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REMARKS

ON

“MOSAIC COSMOGONY,”

BEING

THE FIFTH OF THE “ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.”

*Extracted from the third number of “Occasional Papers on Scriptural Subjects,”*

BY

BENJAMIN WILLS NEWTON.

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## Remarks on "Mosaic Cosmogony," being the fifth of the Essays and Reviews.

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MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PRÆVALEBIT—familiar and oft-repeated words, embody a sentiment that is in itself unquestionably true, for it is founded on the sure promise of God's Holy Word. Truth *is* mighty, and will *finally* prevail. But we must not forget that God has his own appointed seasons for the fulfilment of His promises. We certainly know from Holy Scripture that in the present dispensation Truth will *not* prevail. We are distinctly taught that in this dispensation "evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse" (2 Tim. iii. 13); "that in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim. iii. 1); that "there shall come in the last days scoffers," &c. (2 Pet. iii. 3.) The Old and the New Testaments alike declare that the very moment when the reign of Evil shall be suddenly cut off for ever, will be one in which it will have attained a greatness and a development never before equalled. The persons and systems that have hitherto been marked as peculiar embodiments of evil, are but foreshadowings and warnings of THE Antichrist and THE Antichristianism that is about to be. If we did not know what the Scripture has revealed respecting the progress of evil we might well be dismayed at the signs of the present time. Pure Christian Truth has made but little progress in the earth: Israel remains outcast and blinded: throughout the earth generally, falsehood, violence and bloodshed reign: and even in our own favoured land where the national recognition of the Bible has, for centuries, brought with it such

marked results of blessing, that holy Book has of late received, (and that from unexpected quarters) a series of assaults, before which the mere educational faith of many is beginning to quiver and fall. Every day seems to augment the number and boldness of the enemies of Revealed Truth. The guarded suggestiveness which first characterized the writings of philosophic sceptics in England, is now giving place to more undisguised utterances of impiety. In all this, however, we do but see another indication of that coming darkness which we are taught in Scripture to expect as the immediate precursor of the long-hoped for morning—that morning without clouds, when Truth shall at last spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down satisfied from heaven. Would that these "adversaries" (for so they are termed in Scripture, Heb. x.) would remember that by their very scoffings and triumphs they are but fulfilling the predictions of the Word of God, and affording another proof of its prescience and truthfulness. The Scripture has abundantly spoken of the infidelity that is to prevail in the latter days—it has delineated its course—it has declared its final doom.

Infidelity has ever been accustomed to attack the New Testament through the Old. The consciences of men, unless altogether hardened, cannot but recognise that there is in the New Testament something superhuman, and heavenly, and blessed, in the character, and ways, and teaching, of the Saviour of sinners. They know that never man spake as He. Infidels, therefore, for the most part deem it unwise to commence their assault on Truth by directly assailing the New Testament and the personal teaching of the Lord. The writings of Moses are deemed a more hopeful subject of attack. Men pretend that the truthfulness of the writings of Moses may be impugned without the authority of the Lord Jesus being thereby affected. But do they really believe this? Is it possible for any man of ordinary reflectiveness to take the New Testament in his hand and to say that it does not, over

and over again, affirm the divine authority of Moses? The Lord Jesus whilst publicly declaring Himself to be the appointed Witness of Truth in the earth, and working miracles in attestation of that claim, early took occasion to attest the mission of Moses by saying that He Himself came to fulfil that Law which Moses had ministered. "Verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass" (observe the solemnity of His words) "not one jot or one tittle shall in any wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled." Again, He said, "THE SCRIPTURE cannot be broken:" and under that term—THE SCRIPTURE, every one that heard Him knew that the writings of Moses were emphatically included. On almost the last recorded occasion of intercourse with His disciples, it is said, that "*beginning at Moses* and all the prophets He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." In the Epistles too, the words of Moses are quoted as being the testimony of the Holy Ghost; and on the holy Mount, Moses was seen glorified by the side of his glorified Lord. Could any greater attestation to the mission of Moses be given? What then must we say of those who, knowing all this, pretend to do homage to the Master whilst they reject the servant whom that Master avowedly and solemnly accredited? Shall we say that a blinding delusion, an *επεργεια πλανης*, has fallen upon the minds of such, or do they consciously deceive?

The supposed discoveries of Geology are made, as in the Essay before us, one of the chief grounds of attack on the historic veracity of Moses. It is obvious that if his narrative respecting the creation of "the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is" be false, every thing else that he has written may be false. And seeing that the Scripture every where recognises the divine authority of Moses, if Moses be discredited the whole Scripture is discredited: and so, no authoritative exponent of Truth remains on earth: for as to the much-vaunted "verifying faculty" that is said to exist in

every man's bosom, who would be so mad as to confide in that which not only contradicts Scripture facts, but also leads those who profess to follow its guidance to contradictory conclusions on the very same subjects ?

Undeterred, however, by such considerations as these, the Essay before us resolves to overthrow the authority of Moses. Throughout it, due care is taken to profit by every plausible occasion for sneering at any supposed instance of "the Hebrew writer's" ignorance ; and at its conclusion, the writer plainly declares that the account given by Moses of creation is to be regarded "as the speculation of some Hebrew Descartes or Newton, promulgated in all good faith as the best and most probable account that could then be given of God's universe." (p. 252). In this passage the Essayist seems willing to concede to Moses, "the man of God," the high privilege of being classed with other fallible human speculators ; yet even this concession is immediately after modified and virtually withdrawn, for he adds : "it has been sometimes felt as a difficulty in taking this view of the case, that the writer asserts so solemnly and unhesitatingly that for which *he must have known* that he had no authority. But this arises only from our own modern habits of thought, and from the modesty of assertion which the spirit of true science has taught us. Mankind has learnt caution through repeated slips in the process of tracing out the truth." (p. 252.)

Let every one mark well the statement of this awful passage. It is plain, unequivocal, and incapable of being modified by explanation. Moses is first pronounced a philosophic speculator, but he has not the modesty of *modern* speculators ; nay more, he has not their truthfulness. What *they* state, they state conditionally and with reserve, whereas Moses "*asserts solemnly and unhesitatingly that for which he must have known that he had no authority.*" And what, if we add, as we should add, that Moses professed to state that which he stated *on the authority of God*. The charge against Moses really is, that he

stated *as on the authority of God* things for which he must have known that he had no authority.

One feels such a shrinking from men who can deliberately pen such sentiments as these, that the first impulse of one's heart is to court disagreement with them in every thing that their lips ever utter. There are some men whose disapproval we covet. We feel their praise to be condemnation—their censure honour. We would rather find ourselves opposed to them in every thing, than even seemingly allied to them in one. The Essayists, however, allow us not the opportunity for totality of dissent. They weave a tangled web. Error makes her most secure and most triumphant advances when she contrives to shelter herself under the temporary companionship of Truth.

The Essayist, then, maintains (and would that Christian writers had ever done the same) that the narrative respecting creation given in the commencement of Genesis professes to be a plain, historic narrative of facts. "It has nothing in it which can properly be called poetical. It bears on its face no trace of mystical or symbolical meaning. Things are called by their right names with a certain scientific exactness widely different from the imaginative cosmogonies of the Greeks. . . . . In the first narrative none but a professed mystifier of the school of Philo could see anything but a plain statement of facts. There can be little reasonable dispute then as to the sense in which the Mosaic narrative was taken by those who first heard it, nor is it indeed disputed that for centuries, putting apart the Philonic mysticism, which after all did not exclude a primary sense, its words have been received in their genuine and natural meaning." (Page 223.)

Nothing can be more true than this, at least so far as concerns the great fact, that the first of Genesis does *profess* to be, what indeed it is, a plain, literal narrative of creation. Yet let it not be supposed that the motive of the Essayist in admitting this is a desire to accredit Genesis. On the con-

trary, his object is to make its destruction, as an authoritative witness of Truth, the more certain and complete.

The Essayist proceeds to examine the systems that have been devised to avoid the force of the statements in the first of Genesis : and first he notices that of the late Dr. Buckland. The first verse of Genesis (which is in truth a heading or preface to the whole chapter, declaring to us the Author of that creation of which the subsequent verses treat)—that verse is by Dr. Buckland's theory detached from the narrative that follows, and assigned to another period, thousands, or it may be, millions of years previous to the present Adamic creation—which creation, moreover, is not by this system regarded as being in the full sense a creation, but rather a new formation out of the ruin of a previously created and destroyed world.

