

mooted, as dangerously likely to encourage low moral practice. Their apprehensions were more that justified by the event, for we have the frank confessions of leading Reformers, including Luther himself, of the great outburst of profligacy which marked the adoption of the new teaching wherever it came, quite apart from the special development of avowed Antinomianism within the Lutheran body itself, under John Agricola, which Luther had much ado to keep down. Even still, the sects which make it one of their cardinal tenets stand on a lower moral level than their neighbours, and are peculiarly liable, especially during their revivals, to outbreaks of vice, recalling the worst excesses of ancient Gnosticism. In Germany the doctrine in question, by its tendency to make all religion subjective, and a matter thus varying with each person's mode of thinking about it, has led by regular process to the entire dissolution of belief; while despite the naturally pure Teutonic temperament, it has left its polluting brand on public morals in the unspeakably vicious and degraded marriage law of Prussia, with its incestuous unions and facile divorce. Here, then, is a form of opinion which has done only evil wherever it has come, and consequently, while there are thousands who accept it in all good faith, and do not appear any the worse personally for it, yet it is reasonable to assume that there are special circumstances which so modify its action upon them as to leave them unharmed, but that we have no right to expect that others will enjoy the same immunity. For this reason, it is perfectly just and fair to say what is warranted, not only by a strict process of reasoning, but established by historical proof, that Luther's doctrine of Justification, left to itself, or even allowed an influential position in a theological system, will issue in immorality and unbelief, though it may be perfectly feasible to point to pious and virtuous persons who hold it to be true. And thus it becomes the duty of orthodox Christian teachers to stamp it out by all justifiable means. This is the more needful to emphasize, because there has been a partial recrudescence of the tenet within the Church of England of late years under the name of Aitkenism; and though in that peculiar form of religious opinion it is seemingly conditioned by the simultaneous presence of healthier elements, yet it is the disastrous tendency of this tenet to overpower all others in contact with it, rather than to be modified by them. It is the bad egg which rots the fresh ones in the same basket, unbenefited itself by their neighborhood. And therefore, even the most unquestionable piety and sincerity, the most rousing eloquence, the greatest apparent success in winning converts, ought not to throw open one pulpit to an Aitkenite preacher, because there is the imminent, if not inevitable, danger of his planting the seeds of Antinomianism, however repugnant to himself, in all those many emotional minds which like a gospel of the feelings, which they can divorce from the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Any good he may do other hearers is so fatally overbalanced by this peril, that there is no choice but to exclude

him, for the possibility of his preaching simple Gospel sermons without this modern and unscriptural element in them may be left out of the reckoning.—*Church Times*.

GENESIS AND SCIENCE.

MAN'S limited powers, both of thought and expression, necessitate that the words he coins represent not the scientific truth about things (even if he knew it), but only a kind of apparent and accidental likeness to the truth. The fact is, that from the nature of things nearly all language is metaphorical and phenomenal. The names of most things are at best only either poetical or arbitrary symbols of some accidental or external feature of the things, they are not scientifically accurate and complete descriptions of the things named. Take to pieces the language which is employed by even the greatest scientists in their technical treatises, and most of it is merely phenomenal and metaphorical, while it is scientifically and formally inaccurate. Even scientists speak of the sun's rising, of the sun's setting, of the sun's path, of the quarters and zones of the earth. What ridicule a scientific pundit of the year 3886 may pour out on the crass ignorance of the scientists of this age for talking about *motions of the fixed stars*! Even Mr. Goodwin, while contending for literal and etymological correctness, could write such a sentence as this, 'This earth, apparently so still and steadfast, lying in majestic repose beneath the *ethereal vault*'

In connexion with this subject Taylor Lewis writes, with fitting irony, 'The most philosophical language, when examined in its roots contains as much of phenomenal character as that in common use. Some superficial naturalist might make himself merry with the expressions, "the sun fails," or "goes out," or "faints away," in total ignorance, perhaps, that his own scientific expression, "eclipse," does phenomenally and etymologically present precisely that conception.' Again he writes, 'We also talk of "atmosphere." But what is that? It is *atmou sphaire*, a sphere or ball of vapour. That is our word, but it is no less phenomenal, and no more scientifically correct, than *firmamentum*, or *stereoma*. There is, in reality, no such sphere or ball of vapour. It is not limited by a defined surface like the ocean. It is only an appearance, and our mode of picturing or conceiving it. The word "cloud" we call literal language, with nothing metaphorical about it; but go to the old Saxon, and you find a root related to the Latin "*claudo*," Greek, *kleido*, to shut, enclose, as well as to the derivative "cloth,"—all presenting the same old image of something that shuts in (*encloses*), holds, or contains, like a bag. We recognize it in Job, xxvi. 8, "He bindeth the waters in his cloud, and the cloud is not rent under him." So also Prov. xxx. 4, "Who bindeth up the waters as in a garment." We talk, too, of the reflection, or bending back, and of the refraction, or breaking up, of light.'

Dr. Gladstone says, that when he tried to express in language as scientifically correct as possible the following passage from the Bible:

'The sun knoweth his going down,' the best he could make of it was: 'There is a law by which is determined for any particular day the precise time at which a line drawn from the sun to a given point on the globe will be tangential to its surface, and in what azimuth that line will fall.' Now, suppose that such a sentence could have been put into Hebrew, it would have been intelligible for more than 2000 years, and would seem pedantic even now. Moses spoke as astronomers and other scientific as well as ordinary men speak now. He spoke for the purpose of being understood, and therefore, in his use of words he had regard not to their etymological and literal sense, not to their scientific accuracy, but to the signification attached to them at the time. The conclusion of the whole matter then is, that we have no right to put the language of Scripture to an unfair and absurd test, which neither our own popular nor even our scientific language can stand. Whatever the etymology of the Hebrew equivalent for firmament, it is evident enough from the manner in which it is used elsewhere, that the inspired writer meant what we do by 'heaven,' and 'sky'; viz., the expanse containing the clouds and the stellar and planetary worlds.

Proceeding now to the Scripture record of the second creative day, we find that it represents the earth as covered and hidden by water and watery vapours. Not only was its surface overspread by a universal ocean, but also clouds, and mists, and vapours rested on the ocean, and so closely commingled their moisture with its denser waters that they formed one undistinguishable and undivided mass. Now, what has Science to say to such a state of things in the progressive history of the earth's formation? Well, Science tells us that after the outer surface of the earth had cooled sufficiently to form a hard crust or shell, such as forms on the surface of molten lava as it cools, this crust would for a long time retain some portion of the heat communicated to it from the molten interior. When the temperature cooled down to a certain point, the gases surrounding the globe would be enabled to combine, and water would be formed, which would rest on this heated but gradually cooling crust.* The waters would be heated to boiling-point by contact with the heated crust and these boiling waters must have given off enormous quantities of steam and vapour, which, as they reached the cold air of outer space, would be condensed and precipitated again on to the earth's surface as mists and perpetual showers of rain. As regards these phenomena then which they set before us, Scripture and Science mutually agree with each other, and explain each other.

But Science has still more evidence to give in favour of the Bible record, for it tells us that as the crust of the earth thickened and cooled

* 'Why the chemical combination of oxygen and hydrogen in the proportion of one molecule of the former to two of the latter should produce water with its well-known properties, so precious as one of the constituents of the material universe—this fact, common and simple as it is, is itself a mystery of which physical science does not yet possess the key.'—(Cottrell's *Does Science Aid Faith?* p. 171.)