

questions to which I have referred ; but we are well situated for the useful task of accumulating the necessary data for their settlement. The broad area of the American continent, the wide space occupied by its geological formations, the completeness of the series of its palæozoic rocks, the unbroken connection of its post-pliocene and modern fauna and flora, the meeting on this continent within recent times of multitudes of indigenous and exotic species of plants and animals, the existence up to our own time of feral and aboriginal conditions which are pre-historic in the Eastern continent,—these are all points of vantage on which we can seize in dealing with these questions; and if we properly inform ourselves as to what is being done elsewhere, and diligently improve our own opportunities, I see nothing to prevent us from taking the lead of those who in the Old World are pursuing such inquiries in a comparatively narrow field, and under conditions in many respects less favourable. I must insist, however, that this is not to be done by vieing with them in crude speculations and hypotheses, or in building up specious fabrics of conjecture to dazzle the popular eye, but in patient, honest, and careful accumulation of facts.

We should also bear in mind that in the greater centres of literary and scientific life, there is a strong temptation, especially on the part of ambitious men who have their own fortunes to build up, to deal in that sensation science with which the popular literature of the day is deluged. In our own comparatively obscure field there is little inducement to this or opportunity for its display, and this is so far in favor of a healthy scientific tone, which we should endeavour to preserve and cultivate. Our danger arises from being too ready to follow the extreme views put forth elsewhere, and from impatience with the slow returns for honest and careful work.