If Dr. Buckland had merely asserted that the first verse of Genesis referred to the original creation of the unformed matter out of which the existing earth and heavens, and the sun, and moon, and stars, were subsequently formed—if he had been willing to allow that before the *first* of the six days mentioned in Genesis when God said, "Let there be light," no light had existed—if he had admitted that before the *second* day no firmament had existed ; and that before the *fourth* day no sun, moon, or stars had existed, his theory (although still incapable of being reconciled with the strict interpretation of Scripture) would yet have been comparatively innocent, and unincumbered by those great inconsistencies by which it necessarily destroys itself. For to admit (as Dr. Buckland does admit) that the first of Genesis speaks of a series of six literal days, and that on the first of these days light was made ; and on the second, the firmament ; and on the fourth, the sun ; and afterwards to affirm that both light and the firmament, as well as sun and moon and stars, existed hundred of ages previously, involves a contradiction so glaring, that it is difficult to conceive the process by which any one could reconcile himself to the reception of a system so self-destructive. The

Essayist justly exposes its inconsistency. "Dr. Buckland," (I quote from the Essay) "having thus endeavoured to make out that the Mosaic account does not negative the idea that the sun, moon, and stars had 'been created at the indefinitely distant time designated by the word 'beginning,' he is reduced to describe the primeval darkness of the first day as 'a temporary darkness, produced by an accumulation of dense vapours upon the face of the deep.' 'An incipient dispersion of these vapours may have readmitted light to the earth, upon the first day, whilst the exciting cause of light was obscured, and the further purification of the atmosphere upon the fourth day, may have caused the sun, and moon, and stars to reappear in the firmament of heaven, to assume their new relations to the newly modified earth, and to the human race.'

"It is needless," (continues the Essayist) to discuss the scientific probability of this hypothesis, but the violence done to the grand and simple words of the Hebrew writer must strike every mind. 'And God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.' Can any one sensible of the value of words suppose, that nothing more is here described, or intended to be described, than the partial clearing away of a fog? Can such a manifestation of light have been dignified by the appellation of day? Is not this reducing the noble description which has been the admiration of ages to a pitiful *caput mortuum* of empty verbiage?" (Essays p. 227.)

"It is no part of the commentator's or interpreter's duty" (I still quote from the Essays) "to introduce obscurity or find difficulties where none exist, and it cannot be pretended that, taking it as a question of the use of words to express thoughts, there are any peculiar difficulties about understanding the first chapter of Genesis. . . . . The difficulties arise for the

first time, when we seek to import a meaning into the language which it certainly never could have conveyed to those to whom it was originally addressed. . . . . Although language may be, and often has been used, for the purpose, not of expressing, but concealing thought, no such charge can fairly be laid against the Hebrew writer."

"It should be borne in mind," says Dr. Buckland, 'that the object of the account was, not to state *in what manner*, but *by whom* the world was made.' Every one must see (I still quote from the Essays) that this is an unfounded assertion, inasmuch as the greater part of the narrative consists in a minute and orderly description of the manner in which things were made. We can know nothing as to the *object* of the account, except from the account itself. What the writer meant to state is just what he has stated, for all that we can know to the contrary. Or can we seriously believe that if appealed to by one of his Hebrew hearers or readers as to his intention, he would have replied, My only object in what I have written is to inform you that God made the world; as to the manner of His doing it, of which I have given so exact an account, I have no intention that my words should be taken in their literal meaning." (Essays p. 232.)

Such is the comment of the Essayist on Dr. Buckland's system, which was also the system advocated by Dr. Chalmers and others. Who will deny that the comment is just. Are we to be told that light, and heat, and organised life, existed ages before God said, "Let there be light;" and that the firmament was made and set to divide the waters, ages before that *second* day on which Genesis affirms that it was made: and that the sun, and moon, and stars, were made and set in the firmament and shone ages before that *fourth* day on which Genesis declares that they were made; are we to be told all this, and then asked to believe that the first of Genesis contains nothing that is at variance with such an interpretation—that it still may be received in its plain, natural sense?

If such an interpretation be natural, I know not any that could be pronounced non-natural. The Essayist, as we have seen, pronounces such an interpretation of Genesis to be extravagant and impossible. Agreeing with Dr. Buckland in asserting that the sun, moon, and stars had, ages before the six-days-creation described in Genesis, "marked out seasons, and days, and years, and given light for ages before to the earth and to the animals which preceded man as its inhabitant," they hesitate not to avow that in holding this, they hold something utterly and hopelessly at variance with the statements of Genesis. Having to choose between their supposed facts and Scripture, they elect the former, and reject the testimony of the Word of God.

Amongst those who once adopted the theory of Dr. Buckland but afterwards abandoned it (not indeed on account of its being at variance with Scripture, but for other reasons) was the late Hugh Miller. In 1857 he writes as follows: "I certainly did once believe with Chalmers and with Buckland that the six days were simply natural days of twenty-four hours each—that they had comprised the entire work of the existing creation—and that the latest of the geologic ages was separated by a great chaotic gap from our own." *Hugh Miller as quoted in Essays p. 228.* After recounting some of his labours as a practical geologist, he states that extended research had brought him to a new conclusion. "The conclusion" (I again quote his words) "to which I have been compelled to arrive is, that for many long ages ere man was ushered into being, not a few of his humble contemporaries of the fields and woods enjoyed life in their present haunts, and that for thousands of years anterior to even *their* appearance, many of the existing molluscs lived in our seas. That *day* during which the present creation came into being, and in which God, when He had made 'the beast of the earth after his kind, and the cattle after their kind,' at length terminated the work by moulding a creature in his own image, to whom He gave

dominion over them all, was not a brief period of a few hours' duration, but extended over, mayhap, millenniums of centuries. No blank chaotic gap of death and darkness separated the creation to which man belongs from that of the old extinct elephant, hippopotamus, and hyæna; for familiar animals, such as the red deer, the roe, the fox, the wild cat, and the badger, lived throughout the period which connected their time with our own; and so I have been compelled to hold that the days of creation were not natural but prophetic days, and stretched far back into the bygone eternity." *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 10.

Without touching at present on the geologic phenomena, our first question is whether the word "day" as used in the first of Genesis is capable of being understood of a period of indefinite duration. That it *sometimes* denotes an extended period is true. As in human language, so in Scripture, a prolonged period is often denoted by "day" *when used apart from numerals*. Thus we speak of "the day of man," and of "the day of God:" the day of Solomon, the day of Nebuchadnezzar, and the like. No one doubts that in such uses of "day," an extended period is denoted. Indeed in the second chapter of Genesis, "day" is used in this general sense, and extended to the whole period of creation. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, *in the day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." *Gen.* ii. 4. But the case is entirely different when "day," or any other word denoting time is connected with numerals, such as one, two, three: first, second, third, &c. In all such cases "day" is defined and restricted in its application by the numeral appended to it. One day means one day; and six days mean six days; nor is there any departure from this obvious rule from one end of the Scripture to the other.\*

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\* "Our honourable master Saadiah," says Aben Ezra, "expounds correctly and well. . . . Know also that in Holy Scripture days are always days,

Now I scarcely need say, that in the first of Genesis we have not only a regular succession of days marked by conjoined numerals, "day one," "second day," "third day," and the like, but we have also the word "day" defined as being evening and morning—"the evening and the morning was day one." Nor is this all: as in Genesis, so in Exodus where God Himself speaks from Sinai, we find the seventh day on which God rested, set in contrast with the six preceding days of creation. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter . . . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." *Exodus* xx. 9. 11. I have never heard of any one who maintained that the seventh sabbatical day was other than a literal day, and if it be, the question is settled; for language must cease to be a guide, if *in the same context* the seventh day of a series is to be regarded as a *literal day*, and the six preceding days of the same series regarded as periods of indefinite duration. Besides, as is well observed by the Essayists, the bare theory that a day means an age or immense geological period might be made to yield some rather strange results. "What becomes of the evening and morning of which each day is said to have consisted? Was each geologic age divided into two long intervals, one all darkness, the other all light? And if so, what became of the plants and trees created in the third day

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and never years. Yet it is possible that the word "days" may mean an entire year, since the repetition of the days produces a return of the year, as when it is said in Ex. xiii. 10, from days to days, *i.e.* from year to year; days meaning a complete year. But when the number is stated, as two days, three days, it cannot mean years, but must be days as it stands." For further observation on this subject see, "*The 1260 days of Antichrist's reign future,*" as advertised at end.

or period, when the evening of the fourth day (the evenings, be it observed, precede the mornings) set in? They must have passed through half a seculum of total darkness, not even cheered by that dim light which the sun, not yet completely manifested, supplied on the morning of the third day. Such an ordeal would have completely destroyed the whole vegetable creation, and yet we find that it survived, and was appointed on the sixth day as the food of men and animals. In fact we need only substitute the word 'period' for 'day' in the Mosaic narrative to make it very apparent that the writer at least had no such meaning, nor could he have conveyed any such meaning to those who first heard his account read." *Essays* p. 240. We are justified then, I think, in rejecting this theory without further remark. If we could believe that each of the six days mentioned in Genesis denoted a period of, perhaps, ten thousand years, and that such period was divided into a night of 5,000 years, and into a day of 5,000 years, and that vegetable and subsequently animal life existed during such nights and such days, we certainly should excel in credulity, but it surely would be the credulity of folly—not of wisdom. Wisdom is only credulous when it knows that God hath spoken.

