

to Col. Munro's monograph on the Bambusidae, and Mr. Baker's *Synopsis Filicum* from the papers of Sir W. J. Hooker.

Here he took occasion to remark on the extent to which the combination of species hitherto accounted distinct is carried by these writers, and he conceived that if sub-division has often been carried too far, there is at present a little danger of error in the opposite direction.

A paragraph relating to the Darwinian hypothesis, it is thought proper to give at length.

In the whole field of Natural History, the controversy respecting Darwinianism is still occupying much attention. The new view is defended by several able men of known scientific eminence, whilst those who resist it lie under the disadvantage of being supposed to be influenced more by prejudice than reason. Yet in the sober English mind it cannot be said that the Darwinians gain a rapid or easy victory, and it is quite possible now that even if they cause some change in public opinion, they may by no means secure the prevalence of their own views. There are many minds to which any new doctrine, boldly maintained and pertinaciously urged, seems irresistible. Novelty alone is a strong recommendation, and there is an exceeding pleasure in being carried on by an advancing wave, and seeming to be among the foremost in progressive improvement. It is all very well if the advance is real, but this experience only can test, and history shows us abundant examples of doctrines which have triumphed for a short period, only to pass speedily to the vault of oblivion. Novelty in opinion is neither a recommendation nor an objection. There is far too much yet to be done in the vast fields of knowledge, for it to be admitted as a sign of error. There are too many examples continually occurring of ingenious speculation, unsupported by sufficient evidence, for it to rank as a presumption of truth. A restless grasping after novelty is a serious fault; setting it up as a bar against the examination of evidence is certainly not a less injurious one. If we may implicitly believe a statement in the new periodical devoted to natural science, *Nature*, whilst the English are still discussing the possibility of Darwinianism being true, the Germans have so thoroughly adopted it that it has become the foundation for new systems—the starting point for fresh inquiries. This may appear to most of us to be going somewhat too fast; but then *Nature* may be presumed to be the special organ of the extreme Darwinians, and might be thought to see facts through a somewhat colored medium; and supposing that there is no exaggeration in the statement,