

that the mind is appalled at the rehearsal. In the eighteenth century the battle turned itself against revolution, when deism obtained many followers in England, and, on the continent, gave birth to German rationalism, and now in the nineteenth century, prompted by the generalizations of physical science, and led by the introduction into moral and religious questions of those severe laws of investigation which are proper and necessary to scientific discovery, the human mind rises up in rebellion against the doctrines of natural religion—the being, the providence and the perfections of God, and especially the *fiat* of creation, from which entrenchments Bishop Butler during last century battled so grandly for the truth of the scriptures. In all these ages a different kind of learning was required by the advocates and apologists of the Christian religion. In the sixteenth century men were led by the study of the bible and the fathers into the somewhat narrow field of investigating the claims of the Church of Rome. In the seventeenth century men were led to re-adjust Christian dogma and study the constitution of the church itself and its relation to civil society. In the eighteenth century an immense mass of Christian evidence was accumulated in defence of the Bible,—its authenticity and genuineness, and consequently the trustworthiness of its supernatural claims—and now, in the nineteenth, what is required is, to go forth into the departments of science and seek to demonstrate the credibility of the scripture views of natural religion upon scientific grounds. What Butler inferred from the world as he understood it, we must now do from the world as we understand it, or as science assures us that it is. Each age has produced a new learning and made a new demand upon the defenders of the truth. The struggles of the human mind from age to age have revealed and recorded themselves in the monuments of a noble literature, which it is our business to open up to the minds of our rising youth, that the age to come may “know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them unto their children, that they might set their hope in God and not forget the work of God, but keep his commandments.”