A third system has been proposed by Archdeacon Pratt. Adopting in part the system of Buckland, so far as to maintain that the first verse of Genesis describes an anterior creation stretching back into ages of unlimited extent, and unconnected with human existence; and maintaining also with Buckland that the six days of the first of Genesis are literal, he endeavours to reconcile his system with the statements of Genesis by regarding the first of Genesis not as speaking of natural things according to their *physical realities*, but merely according to their *appearances*. "According to this explanation," (I quote the words of Archdeacon Pratt) "the first chapter of Genesis does not pretend (as has been generally assumed) to be a cosmogony, or an account of the

original creation of the material universe. The only cosmogony which it contains, in that sense at least, is confined to the sublime declaration of the first verse, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.' The inspired record thus stepping over an interval of indefinite ages with which man has no direct concern, proceeds at once to narrate the events preparatory to the introduction of man on the scene; employing phraseology strictly faithful to the *appearances* which would have met the eye of man, could he have been a spectator on the earth of what passed during those six days. . . . . The foregoing explanation many have now adopted. It is sufficient for my purpose, if it be a possible explanation, and if it meet the difficulties of the case. That it is possible in itself, is plain from the fact above established, that the Scriptures wisely speak on natural things according to their *appearances* rather than their *physical realities*. It meets the difficulties of the case, because all the difficulties hitherto started against this chapter on scientific grounds proceeded on the principle that it is a cosmogony; which this explanation repudiates, and thus disposes of the difficulties. It is therefore an explanation satisfactory to my own mind. I may be tempted to regret that I can gain no certain scientific information from Genesis regarding the process of the original creation; but I resist the temptation, remembering the great object for which the Scripture was given—to tell man of his origin and fall, and to draw his mind to his Creator and Redeemer. Scripture was not designed to teach us natural philosophy, and it is vain to attempt to make a cosmogony out of its statements. The Almighty declares Himself the originator of all things, but He condescends not to describe the process or the laws by which He worked. All this He leaves for reason to decipher from the phenomena which His world displays." (*Essays* p. 235.)

Such is the statement of Archdeacon Pratt. "We venture to think" (writes the Essayist) "that the world at large will

continue to consider the account in the first chapter of Genesis to be a cosmogony. But as it is here admitted that it does not describe physical realities, but only outward appearances, that is, gives a description false in fact, and one which can teach us no scientific truth whatever, it seems to matter little what we call it. If its description of the events of the six days which it comprises be merely one of appearances and not of realities, it can teach us nothing regarding them." (*Essays* p. 235.)

Can we take exception to this comment of the Essayist? I think not. All the objections which have been already urged against the theory of Dr. Buckland bear with equal force against that of Archdeacon Pratt. When Genesis tells me that light and the firmament, and the sun, moon and stars, were made on certain days which it specifies, am I to understand it, not as meaning that these things were really made at that time, but merely that they *appeared* to be made—that in reality they existed ages and ages previously? If such a principle be adopted, I do not see how it could be proved that Adam was created on the sixth day! If the sun which is said to have been made on the fourth day was not then *really* made but only *seemed* to be made, why may it not be said that Adam who is said to have been made on the sixth day, was not then *really* made, but only *appeared* to be made? Historic verities vanish before a principle like this; and the result would be a system of universal Docetism. That the object of the Bible is not to make us philosophers is most evident. It is true, likewise, that when Scripture has occasion to allude to certain ordinary occurrences familiar to the thoughts and eyes of men, and is not professing to give precise and definite didactic explanations—in such cases, it adopts, as might be expected, the popular expressions conventionally in use amongst men, and shuns the parade of philosophic accuracy. Men speak, and the Scripture speaks of the sun rising, setting, and the like; and who would not marvel to hear these well-known

expressions pedantically supplanted by others of technical correctness? But such cases have no resemblance to the present. The first of Genesis is a chapter in which man and his mode of contemplating, or beholding, or naming things, has emphatically no place: it is a chapter peculiarly devoted to God and the almighty operations of His hand—the avowed object of the chapter being to teach us how and in what order God called all existing things, ourselves among the number, out of non-existence into being. If strict historical veracity is not to be expected when God undertakes to describe the facts of His own creative agency, when is it to be expected? If we adopt a principle like this, we may as well abandon ourselves at once to an universal Docetism, and say that the Scripture always deals with appearances—not with facts. I must say so, if I could once bring myself to believe that the terms, “came into being,” “create,” “make,” used in the first of Genesis, denote appearances merely, not reality—that light, for example, appeared to be brought into being on the first day, but that really it was brought into being myriads of centuries before.\*

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\* The Essayists do not notice the system of Dr. Pye Smith, probably because they deemed it unworthy of their regard. It is thus commented on by Hugh Miller: “The scheme of reconciliation adopted by the late Dr. Pye Smith, though, save in one particular, identical, as I have said, with that of Dr. Chalmers, is made, in virtue of its single point of difference, to steer clear of the difficulty. Both schemes exhibit the creation recorded in Genesis as an event which took place about six thousand years ago; both describe it as begun and completed in six natural days; and both represent it as cut off from a previously existing creation by a chaotic period of death and darkness. But while, according to the scheme of Chalmers, both the Biblical creation and the previous period of death are represented as co-extensive with the globe, they are represented, according to that of Dr. Smith, as limited and local. They may have extended, it is said, over only a few provinces of Central Asia, in which, when all was life and light in other parts of the globe, there reigned for a time only death and darkness amid the welterings of a chaotic sea; which, at the Divine command, was penetrated by light, and occupied by dry land, and ultimately, ere the end of the creative week, became a centre in which certain plants and animals, and finally man himself,

What then are the statements of the first chapter of Genesis simply and literally taken? In the first verse we find a pre-fatory statement, declaring WHO it was that by His own creative and formative power brought the Heavens and Earth and all things in them, into that completed condition of being which the subsequent verses describe. "In the beginning GOD created the Heavens and the Earth." The emphasis is on *God*. It was He who "in the beginning," that is, before any of the things subsequently described had any being, did by His own almighty power "create," "form," and "make" them all.

The two prominent words used in the first and second of Genesis of God as bringing all things into completed being, are "to create," (ברא) and "to make" (עשה). These words, as used in these chapters, may be regarded as virtually synonymous. There is no "making" spoken of in these chapters that does not involve "creating;" and no "creating" that does not imply formation and completion as its inseparable

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were created. And this scheme, by leaving to the geologist in this country and elsewhere, save mayhap in some unknown Asiatic district, his unbroken series, certainly does not conflict with the facts educed by geologic discovery. It virtually removes Scripture altogether out of the field. I must confess, however, that on this, and on some other accounts, it has *failed to satisfy me*. . . . . I am disposed, I must add, to look for a broader and more general meaning in that grand description of the creation of all things with which the divine record so appropriately opens, than I could recognise it as forming were I assured it referred to but one of the many existing creations;—a creation restricted to mayhap a few hundred square miles of country, and to mayhap a few scores of animals and plants." (*Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 130.) Such is the comment of Hugh Miller. Well may he say that Dr. Pye Smith's system "removes Scripture altogether out of the field." *He* must have formed a strong estimate of the credulity of the human mind and its readiness to listen to any absurdity, who could venture to ask us to believe that Moses when describing "the earth as without form and void, &c.," meant only that a few miles of territory in the centre of Asia were covered with a temporary miraculous darkness!!! Such statements have prepared a "practical breach" in the walls of our citadel, which the more advanced Infidelity of the present hour knows how to avail itself of.

concomitants. In interpreting words in any given passage, we are not concerned with that which they may in other circumstances mean; we are concerned only with that which they mean in the contextual connection in which we find them. Scripture often defines its own expressions; and such is the case here. In the second chapter we find the words, "all His work which God *created and made*;" (verse 3.) and again, "these are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were *created*, in the day that the Lord God *made* the earth and the heavens." (verse 4.) This last verse clearly shows that the creating and making are not acts separated by an interval of countless ages, but that they both alike belong to the six-day period of which the first of Genesis treats. The words "created" and "made" (verse 3.) clearly show that these two expressions indicate, not different acts, but only different aspects of the same act; "create" directing the mind to the work as viewed from its origin—the other to the work as viewed with reference to its completeness.\*

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\* These words **ברא לעשות** are by some translated, *que creaverat Deus faciendo*—which God had created in making. See Wright's Revised Text of Genesis, p. 5. Gesenius observes that when one verb serves to complete the meaning of another, it often stands in the infinitive preceded by ל, thus forming a kind of Gerund. See Gesenius Gr. § 45. 3 and § 139. 2. Compare Gen. xxvii. 20. **מחרת למצא**, thou hast hastened to find, *i.e.* hast quickly found; and **הגדיל לעשות** he hath been great in doing, *i.e.* he hath done greatly. So here: *he hath creatively, or by creation made*, showing how closely the two verbs are associated in meaning.

