

preted by what seems to us their obvious meaning, are literally true. It is a sort of religious tour de force, which makes light of all rational probabilities as nothing better than impertinent intruders into a sacred field, where they have no right to exist. It reminds one of the early stage of the discussion regarding the geological objection urged against the Mosaic Cosmogony, when it was gravely suggested that the curse pronounced upon the earth in consequence of sin and the deluge were sufficient to explain all the phenomena which seemed to militate against the literal interpretation of the six days of creation. The scientific mind simply refuses to consider suggestions of that character. It assumes on good grounds the continuity of natural laws, and, until evidence of a decisive character is produced, refuses to admit that the physiological conditions could have been so widely different from what they are to-day as to account for such an enormous variation in the duration of life as appears to be indicated by these figures. If there is no other explanation of the language, scientific men will prefer to believe that these statements are simply fabulous traditions, whatever may be the consequences to the credulity and authority of the book which contains them, and they will place them alongside the other tradition still current among Orientals that Adam was a hundred and twenty feet high. Not only so, but many others, who can lay no claim to be considered scientific, but who are unconsciously affected by the growing scientific temper of the day, feel that the literal interpretation of these statements imposes a tax on their faith which is becoming continually more difficult to bear. In view of the results that have been reached from the discussion of other difficulties of a similar character they cannot help asking whether this difficulty too, is not altogether of our own making, arising from erroneous interpretation of Bible language. All past experience shows the un wisdom of theologians in holding fast by literal interpretations of Biblical statements at all cost when science shows good reasons for questioning the accuracy of