

ventured on the expression of a hostile conclusion is dismissed with an "Ah! that is not the kind of testimony we are in search of!"

Now, this is morally dishonest in the highest degree; but it is unfortunately too true, and the result is, the slight esteem in which the "Blue Book" philosophy is held by the world.

The true worshipper of truth rises naturally into a purer atmosphere. For our guidance through the past, for our hope and trust in the present and the future, we have illustrious labourers, who breathe a clearer ether than that inhaled by the great mass of noisy and mischievous theorists. The surest test of the true investigator is the absence of all bigoted adherence to theory—the readiness to surrender an opinion as against an admitted fact. All educated men—foreigners, possibly, even in a higher degree than Englishmen—reverence the name of Newton, none more so than those who turn with disgust from the panegyric which, in its blasphemous bombast, is so unworthy of its great subject. A recent criticism on his life and works gives us an anecdote (new at least to me), tending still higher to elevate him in our esteem.

"It was the noblest of his noble qualities that he rigidly and sternly bowed down his hypotheses to facts. When Bradley and others had observed a certain nutation of the earth, which they could not account for, and were thinking it destroyed entirely the Newtonian system, they were under the greatest difficulty how to break it to Sir Isaac, and proceeded to do so in the softest manner. What was his only answer? '*It may be so; there is no arguing against facts and experiments.*' The experimental and theoretical deflections of the moon differed only in the rates of 16 to 13, but this was enough to satisfy Newton that his principle did not admit of proof, and to induce him to lay aside his speculations; but the more accurate measurement of a degree effected by Picard, after an interval of many years, supplied the data which made the moon a true witness for the law of gravitation."

This is an equally beautiful and eloquent rebuke to the rash confidence of many of our blind guides, ever too ready to wrest, mistake, or ignore facts, that make against their darling hypotheses.

Amongst the most mischievous tendencies of this, as well as of preceding ages, may be reckoned the extreme fondness for deducing a novel hypothesis, oftentimes directly opposed to some wide spread opinion—before the facts and phenomena have been thoroughly in-