That **ברא** in Hebrew, like *κτίω* in Greek, is continually used to denote production out of nothing, will I suppose be questioned by few. "All the Hebrew writers," says Fagius, "explain **ברא** in this place as meaning to create out of nothing." Rabbi Nachman says, "we have no word in the holy language to express production out of nothing except **ברא**." And Kimchi says; "the interpretation of 'creation' (**בריאה**) is the making something new, and its being brought from non-existence into existence." *Fagius in Crit. Sacr.* Moreover, we are expressly told on Divine authority that when the things that we now see (*τα βλεπομενα*) were made, they were not made out of things that did appear. Heb. xi. 3. (*μη εκ των φαινομενων τα βλεπομενα γεγονεναι.*) In the first and second of Genesis, the words "create," (**ברא**)

That the first verse is to be regarded as a preface or heading to the chapter, and that it is not intended to give the order of creation is manifest from this, that it speaks *first* of that which was created *last*; for the earth was created before the firmament—"the earth" here denoting, *in virtue of its contrast with "the heavens,"* the whole globe, both water and land—that which we are accustomed to call "earth" in contrast with "the heavens." The earth, so defined, was created on the *first* day; whereas the earth in another sense, as contrasted not with the heavens but with *the waters*, and therefore called "dry-land," was made on the *third* day.

In the second verse we are told that the earth came into being\* (so I understand יהיה—*eyeneto*. See use of *γεννομαι* in John i. 3.) in an unformed condition (תהו), and empty (בוהו). It was shapeless and void. No root, seed, plant, or animal, existed in it. It was encompassed by and buried in water over which the Spirit of God, as the agent of His creative and disposing power, hovered or brooded. But on the first day of the earth's creation, God said, "Let light

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"form," or "fashion" (יצר) and "make" (עשה) are all applied to God as the one almighty agent, who, in bringing the earth and heavens into their appointed completeness, did "create" them, and "fashion" them, and "make," *i.e.* perfect them, by bringing them into that condition which they attained when finished. See the connection of these words in Isaiah xliii. 7. "I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." On this verse Kimchi observes to the following effect: "I have *created* him; that is, produced him out of nothing: next, I *formed* him; caused him to exist in a form or shape appointed: lastly, I *made* him; that is, made the final dispositions and arrangements respecting him; for the word מעשה signifies the final arrangement or perfection of a thing." In translating the first verse of Genesis, Josephus uses *εκτισε*, but the Septuagint *εποιησε*; no doubt fearing lest if they used *κτισω* it might be interpreted in a sense that would fall short of the completion indicated by *ποιεω*. Compare also הברא in Is. lxxv. 17. which is virtually translated in Rev. xxi. 5. *Ιδου καινα παντα ποιω*. "I *make* all things new." When the new heavens and earth shall be *made* it will be strictly a new *creation*; for the former heavens and earth shall pass away, and no place be found for them.

\* See Gesenius word יהיה § 2.

come into being, and light came into being." (γενηθητω φως, και εγενετο φως.) But the light thus created was not, as afterwards on the fourth day, connected with the sun and moon as "light bearers," (מאורות *luminaria*) dispensing it, and regulating its diffusion. Yet the light was nevertheless concentrated. It was not allowed to mingle with the darkness, but was severed from it. "God divided between the light and the darkness." Consequently, a fixed place in relation to the earth being appointed to the light, the diurnal revolution of the earth on its axis would cause, as now, a succession of darkness and light, and thus there was night and day; "and the evening and the morning were day one."

On the second day, by the creation of the firmament, the waters that over-lay the earth were divided—part remaining on the earth, the other part being separated off, and by the firmament, upheld. This evidently implies that the firmament has solidity and strength, whence its Greek and Latin names στερεωμα and *firmamentum*, and the Hebrew רקיע, signifying something that is beat out, like metal by a hammer, and therefore hard and firm. "In it," says Gesenius sneeringly, "the stars were supposed to be fixed; and over it the Hebrews believed there was a heavenly ocean." What the faithful among the Hebrews believed was, not that there was "a heavenly ocean:" they believed that there was a mighty mass of waters beyond the created firmament and sustained by it. And how could they believe otherwise, when they knew not only that Moses had historically declared the fact, but also that David had said, "Praise ye Jehovah, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that are above the heavens." (Ps. cxlviii. 4.) "The work of the second day" (says the Essayist, and here I accept his testimony) "is to erect the vault of heaven (Heb. *rakiah*; Gr. στερεωμα; Lat. *firmamentum*) which is represented as supporting an ocean of water above it. The waters are said to be divided, so that some are below, some above the vault. That the Hebrews understood the sky,

firmament, or heaven, to be a permanent solid vault, as it appears to the ordinary observer, is evident enough from many expressions made use of concerning it. It is said to have '*pillars*' ["the pillars of the heavens tremble and are astonished at His reproof." Job xxvi. 11.]: '*foundations*' ["the foundations of the heavens moved and shook because He was wroth." 2 Sam. xxii. 8]: '*doors*' ["and opened the doors of the heavens." Ps. lxxviii. 23.]: '*windows*' ["the windows," literally apertures, "of the heavens were opened." Gen. vii. 11.] No quibbling about the derivation of the word *rakiah*, which is literally something beaten out, can affect the explicit declaration of the Mosaic writer, contained in the words, 'the waters that are above the firmament.' (*Essays*, page 220.) With all this I accord, but not with the impious words that follow.\*

It is scarcely necessary to increase the length of these remarks by recounting the operations of the Divine hand during the remaining days of creation. What description of them can be given plainer or more simple than that which Genesis itself supplies? Some persons indeed have chosen to perplex themselves and others with imaginary difficulties, because they find that the second chapter of Genesis does not chronologically follow the first, but is, on the contrary, supplementary—retracing the period of which the previous chapter treats, and adding new points of detail. But this method of instruction is not peculiar to these chapters; it is found throughout the whole of Scripture. The whole of Scripture may be said to be written on this principle of recurrence. Not only in successive chapters, but frequently in succeeding paragraphs of the same chapter, we find that after the first chapter or first paragraph has carried on the instruction to a certain point,

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\* The concluding words are: "or avail to show that he (Moses) was aware that the sky is but transparent space." A day is soon coming that will determine who has spoken truth respecting these things—whether God, or they who trample under foot His testimonies.

the next chapter or next paragraph instead of advancing, turns back and retraces the whole or part of the ground already trodden—presenting fresh aspects or adding new circumstances, until the narrative is brought up to the same point again. They who have not observed this, and who are stumbled at finding that the second chapter of Genesis treats of the same period as the first, may possibly be well read—well instructed in other things—but their Bibles they can have studied but little.

Taking then the narrative of Genesis simply as it stands, I do not see what difficulty it presents to those who remember that it avowedly treats of almighty power working *miraculously*. “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” What madness, then, if we believe this, to measure the ways of God by any standard supplied by our own most imperfect, as well as limited knowledge. How can things which are avowedly *beyond* the scope of human experience be *tested by* the rules of human experience? We have to remember too that the Scripture does not profess to supply a full narrative of *all* the circumstances connected with the events it records: it avowedly supplies a partial narrative only, omitting such circumstances as are not necessary to the enunciation of the truth or fact intended to be declared. Hence our knowledge is necessarily imperfect—we know in part, although that which we do know we know *surely*. Thirdly, the Scripture teaches us that we are to receive its statements, not on the ground of their probability—not on the ground of their seeming wise or reasonable to our natural thoughts—not on the ground of their being sustained by inferences drawn from real or apparent facts—we receive the Scripture because we confide in the faithfulness and truth of Him from whom it cometh. If experience of facts ascertainable by human power were the criterion, who would not

say that it was impossible that a fish could swallow a man, or that a man could continue to exist when thus doubly entombed in the mighty deep? But when I know that God has revealed it as an act of His power working miraculously, what difficulty can I have in believing? Are not all things possible with God? And has he not told me that at present I am to walk, not by sight, but by faith?

