

The Spencerian Age.

There need equally be no question that the progress made during the reign of the present British Queen has been without parallel in history, though there may be great diversity as to its causes. The people who repeat the silly story of the alleged reply of the Queen to an Indian prince's question—"The Bible is the source of England's greatness"—are naturally people who will be ready to accept any explanation that may be posited by their accepted authorities. Those, however, who look for efficient causes for all events, will not be satisfied with a statement which involves the idea that a cause which has only served to depress man for so many centuries could suddenly awake to become his savior. The causes which have led to the birth of the newly-developed power, and which have given such a vast impetus to the new ideas which have sounded the trumpet-blast of that great birth in nearly every direction in which the human mind can direct its inquiries, must have been in existence and must have been developing for many ages ere the daylight finally appeared. From Thales and Pythagoras, down through Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus, the names of great thinkers and workers like Copernicus and Kepler, Galileo and Newton, Herschell, Lamarck, and Humboldt, Buffon, Cuvier, and Lyell, may mark stages in progress, but all of these were but prospectors in a field which required for its practical exploitation the work of a man of the broadest views, the clearest perceptions, indomitable perseverance and practical ability. Without such a man, the work of progress would have remained largely *in nubibus*, as for so many ages it had been. Without Charles Darwin, Spencer's grand work would probably have failed and his life been sacrificed many years ago, and much of the work of such men as Huxley and Tyndall, Faraday and Proctor, would have been heard of only in a limited circle. The Victorian Age might still have been a marvellous one, but it would have been wanting in those crowning glories that mark it as the starting-point in a new epoch—the Era of Evolution—the beginning of the final abolition of those ghosts and hobgoblins that have so sorely troubled mankind for so many long ages, and of the adoption of a new motto for humanity—"The earth is man's, and he shall make his heaven in it." The new science and the new Evolutionary philosophy, binding men together in one mighty brotherhood for mutual advantage, open up a vista of hope and of glorious possibilities for man beside which all the older religions and the older philosophies seem but the gloomiest pessimism.

Sixty Years of Progress.

During the last few months we have had tremendous lists of inventions and discoveries which have marked the sixty years during which Victoria has sat upon the British throne. At any previous time, probably,—the last decade, the last quarter or half-century, or the last century itself,—might have been cited as the most prolific in improvement. Still, take it all in all, one cannot but be struck with the immense strides that have been made in the latter portions of the period over whose marvels we are glorifying ourselves. To say that improvements have a tendency to propagate themselves in geometrical proportion is but a partial expression for the intensified mental activities of even the last decade. While however, such a long list of scientific triumphs is of vast interest to us all, some of the most important departments, we might say nearly all of the most essential factors in the real progress of the masses,—have been almost completely overlooked. We may divide broadly these factors into two classes: mental and