

We allow that the science of the present day has gone ahead of the great bulk of christian teachers, and of most of our popular commentators. Literary and Theological studies have in many cases altogether excluded the study of Natural Science. In the regard of some, time is wasted that a student may spend among the objects of nature. And there are good people, who think disparagingly of a minister who is known to cultivate for the enlargement of his mind, a scientific acquaintance with the works of his Creator.

But this state of things is fast passing away. Divines of this generation are treading closely on the heels of the professed cultivators of science. Men are rising up as teachers of religion who can bring to their professional studies all the collateral light of modern science.

Natural Science is after all but modern. In the realms of thought it is yet but an infant of days and has only recently been brought out of the wilderness. Or, to change the figure, its diffused and glimmering rays have only a few years ago been gathered into lights great and small in the firmament of truth. If the conservative religious spirit of the age has not quite been able to keep pace with its progress, this has been, partly, because science has some what broken loose from its natural espousals with religion, and partly because the sagacious spirit of christianity always climbs with a cautious step the airy heights of human knowledge. The princes of science need not therefore chide the more venerable if more tardy priests of the christian faith.

We have been led into these remarks partly in sympathy with many of the wise and truthful statements in the introductory chapters of "Archæia," and partly by the slightest possible objection we have to some sentiments which it contains bearing upon the treatment of science by the teachers of religion. Not that we decidedly object to any statements advanced by our author, but that we would wish to supplement them with kindly apologies for the cautious and it may be unscientific student of theology.

In this book the scriptural views of the physical phenomena of the world, questions that lie within the domain of what in modern times is called Biblical Prolegomena are discussed with much fulness and force. Every point is looked at with the eye of a Christian Naturalist. Topics of weighty importance are introduced to the reader which do not generally come within the range of ordinary reading, and are presented in such relations as to interest and impress the mind. The regions of esoteric debate, which though mainly interesting to scholars and belonging to a kind of third heaven of religious culture, are here opened up in many of their practical bearings upon religious faith. Attentive readers will, we are persuaded, rise from the perusal of "Archæia" with a more profound reverence for the sacred volume, and with minds refreshed and enlarged with farr-reaching and beautiful aspects of its cosmical truths.

On the difficult subject of the inspiration of Scripture, this book gives no uncertain sound. While insisting that science should enter upon its investigations with an untrammelled and fearless freedom, it at the same time bows with submission to the revealed word of God. It shows clearly "that there is no hypothesis short of that of plenary inspiration that will allow us to attach any value whatever to the biblical records." While the primitive civilization was by no means despicable, it yet cannot be said to have attained to such a knowledge of the laws and phenomena of the universe as could constitute a basis for the cosmogony of scripture. Our author justly remarks that the narrative of creation bears no internal evidence of having been the result of inductive enquiry, but appeals at once to faith. "It refers to con-

ditions of our planet respecting which science has even now attained to no conclusions supported by evidence, and is not in a position to make dogmatic assertions." In regard to the mythical hypothesis, the great dream of German infidelity, he combats the views of Prof. Powell, of England, and points out the fallacy of many of that able writer's positions.

Our author is disposed to take a high view of the allusions to nature formed in scripture, while he does not go the length of saying that the representations of nature in the Bible are revelations he yet insists that they have been recorded under the guidance of inspiration. This we conceive is the true position to take. We do not find the Creator revealing that which can be discovered by the faculties he has given us. In all His relations with men he honors, much more than philosophers do, the wonderful organs of perception with which he has endowed the human race. The Creator has faith in human eyes and ears. He knows that they are "very good." In regard to those things, therefore, which lie within their reach, he gives no revelation, but when such things stand related to the spiritual truths which pertain to the moral government of mankind, then he so guides the prophets that no human weakness or prejudice shall mar the perfect action of their perceptive organs.

Taking this view of the question we may expect to find in the Bible allusions to natural phenomena, which in their truthfulness rival the demonstrations of natural science.