Faith, however, is not superstitious credulity. It seeks for evidence, and that evidence God supplies. The *external* evidence\* by which the authority of the Old and New Testaments is proved, is such as no sane mind that duly weighs it could honestly reject. And when we add to this the *internal* evidence (that which is appreciable only by those who, being taught by the Spirit of God, are able to understand the things about which God writes) the demonstration is complete. "If any man," said the Lord Jesus, "will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." When the heart has once learned to trust God, and to listen to the instruction of His word respecting sin and atonement, and salvation—when it has indeed discovered that nothing but sovereign grace freely saving on the ground of Another's merits, can meet a sinner's need, it will soon find in the Scripture, evidences of its Divine authority multiplied on every page. To one instructed in the school of God the Scripture as it is read, supplies each moment, demonstrative evidence of its Divine authority, just as harmony in music proves its own presence to the instructed ear. A Christian who really searches the Scripture *as a whole*—who remembers that the Prophets as well as the Apostles have written for our learning, will find in all that has happened and is happening to the Church, and to Israel, and to the nations, fresh evidence every day that

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\* See as an *example* of this kind of evidence an excellent "Defence of the Authenticity of the Book of Daniel," in "Remarks on the Prophetic Visions of the Book of Daniel," by S. P. Tregelles, LL.D., page 227. This "Defence" is also published separately by Bagster.

the Scripture is indeed the work of Omniscience. Yet though conscious of being instructed, he knows that he is instructed only partially: what he understands, he knows that he understands only in part. He pretends to no completeness of knowledge. He knows too that God has not given him any warrant to expect that conclusions based by men on the accuracy of their own historic records, or on the evidence of supposed philosophic facts will be found in accordance with His own word. He knows that often he may have to say, "Let God be true, and every man a liar:" in a word, he is content to walk not by sight, but by faith.

The readiness, and indeed eagerness, which even true Christians have shown in bending and twisting the words of Scripture so as to force them into apparent accordance with the supposed facts of Geology, or rather with the inferences that geologists have made from these facts real or supposed, has brought great sin upon the Church of God—a sin which even still seems little recognised or repented of. And what has been gained by this desertion of the literal truthfulness of God's word? Has its abandonment appeased the fierce wrath of the enemies of Truth? Has it turned aside the fury of their assault? No. It has given them fresh vigour, and furnished them with new weapons wherewith to assail our citadel. It has caused Infidelity to exalt itself more proudly, and to boast that it has succeeded at last in convicting of falsehood the God of holiness and Truth. "I have adverted" (says one of the Essayists now no more) "to the question of discrepancies between science and the language of Scripture generally, and have referred more especially to that notable instance of it—the irreconcilable contradiction between the whole view opened to us by geology, and the narrative of the Creation in the Hebrew Scriptures, whether as briefly delivered from Sinai or as expounded in Genesis. In the minds of *all competently informed persons* at the present day, after a long struggle for existence, the literal belief in the Judaical cosmogony, it

may now be said, has died a natural death. Yet many are still haunted by its *phantom*, which perpetually disturbs their minds with apprehensions equally groundless on collateral points." \*

Awful words these! They assert not only that the words which Moses was inspired to write are false, but also that that which God himself audibly spoke on Sinai is false. He indeed who dared to write these things is now no more—his lips are silent in death: but the sentiment survives, and is by multitudes received and welcomed; and even they who receive it *not*, seem little to *feel* its awfulness; or if they feel it, are too inert or too timorous to give vigorous expression to what they feel, and to encounter the consequences of faithful action. †

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\* Powell's Unity of Worlds, p. 457.

† One writer on Geology observes, that if certain operations be allowed to be miraculous (he is speaking of the Flood) "then we must give up the idea of philosophizing about it, and believe the facts simply on the Divine testimony. For how can we philosophize upon an event that is brought about by the direct efficiency of God, and without reference to existing natural laws, and, it may be, in contravention of them," &c. *Hitchcock's Religion of Geology*, p. 114. This is just the simple truth. It seems, indeed, little short of madness, to affirm, with the Scriptures in our hand, that the operations of God at the Creation, at the Fall, at the Flood, at the descent on Sinai, and on other occasions of which we have no detailed record, were the result of the operation of mere ordinary natural laws with which we are familiar, and that His agency was not in the full sense *miraculous*. And if it be *miraculous*, then by the confession of Dr. Hitchcock himself, there is an end to philosophizing. To admit that there is an Almighty Being, and yet to aver that He did not act *miraculously* on the occasions referred to, is as contrary to right reason as it is to revelation. And what am I asked to believe when I discard miraculous agency and admit the fancied mythical agencies of the geologists? I must believe "that the epoch of the earth's creation is unrevealed" (*Hitchcock, Lect. II.*)—that "death" (which Scripture declares to have entered by one man's sin) "was a universal law of organic beings on the globe from the beginning" (*Hitchcock, Lect. III.*)—that the Flood was limited in extent, prevailing only in the districts contiguous to Armenia, and that it was not destructive of *all* human and animal life (*Hugh Miller, Testimony of Rocks*, p. 346—*Hitchcock, Lect. IV. and various other writers*)—and that it is doubtful whether it be possible to identify one mark of that event (the Noachic Deluge) in nature (*Hitchcock, p. 111.*) We are asked to admit all this, and many other

Geology, like astronomy, or any other such science, whilst it employs itself in the ascertainment of facts is innocent, and useful for the purposes of life; but the moment it quits this comparatively lowly path and is tempted, instead of collecting and registering facts, to substitute conjecture and hypothesis for facts, and to endeavour to account for its facts by unproved theories, it abandons the sphere of inductive science, and becomes the slave and dupe of vain, empty, deceiving speculativeness. One has to seek among the sophists of Athens, or the Gnostics of Alexandria for parallels to the grandiloquent self-complacency displayed by those who have been during the last few weeks magnifying their discoveries of flint spear heads, and arrow-heads, and bones of pre-Adamic men in the caves of Abbeville. The *αλαζονεία* of these writers (not to speak of their disdainful rejection of Scripture) would be in itself enough to disgust and alienate any right-toned mind. Nor are they agreed as to their facts. One might smile (if the subject were not too solemn) to see how the statements of one week by one writer, are set aside the next week by another. Yet both alike are positive. Are we to humble and abase the banner of God's Truth in the presence of men like these? And even supposing that we could ascertain with perfect certainty every present fact connected with the earth's physical condition, would such an induction enable us to determine the times and the causes of the phenomena thus presented? Evidently not: for the simple reason, that even if our induction of facts were perfect (and who would assert the possibility of this?) yet even then, unless we had access to a sphere of knowledge entirely beyond the scope of human intelligence, we should be utterly unable to account with certainty for our facts, or to form conclusions as to the causes and times of the phenomena before us. Geologists in

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like things, (all falsifying Scripture) and to reject the thought of miraculous agency on the part of God, in order that Geologists may not be obstructed in inventing mythical theories to *account for* their real, or supposed facts.

affirming that this earth was created before the time at which God says it was created, ground their assumption in part, on the discovery of certain phenomena which they say prove that the earth once existed in a very different condition from that in which we now behold it; and that it is very evident that some great act of destruction either universal, or well nigh universal, has spread ruin over it; and then come their various theories to account for the appearances they have discovered. But what weight can any one of these theories have with us, when once we discover that one of the points most material in the consideration of such a question is omitted altogether? This *adamic* earth—the earth whose creation is described in the first of Genesis, came into existence in a condition utterly different, *circumstantially*, from that in which we now behold it. Have geologists ever thought of defining, or are they able to define with accuracy the condition of the paradisiacal earth? Have they ever thought of contrasting with the condition of this fallen earth as we now know it, its unfallen paradisiacal form when it first came fair, and perfect, and blessed, from the hand of its Creator? Never. I never heard of one geological writer that has even endeavoured to say in what respects the present condition of this earth contrasts with its pristine condition of perfectness. They have evidently never reflected on the subject—it has had no place in their thoughts. In all their discussions they have overlooked the all-important fact that this earth has had, not one unchanged *condition*, but two contrasted *conditions* of existence since its creator brought it into being in the six literal days described in Genesis. It is the same earth, indeed, but circumstantially how changed! Any theory, therefore, that pretends to account for the earth's present physical condition, if it ignore the greatness of that change which took place at the Fall (and all present geological theories do) must be utterly worthless. It cannot even have the semblance of plausibility to a reflective mind. The great and all important period of change in

the whole fabric of creation at the time when man fell, and sin and death entered, and when God, as the Scripture tells us, subjected all creation to the bondage of corruption—that period and its resulting consequences, they utterly ignore.

