

extended front of opposition presented last autumn by the newspaper press of England to the British Association, when holding its sittings at Southampton, and the sort of running fire kept up for weeks after on its more distinguished members, — men such as Sir Roderick Murchison, Dr. Buckland, and Mr. Lyell, — seem to have been an indirect consequence of a growing influence in the country on the part of the revived superstition. One of the earliest assaults made on the Association, as hostile in its nature and tendencies to religion, appeared several years ago in the leading organ of Tractarianism, the “British Critic;” but the “Critic” in those days stood much alone. Now, however, though no longer in the field, it has got not a few successors in the work, and its party many an active ally. The mediæval miasma, originated in the bogs and fens of Oxford, has been blown aslant over the face of the country; and not only religious, but scientific truth, is to experience, it would seem, the influence of its poisonous blights and rotting mildews.

It is not difficult to conceive how the revived superstition of the middle ages should bear no good will to science or its institutions. Their influences are naturally antagonistic. The inductive scheme of interrogating nature, that takes nothing for granted, and the deferential, submissive scheme, that, in ecclesiastical matters, yields wholly to authority, and is content though nothing should be proved, cannot well coëxist in one and the same mind. “I believe because it is impossible,” says the devout Mediævalist; “I believe because it is demonstrable,” says the solid Baconian. And it is scarce in the nature of things that one and the same individual should be a Baconian in one portion of his mind and a Mediævalist in another, — that in whatever relates to the spiritual and ecclesiastical, he should take all on trust, and in whatever relates