord between faith and knowledge, why should you or any suppose it to exist? On the contrary, they cannot be well separated. We must know that God is, before we can confess them;—we must know that He is wise and powerful before