The Scripture tells us that “by one offence”—the one transgression of Adam, death entered and reigned. See Rom. v. 12, and 17. To this statement I strictly adhere. The Scriptures do not limit the reign of death and of corruption to man, and facts prove that it is not limited to man. Am I to be told that the God of life and goodness created this earth with one thing in it that was marked by ruin or death? How in that case could He have pronounced it “very good”—how could He have rejoiced in and rested in it? It would not have been very good: He could not have rested in it. We know that at present “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together:” but it was not created in this travail. A judicial act of God in consequence of the first man’s sin, has subjected it to the bondage of corruption; from which, however, through the Second Man, it will, by and by, be delivered. What I maintain, then, is, that up to the period of Adam’s sin, all in creation was positively perfect. I maintain that up to that time, no death, no decay, or dissolution, no process involving the destruction of life—no effects or consequences of destructive judgment, existed either amongst animals or men. Nothing that spoke of ruin was presented to the eye or to the thought of angel or of man, for no such thing existed. Not only the surface of the earth, but the earth’s lowest parts down to its inmost centre were marked, not by traces of convulsion, distortion, and fiery dissolution, but by the presence of absolute perfectness—bearing witness to the life-giving and sustaining power of God. But when man sinned, and when with him creation fell, all was changed. He whose almighty fiat had called light into being, appointed now by a like act of almighty power that death should penetrate and reign over all things. Inward fires that before had

never operated to destroy, were now caused to rage destructively within the earth's bowels. The fact that they do there rage destructively, even philosophy admits, and every volcano proves.\* Does any one believe that these raging fires burnt within the earth's bowels at first, or that the traces of their agency as seen in fused mountains thrown up upon the earth's surface,† were found marking upon the earth the stamp of judgment, when first it existed in its pristine paradisiacal perfectness? Is it not a fact, plainly attested by Scripture, that Sheohl or Hades, (in the lowest division of which, called in Scripture "the lowest Hades," the departed souls of the wicked are at present confined) is formed within the earth's bowels?‡ Surely no such place, indicative of the triumph of sin and death, could have existed when all throughout the whole creation was good, perfect, and blessed. No place of anguish—no *penal* prison-house, nor indeed any prison-house can be supposed to have existed in the bowels of the earth

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\* "Let us take the extreme estimate of forty miles as the depth below which the matter composing the earth is completely liquified. [by fire.] This depth is the one-hundredth part of the terrestrial radius. We are then to regard the earth as a spherical shell of solid matter filled with liquid fire. . . . . If the egg of a fowl or an ostrich be imagined to represent the earth, its shell would be much too thick to represent the earth's solid crust!" (Earthquakes and Volcanoes, Lardner's Popular Geology, § 8.)

† The central fluid [fiery] matter pressing unequally on its confining shell, has at various times cracked it in different directions, and the molten mineral matter, issuing from the fissures, and gradually cooling, . . . . . has formed mountain chains over the fissures. Such has been the operation by which the vast ridges of the Andes, which traverse the new continent from north to south, and those of the Alps and Himalaya, which traverse the old continents from east to west, have been formed." (Ibid. § 10.)

‡ For further remarks on the *locality* of Hades, see note subjoined to this paper. There can be little doubt that the vast mountain chains were thrown up on the earth's surface by the action of fire, were thrown up when Hades was formed within the earth's bowels, not previous to, but after the fall. There was in Hades a part assigned to the blessed; and there the soul of our blessed Lord was during the time that His body was in the grave. It is evident that the interior of the earth was not occupied *entirely* by fire *then*.

then. But this globe, once appointed to be the witness of the life-giving power of God for good, has since become a witness of His destructive power in judgment. What part of the earth's crust (for since Sheohl or Hades was formed, and internal fires began to operate destructively, the earth is but a crust) does not bear witness to the action of violent and destructive agencies, not only by contortion, dislocation, and the like, but by their very constitution? How then can we suppose that any such appearances in the earth's strata existed when first the earth came into its perfected being and was pronounced very good? A direct intervention from God (an intervention not less miraculous, and *possibly* not more prolonged, than that which first called the earth into being) smote it with the stroke of judgment—a stroke that in all probability penetrated like an electric shock into its lowest parts. At first the earth was adapted to the condition which man held in happiness and innocency; afterwards it became altered to meet the condition of man as fallen, and was subjected to the reign of death,—even the very dislocation of the earth's strata and their arrangements (the place of coal fields, metaliferous districts, and the like) being doubtless appointed with anticipative reference to the need of man as fallen, and with a certain reference too, to the destined place which each nation and tribe should hold in human history till the great end shall come. The mere circumstance then, that all present geologic theories ignore these truths, and give no place to the great fact of creation being subjected to the bondage of corruption and the reign of death, is in itself sufficient to invalidate their conclusions.

One might suppose from the boldness with which geologists break through the restraints of Scripture when they impede their theories, that they are themselves thoroughly agreed. But they are agreed neither in their theories, nor their facts. What one avers another repudiates. It is impossible therefore, to find any one geologic writer whose statements would not

be impugned by some other geologist; and consequently, there is no one fixed geologic theory which can be tested as to the amount of its agreement or disagreement with the Word of God; for no one acknowledged theory exists. All that we can do, therefore, is to select one out of the many published theories; and I have selected that of the late Hugh Miller.

One acknowledgment of Hugh Miller is important. He once supposed with Buckland, Chalmers, and others, that a blank chaotic gap of death and darkness separated the creation to which man belongs, from another that preceded. This notion in his last work he entirely repudiates. He rejects it as utterly inconsistent with established geologic facts. Although still believing that there was a creation of animals and vegetables that preceded the creation to which man belongs, he nevertheless admits that not a few of the animals which belonged to the supposed previous creation, continue still. "No blank chaotic gap of death and darkness separated the creation to which man belongs from that of the old extinct elephant, hippopotamus and hyæna; for familiar animals such as the red deer, the roe, the fox, the wild cat and the badger, lived throughout the period which connected their time with our own." *Testimony of Rocks*, p. 10. When we remember the many unscriptural theories that have been founded on this supposed "blank chaotic gap," we may be thankful that it is at last renounced even by geologists themselves.\*

The system of Hugh Miller may be judged of from the following extracts. "The geologist," (he writes) "in his attempts to collate the Divine with the geologic record, has, I repeat, only three of the six periods of creation to account for—the period of plants, the period of great sea-monsters and creeping things, and the period of cattle and beasts of the

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\* The Essayist observes; "this theory (*i.e.* the theory of the chaotic gap adopted by Buckland and Chalmers) is by no means supported by geological phenomena, and is, we suppose, rejected by all geologists whose authority is valuable." *Essays*, p. 228.

earth. He is called on to question his systems and formations regarding the remains of these three great periods, and of them only. And the question once fairly stated, what, I ask, is the reply? All geologists agree in holding that the vast geological scale naturally divides into three great parts. There are many lesser divisions—divisions into systems, formations, deposits, beds, strata; but the master divisions, in each of which we find a type of life so unlike that of the others, that even the unpractised eye can detect the difference, are simply three: the palæozoic, or oldest fossiliferous division; the secondary, or middle fossiliferous division; and the tertiary, or latest fossiliferous division. In the first, or palæozoic division, we find corals, crustaceans, molluscs, fishes; and in its later formations, a few reptiles. But none of these classes give its leading character to the palæozoic; they do not constitute its prominent feature, or render it more remarkable as a scene of life than any of the divisions which followed. That which chiefly distinguished the palæozoic from the secondary and tertiary periods was its gorgeous flora. It was emphatically the period of plants—‘of herbs yielding seed after their kind.’ In no other age did the world ever witness such a flora; the youth of the earth was peculiarly a green and umbrageous youth—a youth of dusk and tangled forests, of huge pines and stately araucarians, of the reed-like calamite, the tall tree-fern, the sculptured sigillaria, and the hirsute lepidodendrons. Wherever dry land, or shallow lakes, or running stream appeared, from where Melville Island now spreads out its icy coast under the star of the pole, to where the arid plains of Australia lie solitary beneath the bright cross of the south, a rank and luxuriant herbage cumbered every foot-breadth of the dank and steaming soil; and even to distant planets our earth must have shone through the enveloping cloud with a green and delicate ray. Of this extraordinary age of plants we have our cheerful remembrancers and witnesses in the flames that roar in our chimneys when

we pile up the winter fire,—in the brilliant gas that now casts its light on this great assemblage, and that lightens up the streets and lanes of this vast city,—in the glowing furnaces that smelt our metals, and give moving power to our ponderous engines. . . . . The geologic evidence is so complete as to be patent to all, that the first great period of organized being was, as described in the Mosaic record, peculiarly a period of herbs and trees, "yielding seed after their kind." *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 134.

Now if we admit the general truthfulness of this description, to what would it amount? It would show that the primæval condition of this earth when it first came forth from the hand of its Creator was one of surpassing loveliness. The whole earth flourished and rejoiced. From pole to pole it was covered with a mantle of verdure and beauty. It had no ice-bound regions in which desolation and solitude reigned—no scorched uninhabitable deserts. The creation when finished was *mature* as well as in condition perfect. It did not (as many seem to assume) pass through a stage of infancy and gradual growth, and so, slowly attain maturity. Trees, plants, animals when created were, like man, *mature*. And all, save man, abounded. Food also abounded. Seas, earth, air, were tenanted with life, and creation in all its parts existed in developed perfectness. Such are the inferences to be drawn from the statements of Holy Scripture; and certainly *the facts* affirmed by Hugh Miller do not invalidate such inferences. They rather confirm.

