

"LIFE AND PROTOPLASM."

"President Hopkins, in his baccalaureate discourse at Williams College Commencement, ably refutes the materialistic views of Prof. Huxley. He says.

"Thirty years ago I said in a public discourse that 'the principle of life is one of the great principles of nature,' and 'when we see it acting with the same uniformity and at times with the same apparent blindness as the other powers of nature, we can neither doubt that it is to be ranked as one of these powers, nor that it is among the greatest and most striking of them.' It is the highest of these powers, and subordinates all others to itself. It breaks up strong cohesion; it picks the lock of chemical affinity; it mocks at gravitation as it lifts the top of its pine three hundred feet into the air. It is an artist, a pre-Raphaelite. It gives the shell in the deep sea its voluted forms and its polish. It snatches colors from the faint light and ingrains them in lines, and patterns of beauty. It ecclipses the edge of the leaf and paints the color of the tulip; it brings from the shapeless mass of the egg, the bird that is perfect in beauty; it builds up the huge form of the elephant, and chisels the lineaments of him who is made in the image of God.

Still it has all the characteristics of a purely natural force. If not as wholly blind as the lower forms of forces it is never more than instinctive, or somnambulic in its ways, and will work at a weed as readily as at an eye. Except as we supply it with material it is wholly independent of our will, and builds and takes down its structures in its own way.

Like other natural forces, this life is manifested only in connection with a particular kind of matter. This has always been known, but a sensation has been created of late, by discovering what kind of matter this is, and calling it protoplasm.

This amounts to just as much as it does to analyze the matter of a crystal and call it carbon of lime and no more. Here, as in the crystal, analysis gives us only the corpse. Of the formative force we know nothing in either case; but that it must be different here is clear from the difference of the result. Before we had a crystal; now we have organization. This is a new thing embodying the idea of a whole made up of parts that are mutually means and ends; and also of the perpetuation of the species while the individual perishes. Here is a radical difference, and the attempt to slur it is vain. So, also, is there a radical difference between the two divisions of that force which we call life. Under one, nutriment is taken directly from inorganic matter, and we have the vegetable; under the other, it is taken from food prepared by vegetables, and we have the animal.

"The difference," says Mr. Huxley, "between the powers of the lowest plant or animal and those of the highest, is one of degree, not of kind." Except that plants take their nutriment from inorganic, and animals from organic matter, he says "it may be truly said that the acts of all living things are fundamentally one." Indeed! The act of a tree is to grow, of a worm to crawl, of a man to reason, to love, and hate, and sin, and repent; and so growing and crawling, and reasoning, and loving, and hating and sinning and repenting, are all fundamentally one! The doctrine, is that, thought results from certain combinations of matter as hardness does, and is its property in these combinations in the same way. As well might we say that thought is the property of a telegraphic machine when in motion. Such a machine not in motion is as dead protoplasm. Here is a dead body. It is protoplasm; it is organized. As mere matter, its combinations are the same as in life. But it is dead. It is a telegraphic machine before the electricity comes. That is the life of the machine. Let that come—not a property of the machine remember—and it will go. Ah, you say, but is not electricity matter too? Yes, but to say nothing of the origination of the machinery, you have no thought yet. It only clicks. At best it is but vegetable. To have thought, you as much need an agent other than electricity, higher, and totally different, as you needed electricity to start the dead machine. If the clicking were to go on a hundred thousand years it would not develop itself into thought. The machine would not come to self-consciousness and stand above itself, and interpret the product of its own working. No. What we say is that the moment you have a formative force that works under the idea of order, you have what mere matter cannot account for.

We say there is a difference in kind between a crystal and a vegetable, a vegetable and an animal, and an animal and a man. A vegetable has life, a crystal has not. An animal has sensation, a vegetable has not; a man has a conscience an animal has not. We say there is a difference in kind between motion and thought, and that it is not "fundamentally one" to demolish the argument of an opponent, and to knock him down with your fist. We say, not only that there is a difference in kind between mineral and the vegetable, the vegetable and the animal, the animal and man, but that the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the rational kingdoms are so ordered relatively to each other as to show unity of purpose, superintending wisdom, and origin from an intelligent will. Admit this, and every thing is accounted for. Deny it, and nothing is accounted for. You may observe, and record, and classify, but you account for nothing. And not only so, but you have the higher from the lower, unity from multiplicity, life from death, thought from motion, something from nothing, and you make God impossible. Whosoever says 'no phosphorus, no thought,' says there is no God. God cannot be matter or force and be God. He must be a person, rational, free, moral, causative, and so 'the living God, and an everlasting King.'

living in that life of which I have just spoken, and by partaking of which we are His image. —(Watchman & Reflector)

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

A VISIT TO CAPE BRETON.

INGRAM'S RIVER, HALIFAX CO.,
Aug. 19th, 1870.

As I had not seen my father, (Rev. George Richardson,) and many other relatives and friends for more than 15 years—some for more than 25 years—and as travelling is much more easily accomplished now than formerly, I concluded to pay a visit to my old home a short time since.

