

authority. It has been quoted as an authority on questions of science, philosophy, history, literary criticism, and a thousand and one other things. It has been made to teach what it was never intended to teach, and this misuse of scripture has done fatal mischief.

For example, the bible has been used as a text-book on physical science. The opening chapters of the Book of Genesis were interpreted as a matter-of-fact history of creation; as an accurate scientific account in detail of how the world came to assume its present form. They were supposed to teach (1) the time of the creative process, six literal days; (2) the order in which existences appeared, namely the formless earth, the atmosphere, the separation of land and water, vegetable life, the heavenly bodies, marine animals, land animals, finally man; and (3) the mode of creation, by successive direct divine creative acts. Then the discoveries of science presented to men another view of creation than that of the writer of Genesis. Geology brought forth evidence which went to show that countless ages must have elapsed during the creative process. Also the order of Creation as read in the book of Nature was different to that in Genesis. Science could only deny the creation of sun, moon and stars subsequent to the creation of the earth, and the existence of vegetable life prior to that of the sun; it also taught with tolerable certainty that

the creation of plants and animals cannot be separated as they are in Genesis but that their growth has been to a large extent along parallel lines; instead of all plants existing before any animals, evidence was found that some animals appeared on earth before some plants, and, contrary to Genesis, that some land animals appeared before some sea animals. Moreover the mode of creation is regarded by modern scientific scholars to have been that of evolution, "a continuous progressive change, according to fixed laws, by means of resident forces," whereas the writer of Genesis seems to attribute each new appearance to a distinct creative act on the part of God. Here then was a conflict between science and the bible. Honest students of natural science reached certain conclusions; but on the authority of the scripture theologians condemned their conclusions as erroneous and denounced science as atheistic. What was the result? The scientist was placed between the horns of an ugly dilemma—science or the bible. Take your choice. If you choose the bible, then shut your eyes to the evidence of science. If you choose science, then abandon the bible, and the church. Many men were led to choose science and to regard the bible as an untrustworthy guide on scientific matters, and, if untrustworthy at one point, then unreliable, it might be they argued in every respect. How could the man who would be true to his