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JOURNAL OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS  
OF  
The Victoria Institute,  
OR  
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VOL. I.



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## CIRCULAR, MAY 24, 1865.

### PROPOSED VICTORIA INSTITUTE, OR PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

*London, 24th May, 1865.*

It is proposed to found a new Philosophical Society for Great Britain, to be composed of Members or Fellows and Associates who are professedly Christians, and the great object of which will be to defend revealed truth from "the oppositions of science, falsely so called."

In the words of a recent author, "those who believe the Christian religion to be true and to rest upon rational grounds, and who consider that the only proper mode of propagating the truth is by proving it to be true, and of opposing error by disproving it, cannot help the burden this places upon them."—"We are suffering from the consequences of a culpable stagnation of thought, or from having failed to investigate fully and fairly, but rigidly, all the facts and arguments from time to time put forth as truths newly discovered by science and as being contradictory to the Scriptures."

It is in order that this may now be done thoroughly, that the institution of a new Society for this express purpose is proposed. It will be of great advantage to *real* Science, and has become a necessity for the Christian religion.

It will therefore be the duty of this Society to enter upon controversies of the day, and to give a hearing and encouragement to all who are willing to battle with the "oppositions of science," in order to reduce its pretensions to their real value.

There is no existing scientific body that fulfils these ends. At the present time, the only thing almost that is considered a fair subject for question and free opposition from every quarter, in all such societies, is Revealed Truth. There is by no means an equal freedom allowed in questioning what is called "Established Science."

At the Anthropological Society of London, on May 16th, Bishop Colenso spoke of "the facts of Geology" as disproving the Scriptures; as if he had really not been aware, that at the last meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (at which he was present), all these lately assumed foundation "facts" of Geology were publicly given up as untenable and disproved by Sir Charles Lyell in his Address, which Bishop Colenso actually heard delivered. Along with this now abandoned Geology, all the cosmological notions which Mr. C. W. Goodwin, in "Essays and Reviews," boasted of as being "certainly established science," contrary to "the Mosaic Cosmogony," have vanished like a dream.

It will be the business of the new Philosophical Institution to recognize no human science as "established," but to examine philosophically and freely, all that has passed as science, or is put forward as science, by individuals or

in other societies ; whilst its members, having accepted Christianity as the revealed truth of God, will defend that truth against all mere human theories by subjecting them to the most rigid tests and criticisms. In fact, the Society will be organized for the purpose of applying to "science" somewhat of that vigilance to detect its errors, contradictions, and fallacies which has been freely enough exercised in our day upon the statements of the Scriptures and of Christian doctrine, by those who accept, without the least examination and with an almost absolute credulity, all that passes for science.

Such a Society will doubtless succeed. Its head-quarters will be in London, but it will soon boast of corresponding branches throughout the whole country. Similar societies will be established on the Continent and throughout the world, thus affording facilities for individual and combined co-operation, and also for reproducing each other's most important publications.

The battle between the Scriptures and Science will then be fairly fought, —not any longer with all the organization on one side. Truth is great, and it will prevail! Papers will be read before the Society, discussing the most important questions of philosophy and science, without limit as to the subjects, except that those will be especially considered and have a preference that appear to touch adversely the bases of the Christian faith. Free discussion will be allowed. The discussions will be reported *verbatim*, and published in the Society's journal, probably in combination with a new review, to be called *The Christian-Philosophy Review*, in which a fair account will be given of all important new publications, especially those bearing upon general philosophy, morals, and religion. A Library and Reading-room will also hereafter be established in connection with the Society.

It is proposed that the Society shall be incorporated, and hereafter obtain a Royal Charter ; that Her Majesty shall be requested to become its first Patron, and that it be called *The Victoria Institute*, to commemorate its inauguration in her most gracious Majesty's reign. That it shall confer a medal annually upon some writer who has distinguished himself in refuting false philosophy, or exposing the fallacies of so-called science—this medal to be called, with her Majesty's permission, the Victoria Medal. Also that the Prince of Wales be requested to become its first Vice-Patron and Honorary President.

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*\*\* Be good enough to circulate this paper among your friends who are likely to take an interest in what is proposed. What nobler pursuit can man engage in, than in trying to discover truth by the philosophic study of God's works of creation ; and in what respect can Christians better employ themselves than in discovering ever fresh proofs and confirmation of the revelations contained in the Holy Scriptures? Those who may not be able to take a prominent part, as Fellows or Members of the Victoria Institute, may join as Associates (ladies being eligible), and thus aid the good work as subscribers, receiving in return the Society's Journal and other privileges.*