And now let me ask whether there be any thing strange—any thing improbable in the thought that when sin entered, and when creation, once known as the home of perfectness, was appointed to receive the impress of judgment and to bear witness to the reign of death—is there any thing improbable in the thought that the plants, and trees, and flowers, and all the paradisiacal loveliness of the earth should, as to the original form of their perfectness, disappear, and be, for the

most part entombed; and that black coal fields should remain as their memorial, to tell us, in charred and mutilated forms, of an excellency of beauty and strength that once was, but has departed—swept away because of human sin. If it was fitting that the home of man's innocency should be marked by all excellency of perfectness and beauty, it is no less fitting that the abode of his banishment—the earth which he has ruined by his transgression, should present him with memorials which he may disinter, and contemplate, and read in them a record of what his sin has wrought. We might well expect that a fallen earth should become the grave of its original perfectness, and *that*, by an act of God's sovereign power as *miraculous*, and probably not more prolonged, than that by which He first gave to it its completeness. It was not indeed a destruction of the earth, nor of *all* things in it; but it was a destruction of its primæval *condition*, and a destruction, no doubt, of many things that had distinctively marked that primæval condition.

But to return to the statements of Hugh Miller. He goes on to say, "The middle great period of the geologist—that of the Secondary division—possessed, like the earlier one, its herbs and plants, but they were of a greatly less luxuriant and conspicuous character than their predecessors, and no longer formed the prominent trait or feature of the creation to which they belonged. The period had also its corals, its crustaceans, its molluscs, its fishes, and in some one or two exceptional instances, its dwarf mammals. But the grand existences of the age,—the existences in which it excelled every other creation, earlier or later,—were its huge creeping things,—its enormous monsters of the deep,—and, as shown by the impressions of their footprints stamped upon the rocks, its gigantic birds. It was peculiarly the age of egg-bearing animals, winged and wingless. Its wonderful *whales*, not, however, as now, of the mammalian, but of the reptilian class, —ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs, and cetiosaurs,—must have tem-

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pested the deep ; its creeping lizards and crocodiles, such as the teliosaurus, megalosaurus, and iguanodon,—creatures some of which more than rivalled the existing elephant in height, and greatly more than rivalled him in bulk, must have crowded the plains, or haunted by myriads the rivers of the period ; and we know that the footprints of at least one of its many birds are of fully twice the size of those made by the horse or camel. We are thus prepared to demonstrate, that the second period of the geologist was peculiarly and characteristically a period of whale-like reptiles of the sea, of enormous creeping reptiles of the land, and of numerous birds, some of them of gigantic size ; and, in meet accordance with the fact, we find that the second Mosaic period with which the geologist is called on to deal was a period in which God created the fowl that fieth above the earth, with moving [or creeping] creatures, both in the waters and on the land, and what our translation renders great whales, but that I find rendered in the margin, great sea-monsters."

"The Tertiary period had also its prominent class of existences. Its flora seems to have been no more conspicuous than that of the present time ; its reptiles occupy a very subordinate place ; but its beasts of the field were by far the most wonderfully developed, both in size and numbers, that ever appeared upon earth. Its mammoths and its mastodons, rhinoceri and its hippopotami, its enormous dinotherium and colossal megatherium, greatly more than equalled in bulk the hugest mammals of the present time, and vastly exceeded them in number. The remains of one of its elephants (*Elephas primigenius*) are still so abundant amid the frozen wastes of Siberia, that what have been not inappropriately termed "ivory quarries" have been wrought among their bones for more that a hundred years. Even in our own country, of which, as I have already shown, this elephant was for long ages a native, so abundant are the skeletons and tusks, that there is scarcely a local museum in the kingdom that has not

its specimens, dug out of the Pleistocene deposits of the neighbourhood. And with this ancient elephant there were meetly associated in Britain, as on the northern continents generally all around the globe, many other mammals of corresponding magnitude. 'Grand indeed,' says an English naturalist, 'was the fauna of the British islands in those early days. Tigers as large again as the biggest Asiatic species lurked in the ancient thickets; elephants of nearly twice the bulk of the largest individuals that now exist in Africa or Ceylon roamed in herds; at least two species of rhinoceros forced their way through the primæval forest; and the lakes and rivers were tenanted by hippopotami as bulky, and with as great tusks as those of Africa.' The massive cave-bear and large cave-hyæna belonged to the same formidable group, with at least two species of great oxen (*Bos langifrons* and *Bos primigenius*) with a horse of smaller size, and an elk (*Megaceros Hibernicus*), that stood ten feet four inches in height. Truly this Tertiary age—this third and last of the great geologic periods—was peculiarly the age of great 'beasts of the earth after their kind, and of cattle after their kind.'" (Miller, p. 136.)

If again we accept the facts thus detailed (I say the facts, for the conclusions based on them I utterly repudiate as contrary to the Word of God) what would these facts show? They would show that the same Almighty hand that, in judgment, took from the earth the perfectness of its primæval verdure and beauty, did also cause the *animal* world, teeming as it was with life and giant forms of strength, to share in the general ruin. Whilst man unfallen stood in honour and dignity as the head and lord of creation, it was meet that earth, and air, and seas, should abound with living forms of giant might, for the greater the vastness of their strength, the more complete was the attestation to the superior greatness and lordship of man who was set over them all. The vastness of these creatures had in it nothing terrific when first they roamed peacefully and rejoicingly throughout a paradisiacal

earth—scorched by no burning heat—withered by no cold. They preyed not one on the other: the green earth supplied them with their food. They threatened not each other; much less did they threaten man. Innocency and peace reigned. There was no need, as afterward, (see Luke x. 19) to be guarded against the sting of the scorpion, or the fang of the bear, or any other form of "the power of the enemy," because nothing harmed,—nothing destroyed. There was nothing venomous—nothing that had in it the power of death, for death as yet was not. But when sin, and with it the power of Satan, entered, all was changed. The time allowed to manifest the alteration *might have been* very brief;\* but it was no doubt sufficient to evidence among the monsters of the land and of the sea, their change from lamb-like gentleness to satanic cruelty and fury. Fierceness had become the companion of strength: terror of weakness; and fierceness also became armed with power to destroy. What if the earth had remained full of these mighty monsters after their nature had been changed? Would not the earth have become untenable by man? The beasts of the field—"evil beasts," as they are called in Scripture, although reduced in numbers and in strength, became to man one of his fiercest and most dreaded enemies. What then would they have been if their giant size and strength, and numbers, had continued what they originally were after they had become possessed of the will

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\* Respecting this I make no assertion. Whether the results of the Fall in spreading death and destruction were rapidly or more slowly developed throughout the earth—whether *all* traces of the Earth's paradisiacal condition instantaneously disappeared or were *in measure* preserved till the Flood, and then finally obliterated—whether that ordered record of death which is said to be written on the earth's strata was effected fully at the Fall, or was finally completed when creation was entombed beneath the waters of the Flood—these and such like questions being utterly beyond the scope of human cognisance, cannot be answered. All that we are concerned to maintain is that which Scripture asserts, viz., that death, destruction and ruin, did not precede but follow the Fall; and that all that the finger of God may have written on creation as a record of judgment, is *subsequent to* human sin.

and the power to destroy? On every account, therefore, it was to be expected that the hand of almighty power, without indeed making a full end, should yet be stretched out against this part of creation also, and the earth should be made the grave of a greatness for which it was no longer the suited sphere. The same *miraculous* power that in one day had caused the earth to teem with these matured giant forms of life, was equally able in one day (if it so pleased) to cause them to disappear, and to entomb the memorials of them in the rock.

Hugh Miller invites us to enter the geological gallery of the British Museum, and to inspect the organic remains that are consecutively arranged in the successive rooms—the first being devoted to fossil plants chiefly of the Coal Measures. Well, we accept the invitation, and we enter. We hear his statement of the facts, but the comment shall be our own. And our comment is this, “Here we see the record of the ruin of the earth’s “gorgeous flora”—a buried memorial of the strength, and verdure, and beauty, that once characterized an unfallen earth in the day when it “brought forth grass, and the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind”—all created, be it remembered, in maturity and spreading over the earth from pole to pole, for there were then no blighting consuming influences—no scorching heat—no withering cold—no wasting tempests—no undermining waters—all was peaceful, perfect, and instinct, not with the power of death but of life. It was the era of man’s innocency. But he sins. The scene is suddenly changed. The reign of death begins. God puts forth His almighty power, and by a miracle changes the condition of the earth. He disrobes it of its mantle of beauty. He constitutes these black coal fields as the memorial of the bright living greenness that had been. We gaze on them, and see the record of the ruin that human sin has caused.”

We pass on to a second room. We find ourselves still

surrounded by memorials of death. We beheld the remains of gigantic animals, "all enormous, monstrous, vast," disinterred from the earth's next lowest strata. The hand of God has, so to speak, buried and preserved them separately, that they might be a memorial of the spectacle which the earth on the *fifth* day of its existence presented; when earth and seas from pole to pole teemed with these giant creatures—all harmless—all happy—all ready to own subjection to man. But man sinned; and God miraculously stretched forth His destroying hand, and the earth became well nigh denuded of the mighty creatures that tenanted it; and we see the record of what they were in the fossilized remains before us—another memorial of human sin.

