

plants and the action of sunlight, but all natural phenomena. It would seem as if there were other than a purely theological meaning in the words by which Virgil, the master of the ancient knowledge, emancipates Dante from old learning and art, and opens to him the gates of new knowledge. by admonishing him to look for himself, look to the sun shining before him, and to all the plants and trees growing spontaneously around :

. . . Lo tuo piacere omai prendi per duce ;
Fuor sei dell' erte vie, fuor sei dell' arte.
Vedi là il Sol che in fronte ti riluce ;
Vedi l' erbetta, i fiori e gli arboscelli,
Che qui la terra sol da sè produce.

Non aspettar mio dir più, nè mio cenno :
Liberò, sano e dritto è tuo arbitrio,
E fallo fòra non fare a suo senno ;
Perch' io te sopra te corono e mitrio ;¹

or, in Wright's rendering :

Take thou thy pleasure for thine escort now—
Forth of the steep and narrow way emerged.
Behold the sun upon thy forehead thrown—
Behold the trees, the flowers, of every hue,
In this most happy soil spontaneous sown.

No more from me expect or sign or word :
Thy will henceforth is upright, free, and sound :
To slight its impulse were a sin : then lord
Be o'er thyself ;—be mitred, and be crowned.

The splendour of the ancient literatures, dawning again upon Italy, overpowered the rising of the new science. The generations that followed Dante became more erudite than learned ; and the new knowledge slept again through the centuries, just showing life with Leonardo da Vinci, and a few others, until the "unlocking of the gates of sense, and the kindling of a greater natural light," in the days of Bacon and Galileo. ITALO GIGLIOLI.

THE REV. W. COLENZO, F.R.S.

WE briefly announced in our issue of February 16 the death of the Rev. William Colenso, F.R.S., of Napier, New Zealand. The close of so interesting a life, which for more than half a century has been intimately associated with the progress of science and education in the antipodes, is one that demands more than a passing reference in the columns of NATURE.

Mr. Colenso was the son of the late S. M. Colenso, a saddler of Penzance, and was born in that town in 1811. He was put to learn the arts of printing and bookbinding in London, where he was eventually employed for a time on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In 1833 the Church Missionary Society determined to establish a printing press in the then almost *terra incognita* of New Zealand. Mr. Colenso was selected to take charge of the enterprise, with results that must have more than justified the most sanguine expectations. An account of his early experiences in the joint capacity of printer and missionary was published by him in 1888, under the title of "Fifty Years ago in New Zealand," and a more interesting history of pioneer work of the kind undertaken by Mr. Colenso, performed as it was under exceptionally unfavourable conditions, it would probably be impossible to find. "In December 1837," says the technical journal *Typo* (April 26, 1890), "under difficulties such as perhaps no printer ever had to surmount since the first invention of the art, Mr. Colenso completed his great work (a translation into Maori of) the entire New Testament, in octavo, small pica type." From about the year 1840 Mr. Colenso devoted himself

¹ "Purgatorio," xxvii. 131.

principally to mission work. In 1844 he took orders, after preparation under Bishop Selwyn. In the same year he settled at Hawkes Bay, where he resided for the rest of his life.

An ardent lover and student of nature, Mr. Colenso has left behind him a distinguished record as a botanist and as an authority upon the natural history of the archipelago. For his services to botanical science he was in 1886 elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, having been previously made a Fellow of the Linnean Society. The wild woods and mountains of his island home, traversed unremittingly by him in his missionary avocations, exercised throughout his life an ever-increasing fascination on his mind. With the Maoris his acquaintance was necessarily of a most intimate character ; and he became an authority second to none on the subject of their language, arts, and legendary lore.

On June 25, 1896, a notice appeared in NATURE of the generous scheme for the foundation of a museum that Mr. Colenso had put before a meeting of the Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute. The enlightened spirit in which the scheme had been conceived is shown by the extract which we printed from Mr. Colenso's address to the meeting. In offering 1000*l.* as a nucleus of the fund required for the establishment of the museum, he imposed the condition, among others, that the museum should be opened on Sunday afternoons as well as on every weekday. It is stated in the Cornish press that the reception accorded to his munificent offer was very disappointing to him, and that the scheme was withdrawn by him in the following year, with the announcement that his books and money would go to his native town. He had already presented 1000*l.* to the borough of Penzance, the income from the investment of which sum is utilised for annual gifts to the deserving poor. At the end of 1898 this fund, known as the "Colenso Dole," was increased by a second donation of 1000*l.*

Mr. Colenso's zeal in the pursuit of science, and his enthusiasm for missionary work did not exhaust his energies. He discharged important public duties from time to time. In the days when the relations between the natives and the colonists were strained he acted as a negotiator in the interests of the Maoris, and was the last survivor of the English signatories of the treaty of Waitangi. He was a member for Napier in the first General Assembly, and retained the seat for many years.

Mr. Colenso was a first cousin of the late Bishop of Natal. There are marked points of resemblance between the spheres in which the two men worked, and it is not surprising that the former felt himself to be in close sympathy with his South African namesake on the subjects which the Bishop had at heart.

This fact, and the untiring energy which sustained Mr. Colenso in his latest years, are evidenced by the following extracts from a letter which he wrote to a correspondent in London barely two years ago. He said : "I am leaving here to-morrow morning by rail for the Bush district (that is the forest country) in the interior, having Church duty at Woodville, 100 miles S., on Sunday next, the Vicar being unwell. Last Sunday I took Church duty here at St. Augustine's, and on the Sunday before at Clive, a village nine miles E. towards Cape Kidnappers. I am far too old (eighty-six) to undertake the duties of a *parish*, but I *love my work*, and am always ready to help as far as I am able." He then adds that he had always been "a great admirer and supporter" of Bishop Colenso's "theological works." "I have them here," he writes, "and have often studied them. I particularly like his volumes of Natal sermons, &c., and went with him wholly in the matter of the oppressed and ill-used Zulus."

It is greatly to be hoped that the preparation of a biography of this remarkable man may fall into thoroughly competent hands.