I left Halifax on Tuesday morning, July 26th, and arrived at Sydney on Wednesday afternoon. Rain for a time destroyed our sight-seeing from the Neptune's deck, but we had not steamed far past the marble mountains, when old Sol indicated that he would smile on us the rest of our journey. And Mr. Editor if you ever travelled the same route at the same season of the year, I think you will join me in saying that on our fair earth it would be hard for him to find a fairer spot to smile upon, than this delightful "Arm of Gold," about the centre of Cape Breton. It is not wanting in historic interest, nor yet in beautiful farms which slope from the forest hills down to shores of the Bras d'Or; not to mention the grand natural scenery of this beautiful inland sea. I cannot divest myself of the opinion that if some capitalist whose taste ran that way, would put up a first class hotel near some of the fine mineral springs of Bras d'Or with sufficient accommodations, and would advertise as he ought, he would before long turn the human tide from Saratoga, &c., to central Cape Breton where invalid geologists and mineralogists would be sufficiently interested in looking over their Mother's cabinets and jewelry to prevent their brooding over her speedy embrace of them. Or should some whose proclivities lay in an angling direction seek both health and pleasure, they would find their piscatory privileges all that could be desired, and not surpassed by any in the Province. Cod and Herrings all the year round. In the Margaree Trout and Salmon abounds.

On Saturday we took a trip in the Neptune to Cow Bay Mines and vicinity. As we steam from Sydney to Cow Bay, we pass clear of the peninsula on which Sydney is built, to our right is the new wharf of the International Co., by the side of which is lying a barque unloading railway iron. The coals to be shipped here will come 12 or 14 miles. Two miles farther down, and just inside the South Bar is a similar new wharf and ship with railway iron for the Victoria Mines on Lowpoint shore about 4 miles below the landing ground, owned by Fraser, Paint & Co. About 4 1/2 miles from Lowpoint Light is a coal seam 9 feet thick worked by the General Mining Association. A very short distance and we come to Langan Mines, channel only 13 feet at high water. Next Bridgeport Mines, not working at present. Next Union or International, will ship at the first mentioned wharf about October. Little Glace Bay Mines which come next are rather interesting, as they have literally dug a harbor up into the land. Within sight is Caledonia Mines; coals are shipped at Big Glace Bay. Two miles farther on we find Clyde Mines. Next Schooner Pond, opened by H. Ross, not now working. As we come around the Head, we open up the Blockhouse mines, R. Belloni, Esq., agent. Here we inspected the mineral cabinet of Thos. P. Jones, Esq., we were treated to some fine music and refreshments. We next visited the old French mines where the pillars of coal left by the French where they worked the mines more than a hundred years ago, still stand. Here too is a break water 1400 feet long; and they are about to add 300 feet more to the end.

In this vicinity are many mines too numerous to mention here. For the information of any boys who may read this I would say that the coal beds stretch from the north side of Big Bras d'Or to Mira Bay. The only drawback seems to be, want of free trade, or the duty of coals and fish in the United States. May it soon come.

I found my father unable to leave his bed the first Sabbath I was there. The next I heard him preach at Victoria Mines. His lungs are yet good; although he has lived to that age when Moses says their strength is labor and sorrow. I arrived home on Thursday, Aug. 9, having enjoyed altogether one of the most pleasing periods of my life.

GEO. J. RICHARDSON.

For the Christian Messenger.

Mr. Editor,—

I find that some of your readers are not satisfied with the course pursued by me in the recent discussion respecting Prof. Huxley. They say that if Huxley's views are really not in accord with the teachings of the Bible, some specific statement of his ought to have been adduced in proof of the fact. Now, while I think it would be easy to shew that proofs of the kind referred to, did not come necessarily or naturally within the scope of that discussion, yet, as I wish to give all the satisfaction in my power to all parties concerned, I must crave space in your columns for one or two quotations.

In his work entitled "Man's place in Nature," Prof. H. says:

"The whole analogy of natural operations furnishes so complete and crushing an argument against the intervention of any but what are termed secondary causes in the production of all the phenomena of the universe, that, in view of the intimate relations between man and the rest of the living world and between the forces exerted by the latter and all other forces, I can see no excuse for doubting that all are co-ordinated terms of Nature's great progression, from the formless to the formed—from the morgeanic to the organic—from blind force to conscious intellect and will."

In an article on "The origin of species" of which Prof. Huxley is said to be the author, and which was published in the *Westminster Review* a few years ago, we find the following:

"The myths of Paganism are as dead as Osiris or Zeus, and the man who would revive them in opposition to the knowledge of our time would be justly laughed to scorn; but the coeval imaginations current among the rude inhabitants of Palestine, recorded by writers whose very name and age are admitted by every scholar to be unknown, have unfortunately not yet shared their fate, but, even at this day are regarded by nine-tenths of the civilized world as the authoritative standard of fact, and the criterion of the justice of scientific conclusions in all that relates to the origin of things, and among them, of species."

