

I might refer, in this connection, to the whole subject of pantheism, in its chameleon forms. The rhapsodies of spiritual pantheism must, indeed, be met by metaphysics equally transcendental. But, after all, it is from biology that the pantheist derives his choicest weapons. He appeals, also, to astronomy, zoology, and geology; nor is it the superficial naturalist that can show how hollow is the foundation on which he rests.

These are only a few examples of the points of physical science on which scepticism at this moment has batteries erected with which to assail spiritual religion. Will the minister but slightly familiar with the ground chosen by the enemy be able not only to silence his guns, but, as every able defender of the truth ought to do, to turn them against its foes? Surely it needs a professor of natural theology in our theological seminaries, (and if such chairs existed in our colleges they would be serviceable,) to teach those who expect to be officers in the sacramental host how to carry on the holy war. I do not see how much more time can be given to the natural sciences in our colleges than is usually done, without encroaching upon other indispensable branches. If, therefore, provision be not made for studying the religious bearings of these sciences in our theological seminaries, our youthful evangelists must go forth to their work without the ability to vindicate the cause of religion against the assaults of the sceptical naturalist. Would not, then, those wealthy and benevolent individuals be great public benefactors, who should endow professorships of natural religion in our schools of the prophets?

But I must not pursue this subject farther. I commit my work to the public with no raised expectations of its welcome reception. I have a high opinion of the enlightened candour of the educated classes of our country, especially those in the ministry. Yet I know that many prejudices exist against science in its connections with religion. And, therefore, my only hope of any measure of success in this effort rests upon the divine blessing. But if the work be not pleasing to Infinite Wisdom and Benevolence, why should I desire for it an ephemeral success among men?