The first part of the book discusses the questions involved in the Mosaic account of the creation. Although not much that is new has been said about this difficult matter, our author has yet stated well and favorably the arguments in defence of the view which he adopts. His views are essentially the same as those first broached by Cuvier, and since his time generally adopted by scientific men. We cannot altogether approve of the system of exegesis on which he, along with others attempts to establish the hypothesis of day periods of creation, as the proper interpretation of the creation days. This idea is becoming less tenable every day. The critical enquiry into the text is leading scholars to a more literal acceptance of its words than the day-period hypothesis will admit of. The recent discoveries in Geology are too giving views of the world's ancient history, less reconcilable with this theory than those upon which even Miller founded his opinions. It is not now contended that the Carboniferous period synchronises with the third creative day of scripture. We are now referred back for that period to the region of the crystalline unaltered rocks in which as yet not a vestige of organic remains has been found, but for this conjecture, there is scarcely a vestige of scientific proof. Geology is thus shifting its ground, and professes now only to give us an account of the fifth day of creation, beginning with the Silurian period in which animal life first appears. We apprehend that the ultimate inductions of Geology will lead to the conclusion that the world has been formed and fashioned by a series of creative acts, continued in all the departments of organic life up to the time when man appears. This being the case, the inference will possibly be that the Mosaic records contain a representation of the creation in the form of six literal days in which there is comprehended in epitome all that is necessary for us to know concerning the origin of the physical phenomena of the universe. This view of the case to which the profound speculations of Kurtz in his "Bible and Astronomy," has led, and to which Hugh Miller in his "Testimony of the Rocks" has ascribed great value, releases the text from its supposed figurative signification, and Geology, from the necessity of discovering certain distinctly marked periods of

the creation of the vegetable and animal kingdom.

The second part of Dr. Dawson's book which treats of the unity of the human race, ably discusses the difficult topics which it involves, and is worthy of attentive perusal. In this department our author is in advance of many Naturalists of the present day. His treatment of the whole subject exhibits a ripeness of thought, clearness and acuteness of perception, together with a sobriety of judgment not often to be found in writers upon the discursive questions of Ethnology. To those desirous of becoming acquainted with the present condition of Ethnological researches we can recommend nothing better than Dr. Dawson's book.

We trust that the reading public will show their appreciation of this able book, and of the enterprise of its Canadian publishers by speedily purchasing the entire edition.

NEW BOOKS.

- MOSHEIM'S Ecclesiastical History by James Murdock, D.D., revised, and supplementary notes added by James Scanton Reid, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Glasgow. One thick vol., 8vo., 1859. Price \$2 50.
- Crisis of Being: Six Lectures to Young Men, on Religious Decision, by D. Thomas, editor of The Homilist, Progress of Being, &c. Stockwell, London, 75 cents.
- The Homilist, Vol. I.—\$150. Vol. II. to VII.—\$2. Seven annual volumes of The Homilist are now before the world. It is now rooted in one of the best soils in the religious world, the soil of unsectarian, independent, and progressive thought. Thousands of ministers of all denominations, many of them the first preachers of the age, and some of the dignitaries of the Church, heartily welcome it to their homes.
- Progress of Being: Six Lectures to Young Men on the Free Progress of Man, by Rev. D. Thomas, editor of The Homilist, Crisis of Being, &c., 75 cents.
- Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. New edition from eighth London edition, 2 vols. \$4 00.
- Eadie's Commentary on the Phillipians, \$2.
- Haldane Romans, \$2 50.
- Brown's Sufferings and Glories of the Messiah, \$1 50.
- Brown's Analytical Exposition of the Romans, \$2 50.
- Brown on the First Epistle of Peter, \$2 50.
- A Voice from the Desert, or, the Church in the Wilderness, by Rev. Robert Simpson, author of Traditions of the Covenanters, 75 cents.
- Expository Outlines, Sketches and Outlines of Sermon upon the most important paragraph of the New Testament, by the author of The Faithful Witness, Footsteps of Jesus &c., \$1.
- Spurgeon's Gems, \$1.
- Spurgeon's Sermons—fourth series, \$1.
- Guthrie's City: Its Sins and Sorrows, \$1.
- Guthrie's Gospel in Ezekiel, \$1.
- Robertson's Sermons—third series, \$1.
- St. Augustine: a Biographical Memoir, by the Rev. John Baillie, Cambridge, 75 cents.
- Scotland: Its Faith and Features, by Rev. Francis Trench, 2 vols in one, \$1 25.
- J. CAMPBELL,
103 Yonge Street, Toronto.

REMOVAL OF OFFICE.

The General Office of the Church has been removed to Knox College. Letters and notices may be left at Mr. Bain's, King Street East, immediately under the former office.