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Dr. Dawson, conspicuous among the scientific men of our age, no less for laborious and careful original investigation than for sound and cautious judgment in theorizing, and among educationists of this Dominion for earnest, devoted and successful effort as a teacher in the higher ranks of the profession, and as an organizer and director of the labours of other teachers, is one of that band of men, natives of our country, who, notwithstanding the discouragements and disadvantages of colonial life, have achieved a world-wide reputation. Born at Pictou, Nova Scotia, in the year 1820, he received his earlier education in his native town, and completed his academic course in the University of Edinburgh, of which he was a graduate.

It is as a naturalist, especially as a geologist, that Dr. Dawson is, and will continue to be, most widely known. At the early age of ten years he had commenced to collect fossil plants of the coal period, and has so ardently pursued the same and allied subjects since that he now stands confessedly the greatest authority on the Devonian and Carboniferous floras of the Western World, being himself the discoverer of the oldest known exogen and gymnosperm. In 1842, and again in 1852, he was associated with Sir Charles Lyell in his geological explorations in Nova Scotia, and by microscopical and field research threw a flood of light on both the fauna and flora of this interesting period. With Sir Charles Lyell he discovered the bones of the largest carboniferous reptile of America; he himself found the oldest land snail and the oldest millipede. In 1864 Dr. Dawson, by his microscopic skill and comprehensive insight, recognized the foraminiferous structure of *Eozoon Canadense*, and, after a sharp contest, established its claim to the position he had assigned it as the oldest known form of animal life, the uncouth precursor of the myriad forms that with ever more distinct differentiation of function and so, with ever higher type of structure have marched in long succession across the stage of existence.

It is impossible within the limits of this sketch to make a bare enumeration of the discoveries made and communicated in important papers by Dr. Dawson to the leading scientific societies and journals of Britain and America. But it must not be supposed that he has been a mere industrious collector of facts to be classified and

arranged by others. He has proved himself one of the most formidable opponents of certain brilliant, specious and fashionable theories, of the modern school of zoologists, and one of the ablest vindicators of the Biblical cosmogony, as rightly interpreted. He, in common with all profoundest thinkers of ancient and of modern times, sees that no merely material hypothesis can solve the mysteries of the universe. He catches glimpses as of a real but elusive spiritual presence in all the mystery of nature. He recognizes the essential distinctness of the universe of mind from the universe of organized matter. He acknowledges the impassable barriers that divide organized life from unorganized and dead matter, of vegetable from animal life, of Cuvier's four types of animal structure from each other, and of each species, when properly recognized and defined, from all other species. Now that Agassiz is dead, he is perhaps the foremost opponent of the seductive hypothesis of evolution of Darwin and Spencer.

Remembering that Dr. Dawson's has been eminently a busy life, as a man of affairs in the practical world, it is surprising that he has found time to write and publish so many valuable works. To mention only a few of the largest of them, his *Acadian Geology*, *Archaia*, *Air-Breathers of the Coal Period*, *The Story of the Earth and Man*, *Science and the Bible*, *The Dawn of Life*, and, latest of all, the *Origin of the World*, are all works that evince remarkable powers both of thought and expression. The writer of this sketch is glad to confess his great obligations to the author of *Archaia* for having set at rest in that work doubts that had long harassed him respecting the nature and reality of Biblical inspiration, and he hesitates not to affirm that no man

is competent to decide adversely to the ancient claims of the Bible to be considered Divine who has not satisfactorily answered the arguments of the author of that work, especially as reiterated and strengthened in "*The Origin of the World*."

Though most widely known as a man of science, it is as an educator that Dr. Dawson's labours have been most beneficial to his country. For three years, beginning with 1850, he held the post of Superintendent of Education in Nova Scotia, and by his visits, his lectures, his writings, and by the establishment of a Normal School, he gave an impulse, not yet lost, to popular education in that province. Appointed by his friend Sir Edmund Head, one of the commissioners for that purpose, he took an active part in establishing the University of New Brunswick upon a proper basis.

