

But the supposed pathological action of the matter, if it exists, may be considered as disposed of by Dr. Lewis's Report on the Scientific Inquiry into Cholera in India, in which he tells us "that the flakes and corpuscles in rice-water stools do not consist of epithelium or its *débris*." There being no *corpus delictum*, "Cholera infecting matter" cannot act in the way supposed. The whole structure falls to pieces whenever the light of scientific observation is brought to bear on it. We are thus left to deal with the other half of the theory, namely, the "Cholera germ," which is supposed by some to be of fungoid nature. But when we look for proof of its existence, we find only inference. The "fungoid" bodies which, by another modification of this theory, were supposed to be the agents in removing the epithelium, have been shown by Dr. Lewis to differ in nothing from similar bodies in healthy discharges, so that this fungoid theory has stood the test of observation no more than the "vibronic" theory.

Instead of supplying the place of fact by inference or theory, would it not be better once for all to discard both, and try another method of arriving at truth regarding epidemic diseases? We agree with Prof. Tyndall as to the importance of physical research in such questions. Its methods are precise and rigorous, and by taking no cognizance of what is unproved, it may eventually do much in reconciling all the diversities of medical observation, and in opening out entirely new fields of investigation. Under the Government of India a most important scientific inquiry into Cholera is now being carried on in that country; and to all appearance the time is at hand when the most competent scientific men in Europe will have opportunities enough of dealing with the subject. Let the inquiry be strictly scientific. Let us refuse absolutely to admit anything of which we have not scientific proof, and we shall at least be able to divide between the known and the unknown.

Notwithstanding these criticisms on scientific points, Mr. Macnamara has written an interesting book which will well repay perusal. Amongst other things, he gives an account of the various practical sanitary proceedings which have been in use for mitigating attacks of Cholera.

Setting aside all theories about their action, it is satisfactory to know that with temperance in diet, attention to clothing, pure water for drinking and cooking purposes, and rigid cleanliness of towns, houses, and persons, as well as in ships, there is little to fear from Cholera epidemics. There is no theory needed to help us to understand these things. They simply require to be done. Volumes of instruction will not make the duty of doing them plainer than it is. These are, moreover, the things which are especially required for India, and we heartily second Mr. Macnamara's appeal to Lord Mayo, and to our present scientific Minister for India with which he concludes his work:—"The question for the consideration of the Government, is nothing less than this: Shall Cholera be allowed by our mismanagement or neglect to become permanently localised throughout the civilised world. It is to the condition of the inhabitants of the Gangetic valley that our attention and efforts must be primarily directed, if Asiatic Cholera is ever to be effectually controlled by human agency."

## OUR BOOK SHELF

*Papers on the Great Pyramid.* By St. John Vincent Day, C.E., F.R.S.E., &c. (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1870.)

*The Great Pyramid of Jizeh: the Plan and Object of its Construction.* (Cincinnati: R. Clarke and Co., 1871.)

THE investigation of the history and origin of the Pyramids, and the attempt to arrive at the truths that are hidden in these, the greatest monuments of antiquity, is undoubtedly of the first importance, but must nevertheless be entered upon with caution. There is a danger about such a study which few seem to escape, a danger of being enslaved by some theory which becomes absolute master of the man who originated it, which makes him see everything through a false medium, and in support of which he perverts facts in the most marvellous manner. Mr. Day, the author of the "Papers on the Great Pyramid," has avoided the danger to this extent, that he brings forward no new theory of his own, but places his entire faith in Prof. Piazzi Smyth, the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, to whom this volume is dedicated. The papers are three in number; the first is a critical examination of Sir Henry James's "Notes on the Great Pyramid of Egypt," and would not have been written, the author tells us, had not Sir Henry himself opened and continued a correspondence with him on the subject, and had not he felt "the promptings of duty to expose fallacies so authoritatively flung into the midst of mankind." The two other papers are entitled, "The Measurements of the Great Pyramid recorded in history," and "An examination into the condition and works of mankind from the Creation to the building of the Great Pyramid." More than half of the entire volume is occupied by the first paper, and in it Mr. Day examines in the most minute manner every one of the eight "notes" he undertakes to controvert. He has succeeded in showing that Sir Henry James has been, to say the least, careless in his assertions, and even in his arithmetic, considering how positive his statements were. The general impression left upon the mind of the reader is that until the measurements of the pyramid have been ascertained without a shadow of doubt, no man has a right to base upon them positive assertions as to standards of length. Notwithstanding defects in his mode of treatment of the subject which it is hardly within our province to criticise, the book recommends itself to those who are interested in the Great Pyramid controversy, as it is evidently the result of careful study.

We also wish to notice in this place a small pamphlet on the Pyramid of Jizeh, which has come to us from across the Atlantic. The author does not profess intimate acquaintance with his subject, but acknowledging that such suggestions must be made with much reserve, points out certain relations he has discovered between the measurements of the pyramids and "time, extension, and earth space." They are certainly ingenious, but hardly, we think, much more. As illustrating what was said about the danger of indulging in such speculations, the author concludes by abruptly exclaiming that the fact of the English inch and English foot running "in such admirable rhythm with time and pyramid measure," may be a link of connection between the Anglo-Saxon and Hebrew races. Then plunging still deeper into this dangerous line of thought, he says, "were the blind eyes opened, it is quite possible that here in this new world of ours one would suddenly come to the realisation that he was dwelling in the midst of the teeming multitudes of Israel; terminating their emigration in a land long promised, long reserved; under government of a commonwealth restored; free from every taint of caste condition, or of kingly rule."

Although this pamphlet seems distinguished more by ingenuity than by any real value, it possesses the merit of being short, and is written with a reserve proper when dealing with such a subject.

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