

- Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.  
Vol. IV., Nos. 3, 4, 5. 8vo.—*By the Academy.*
- Journal of the Statistical Society of London. Vol. XII., Part I.  
8vo. *By the Society.*
- Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society. No. 17. 8vo.—  
*By the Society.*
- The Ethnological Journal. No. 9. 8vo.—*By the Editor.*
- Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia. Vol. II.,  
Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12. 8vo.—*By the Editor.*
- A Monograph of the British Naked-eyed Medusæ, with figures of all  
the species. By Edward Forbes, F.R.S. 4to.—*By the Author.*

*Monday, March 5, 1849.*

The Very Rev. Principal LEE, V.P., in the Chair.

The following communication was read:—

Biographical Notice of Dr Chalmers. By the Very Rev. E.  
B. Ramsay.

The writer of this paper commenced by stating his purpose of viewing Dr Chalmers as a public character only, and to avoid all questions which belonged to the peculiar relations in which he stood to his own religious communion; and after a brief outline of the various circumstances of his life, and the dates belonging to each, the paper proposed to consider Dr Chalmers,—

- I. As an Author.
- II. As a Political Economist.
- III. As a Speaker.

I. Under the first head were noted the peculiarities of Dr Chalmers's mode of treating a subject, and the distinguishing points of his style, the abundance of his *imaginative* faculty, and the effects which were produced by it upon his writings.

II. Under the head of political economy, the principal object was to exhibit Dr Chalmers as a true Christian philanthropist. The circumstances connected with his management of the poor in St John's parish, Glasgow, were detailed; and the influence which that experi-

ment had upon his views of pauperism and poor-laws, generally. Some objections to his Glasgow scheme were considered, and some misapprehensions of it were explained. Under this head were detailed his views on Ecclesiastical and Academical Endowments, and his testimony to the value of the English Church and Universities.

III. In considering Dr Chalmers as a public speaker, some specimens of his sermons were read, with remarks upon his eloquence in the pulpit. The case of his speech on the Catholic Emancipation Bill, was cited as an instance of great effect produced by eloquence at a public meeting. His striking reply to an accusation of inconsistency brought against him in the General Assembly, and a specimen of his mode of lecturing were given. Some observations were then made on his love of natural scenery, and his admiration of the beauties of the material world. His private character and social intercourse were referred to—his powers of conversation, and his perfect freedom from affectation, bigotry, or intolerance; of these qualities examples were cited, as also of his turn for humour, and his keen sense of the ridiculous. The author of the paper then concluded by stating his conviction, that although there might be differences of judgment regarding particular portions of Dr Chalmers's public acts and opinions, yet that no one who had known him personally, and who had been well acquainted with his real character—that no one who had studied and appreciated the spirit and tendencies of his writings, would hesitate to admit that he was a good and a great man—that he was a sincere friend to the poor,—and that his great aim in life was to promote the glory of God, and the wellbeing of his fellowmen—that he was a Scotchman of whom Scotland might be proud—and that his labours and his writings have gained a name, and established a reputation, which will not pass away.

The following Donations to the Library were announced :—

- Catalogue of the Library of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 8vo.—*By the Society.*
- Catalogue of the Library of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. 8vo.—*By the Royal College of Physicians.*
- Journal of Agriculture, and Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. No. 24; (N. S.) 8vo.—*By the Society.*

- Magnetische und Meteorologische Beobachtungen zu Prag. 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848. 4to.
- Magnetische und Geographische Ortsbestimmungen Böhmen in dem Jahren 1843–5. Von Karl Kreil. 4to.
- Magnetische und Geographische Ortsbestimmungen in Österreichischen Kaiserstaate. Erster Jahrgang. 1846. 4to.—*By the Observatory of Prague.*

*Monday, March 19, 1849.*

The Right Rev. Bishop TERROT, V. P., in the Chair.

The following Communications were read:—

1. An Attempt to compare the Exact and Popular Estimates of Probability. By Bishop Terrot.

The author began by defining probability as being that state of mind in which we are inclined to believe a proposition, without being absolutely convinced that it is true. Objectively, every proposition is either true or false; subjectively, it may be certainly true, probable, or impossible.

The measure of probability he shewed to be the same as the measure of the cause producing it; that is, the ratio of the reasons inclining us to believe a proposition, to the whole number of reasons bearing upon it, whether for or against; all of which reasons are founded, either upon necessary inference from experience, or from testimony.

How inference from experience may lead to a definite expectation of an event different from that which has been experienced, was shewn in the case of an urn, containing two balls, white or black, and from which a white has been drawn. There is then a probability of  $\frac{1}{3}$  that the remaining ball will be black; and if a witness asserts that at a second drawing black was drawn, his credit must be very low indeed, if his assertion does not raise this probability from  $\frac{1}{3}$  to above  $\frac{1}{2}$ , that is to say, render it more likely that the event in the second drawing was different from, though not contradictory, to that observed in the first drawing, than that it was not different.