

ing largely to the radical tendency in theology, whether in dogmatics or in biblical scholarship. The bold scientific thinker when he comes to handle religious and ecclesiastical topics is not unlikely to bring with him the mental tendencies and habitudes which he has acquired in another province of investigation. Unless he shall recognize what is necessarily special to the methods of theological study in its several branches, the probability is that he will insist upon very radical procedure. Many distinguished philosophers and men of science, it is true, have not only bowed with all submission to the authority of revelation, but have given hearty assent to the usual forms in which the evangelical doctrine is expressed ; but others, though not devoid of religious feeling, have advocated a freer handling of religion and the Bible than any of the great churches would approve.

Among the causes of radicalism in the theological speculations of scientists, the following may be noticed :

1. In certain departments of science demonstrative evidence is alone valid ; and when men accustomed to require such evidence enter a province where moral evidence rather than demonstrative prevails, they are not unnaturally inclined to suppose that nothing in it is settled, nothing ascertained ; and should they not reject supernatural religion altogether, they are likely to follow some method of very fundamental reconstruction. Many instances will readily occur to illustrate this remark.

2. When scientific study has been mainly or exclusively physical it constitutes a very imperfect preparation for dealing with questions of a spiritual nature. Here, again, mental habits which may lead either to unbelief or to very radical revision of theology are quite commonly acquired. The physiological or chemical laboratory does not qualify for the interpretation of spiritual phenomena. Perhaps it is believed that there are no such phenomena, and that matter contains in itself all the potencies. Or should so extreme a conclusion not be reached, should the existence of soul be allowed, a view of the nature of the soul and the conditions of its activity may be entertained which cannot be reconciled either with the ordinary theology or with the plain meaning of the Scriptures. *E.g.*, the connection of all mental phenomena with certain action of the brain and nervous system has persuaded many that the soul when separated from the body must continue unconscious till the resurrection, or else that at death another and more refined organism is evolved, by means of which the soul's activity is maintained. Suppose any such views to have been accepted on physical grounds, it would follow that the teaching of the theologians regarding the nature of the soul must be rejected and that Scripture must receive a new interpretation.

3. Lastly, among a certain class of men engaged in scientific pursuits, there is a sort of undefined feeling to the effect that theology has not been thoroughly and scientifically treated, and that the current theologies and interpretations of Scripture are not entitled to any great degree of respect.