

earth's crust, must, to a great extent, ignore all preconceived opinions, and exert its keenest powers to collect, verify and register facts. Whether these facts, when ascertained, may tend to support or to weaken opinions and ideas—dear as life itself, possibly—to the heart of the investigator, is a matter which should be absent from his thoughts, as a dangerous enemy to the rigid impartiality with which his labors ought to be conducted.

It is of surpassing importance to us all, that Truth in all its purity should be unfolded to us ; it is therefore of as paramount importance that those to whom we look for the precious revelation, should pursue their enquiries with a perfectly free glance—and with a judicial impartiality—unstained by the secret desire to find evidence to support a forgone conclusion.

Now, this principle is at the root of all scientific investigation, and also underlies much of the distrust that attends it. If we know that one man has strong opinions in favour of the Mosaic Cosmogony, and another is decidedly committed against it, we know enough of human nature to suspect the deductions which each may draw from his researches into a subject that as yet has hardly taken its place among the exacter Sciences. If we can find one whom we know to have started on his enquiry determined to see and register every phenomenon—one whom we can trust as not wilfully closing his eyes to appearances at least as striking as others that he records, lest they should bear against some previous theory or dogma, this man will be honoured by the earnest attention of every sound mind, and his report trusted as, with whatever imperfections, containing the honest record of things as he saw them.

We all know of the means pursued to get up evidence in support of particular theories. The history of Parliamentary "Blue Books" illustrates the practice. We have heard too often how such things are managed. A committee sits to take evidence on some subject of projected reform—sanitary, social or financial. It is true that all are invited to bear testimony, but practically the getting up of evidence is in the hands of a few, and those few almost always the persons most thoroughly committed to some particular specific for the evil sought to be remedied. We hear of cases where the determined theorist comes to enquire of men as to their knowledge of facts or conclusions from observation or experience. The witness whose opinions favored that of the applicant is carried off to testify ; he who