History records that whenever science and orthodoxy have been fairly opposed, the latter has been forced to retire from the lists, bleeding and crushed if not annihilated; scotched if not slain. But orthodoxy is the Bourbon of the world of thought. It learns not, neither can it forget; and though, at present, bewildered and afraid to move, it is as willing as ever to insist that the first chapter of Genesis contains the beginning and the end of sound science; and to visit with such petty thunderbolts as its half-paralyzed hands can hurl, those who refuse to degrade Nature to the level of primitive Judaism."

I will not weary the patience of your readers by any attempt at comment. Let them "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" the quotation given, and draw their own inferences.

Yours truly,
LAICUS.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

Mr. Editor,—

A few thoughts "concerning the country parson's life," have absorbed my attention for the last hour. And with the hope that they may prove somewhat interesting and beneficial to your readers request for them a place in your columns.

"Just at the present hour, I am willing to declare that I think the like of a country clergyman, in a pretty parish with a well-conducted and well-to-do population, and with a fair living, is as happy, useful and honorable as the life of men can be. Your work is all of a pleasant kind; you have, generally speaking not too much of it; the fault is your own if you do not meet much esteem and regard among your parishioners of all degrees; you feel you are of some service in your generation. You have intellectual labors and tastes which keep your mind from growing rusty, and which admit you into a wide field of pure enjoyment. You have pleasant country cares to divert your mind from head-work, and to keep you for hours daily in the open air, in a state of pleasurable interest; your little children grow up with green fields about them and pure air to breathe; and, if your heart be, in your sacred work, you feel Sunday by Sunday and day by day a solid enjoyment in telling your fellow creatures the good news you are commissioned to address to them, which it is hard to describe to another, but which you humbly and thankfully take and keep."

Still, even on this charming morning, I do not forget, that it depends a good deal upon the parson's present mood, what sort of account he may give of his country parish and his parochial life.

If he have been recently cheated by a well-to-do farmer in the price of some farm produce; if he have seen a neighbor deliberately forcing his

cow into a pasture field of the glebe; * * * If a farmer tells him what a bad and dishonest man a discharged man servant was, some weeks after the parson had found that out for himself and packed off the dishonest man; if certain of the cottagers near seem disposed to live off the parsonage larder; the poor parson may sometimes wish himself in town not spreading out such a surface, as in the country he must, for petty fraud and peculation. But, after all, the country parson's great worldly cross lies in his poverty, and in the cares which arise out of that. It is not always so, indeed. In the lot of some the happy medium has been reached; they have found the "neither poverty nor riches" of the wise man's prayer. Would that it were so with all! For how it must cripple a clergyman's usefulness, how abate his energies, how destroy his eloquence, how sicken his heart, how narrow and degrade his mind, how tempt (as it has sometimes done) to unfair shifts and expedients, to go about not knowing how to make the ends meet—not seeing how to pay what he owes! If I were a rich man, how it would gladden me to send a fifty pound note to certain houses. I have seen what a dead weight it would lift from the poor wife's heart. Ah! I can think of the country parson, like poor Sydney Smith, adding his accounts, calculating his little means, wondering where he can pinch or pare any closer, till the poor fellow bends down his stupified head and throbbing temples on his hands, and wishes he could creep into a quiet grave.

God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb; or I should wonder how it does not drive some country parsons mad, to think what would become of their children if they were taken away. It is the warm nest upon the rotten bough. They need abundant faith. Let us trust they get it. But in a desponding mood, I can well imagine such a one resolving that no child of his shall ever enter upon a course in life which has brought himself such misery as he has known."

SCIENS.

For the Christian Messenger

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.

Mr. Editor,—

Accompanying the general desire for a revision of the English Scriptures is the very natural endeavour to obtain the oldest possible manuscripts of the sacred writings. Their authority is regarded as greater than that of later copies; or, in other words, high in proportion to the probable antiquity assigned to them. Hence the interest which attends the discovery of a manuscript that can be referred to the earliest centuries of the christian church, and the high value set upon it by scholars, and all who care for faithful versions of the Word of God.

But it has always seemed to me that a mistake is here possible, and that an important consideration is lost sight of. The most ancient manuscript which now exists is not, per se, the one of highest authority. A copy of later date may be more nearly the counterpart of the original, and therefore the most valuable. As I have never met with a reference to this point, permit me to explain.

Let us suppose there were a number of copies of the original gospels and epistles made in the third century, and that of these one was, to some extent, inaccurate. Now if, in the course of time, all the contemporary correct copies should have perished, or have become lost to the world in some other way; and if subsequently, in the fourth or fifth century, for example, the originals should have been again transcribed, and this time correctly, it follows that the more recent manuscript, being a perfect transcript of the original, would be of higher authority than the other, which, according to the supposition, is one or two centuries more ancient. And what we have supposed is quite possible, which is all that is necessary for the argument.

In this view of the case we need not be alarmed if we discover that some passages, generally regarded as having an important bearing on the truth of certain doctrines, are not found in the oldest manuscripts of the Scriptures which we possess. It does not follow that because we miss them in these, they are not, therefore, a part of the Divine oracles. This genuineness is to be settled on other grounds.