We enter the third room, and the same lesson is in another form repeated. Is there anything that should surprise us in all this? Is there anything that does not seem antecedently probable to every mind that owns the power of God as almighty, and recognises that He is able to act secretly as well as miraculously, and believes what the Scripture reveals respecting the consequences of human sin and the reign of death? Indeed, I can see no difficulty in receiving these things. But if, on the contrary, I am asked to believe that the paradisiacal earth which the God of life and love "created," "formed," and "made," and pronounced "very good," was at that moment, down to its very lowest strata, the record of nothing but destruction and death, I repudiate the thought as contrary to every thing that conscience and Scripture teach.

And on what ground am I asked to give my adherence to these theories? On the ground that "IF" we regard the earth's stratification as the result of agencies analogous to those with which experience has elsewhere made us familiar, then myriads of millions of years (we might as well say at once an eternity) would be required to produce the phenomena. But that *IF* involves the whole question. I refuse to grant the hypothesis. I refuse to allow it to be assumed

that God did not act miraculously when the earth's strata were made, as to every essential characteristic, what we now find them to be. I ask for demonstrative proof that God did not act miraculously when He smote creation at the Fall. I ask for demonstrative proof that He has not acted miraculously *since*, in convulsing and upheaving the earth's crust, as at the time when He brake up the fountains of the great deep at the time of the Flood, and as at the time when He descended on Sinai and shook the whole earth. If God, at the time when He miraculously smote creation, was pleased to appoint that the memorials of creation's ruin should be presented in a certain order and arrangement analogous to that which He adopted in presenting the original order of life, and if subsequently, still acting miraculously (as when He descended at Sinai, and at the Flood) he has by means unknown to us, disturbed and convulsed the earth's crust, I find in such operations of the Divine hand, a sufficient cause for every appearance, whether of order, or disorder, that the earth's strata presents. I can understand why remains that, according to the order of arrangement, should belong to the lowest strata, should be found in the highest, and the reverse. If, after the earth was stricken at the Fall, it had become the abode of humility, contrition, and obedience, the case would have been different : but instead thereof, it became the abode of violence, rebellion, and sin. What wonder then that God should have shaken it to its very foundations as He did at Sinai, and as He will yet again shake it, in token that He recogniseth it as the habitation, not only of fallen, but of un-humbled, rebellious man.

I wish it to be observed that in saying these things I pretend to no geologic learning—I have none ; nor do I profess to propose any theory that will satisfactorily account for all geologic facts, or meet every difficulty that might be, whether reasonably or captiously urged. What I say is this. I maintain that all that Scripture has revealed, directly or indirectly,

concerning the physical condition of the earth, both in its paradisiacal and its fallen state, is to be tenaciously held. Having once ascertained that Scripture does reveal certain things as true, those things we must hold as infallibly certain, and even if an angel from Heaven were to gainsay them we heed him not. If any supposed facts, the result of human research, are presented to us, we should be willing to examine and try them by the Scripture. If they bear the test—especially if they manifestly tend to corroborate or illustrate Scripture, we welcome them. If they do not bear that test, we shall certainly find, sooner or later, either that we have hastily assumed as a fact that which is not a fact; or that we have been comparing with the Scripture, not a fact, but our deductions from, or reasonings about, a fact.

I am not here concerned to enquire into the arguments that may be urged either for or against the facts advanced by Hugh Miller. If we assume them to be, even in a general sense, true—if we admit that the fossilised remains in the earth's strata present an order of destruction closely resembling the order of creation on the third, fifth, and sixth days, as detailed in Genesis—if the work of the third day in clothing the earth with verdure and beauty, has its memorial in the stricken and mutilated remains of trees and forests that lie entombed beneath our feet; and if the works of the fifth and sixth days are also recorded by corresponding remains of ruin, I accept the attestation that such records furnish to the great truth, that the earth, once free from all corruption and all power of death, has, because of human sin, been made likewise to witness to the power of that hand which is able not only to bless, but also to destroy.

If it be contended that the remains found in the earth's strata are not only the result of distinct acts of destruction, (which may be true) but that they belong to periods infinitely distinct in time, I reply that such a statement can have no weight with those who receive the Scripture. It is really the

same kind of argument as is used to shew the days of creation were separated periods of undetermined extent. Moreover, such a statement belongs to a theory whose conclusions it is impossible to accept; first, because they rest on an insufficient induction of facts; and secondly, because the premise which is the very pillar of their system, will be found, on examination, to rest on mere assumption, and not on fact.

First, as regards insufficient induction. All present geologic theories recognise no distinction between the condition of the paradisiacal, and the unparadisiacal earth: they ignore the consequences of the Fall—they forget that the trees, plants, and animals, which spread over the earth at first, were created, not in an imperfect, but in a mature condition; and they assign no place for the *miraculous* operation of the hand of God, at the Fall, and since the Fall, in altering the condition of the creation. Any theory that omits these all-important facts must be worthless.

Secondly, as regards unwarranted assumption—what shadow of proof can be adduced to shew that the operation of slowly working physical agencies (and not miraculous power) either formed the earth's strata, or brought them into the condition in which we now find them to be? I ask for proof—clear, definite proof that the agencies asserted to have produced such and such phenomena ever existed. I ask for proof that the phenomena ever were, or could be, produced by any such gradual agencies as experience has made us acquainted with: but I find no answer to my demand. No proof is furnished me. On the contrary, I find the theories proposed to me to be based on the merest speculative assumption. Am I not more than justified in saying this, when I read such a statement as the following? "That small pencil of solar radiation which is arrested by our planet, and which constitutes less than the 2,000-millionth part of the total energy sent forth from the sun, must be regarded as the power which enabled the plants of the carboniferous period to wrest the carbon

they required from the oxygen with which it was combined, and eventually to deposit it as the solid material of coal. In our day, the reunion of that carbon with oxygen restores the energy expended in the former process, and thus we are enabled to utilize the power originally derived from the luminous centre of our planetary system. But the agency of the sun in originating coal does not stop at this point. In every period of geological history the waters of the ocean have been lifted by the action of the sun and precipitated in rain upon the earth. This has given rise to all those sedimentary actions by which mineral substances have been collected at particular localities, and there deposited in a stratified form with a protecting cover to preserve them for future use. The phase of the earth's existence suitable for the extensive formation of coal appears to have passed away for ever." (Extract from speech of Sir W. Armstrong at meeting of British Association, August 26th, 1863.)

Now I ask any unprejudiced person to say whether there is the slightest evidence *to prove* that metal-deposits, and coal, were produced in the way supposed? If they ever were so produced, is it not evident that we should find a similar process in some form or other being continued still, especially, when geologists assert that in the earliest of their pretended pre-Adamic ages, the atmosphere and the respiratory organs of animals were in every material respect the same as now?\*

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\* "All these circumstances lead, therefore, to the conclusion that the external conditions in which animals exist have undergone no essential change since the Palæozoic age, inasmuch as the organs of respiration have remained the same, a conclusion which is still further confirmed when, descending from the orders, the genera are examined." (Lardner's Popular Geology, § 544)

"We arrive, therefore, at the conclusion, as well for terrestrial animals which breathe by trachea, as for marine animals, that the respiratory organs have not undergone any progressive improvement, and that this class in the cradle of nature was what it still is; in fine, that the medium of its terrestrial existence has always been the same, since the first animalisation of the globe to the present time." (Ibid § 546.) "It must, therefore, be inferred,

But we find no coal-fields growing around us now. Unfortunately for his theory, Sir William Armstrong is obliged to acknowledge that "the phase of the earth's existence suitable for the extensive formation of coal appears to have passed away for ever." Yes: but when did it exist? Is it indeed asked of me that I should believe that all the vast coal-fields that are now being laid bare, and found to be filled with memorials of a destruction suddenly brought on a fair creation, are the results of the slow mingling of light with certain carbon supplied by plants? If we be willing to lend our credulous ear to such fables—if on the assumption that fabulous, imaginary agencies like these, have produced the phenomena of creation, and that because such agencies must be slow, therefore, an antiquity of countless ages must be assigned to a globe whose existence has not yet measured 6000 years—if, I say, we so thoroughly despise the Word of God as to be willing to allow baseless speculations like these to weigh in the balance more heavily than its Divine testimonies, I know not what we can expect, save finally to be counted among those adversaries who shall, by and by, "wonder and perish."

Whenever geologists are able to declare with precision the exact condition and constitution of the Paradisiacal earth—when they are able to tell the mode, extent, and results of the change in the earth's condition at the fall of man when creation was first subjected to the bondage of corruption—when they can describe the manner of the formation of Sheohl (Hades) within the earth's bowels, and the effects thereby produced on the earth's surface—when they can tell me what is meant in Scripture by Hades "enlarging herself" (See Is. v. 14) and all the effects of such enlargement—when they can tell me

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that at these remote epochs, the medium in which birds and reptiles breathing the air by lungs lived, was little if at all different from the medium in which similar classes now live, which leads to the conclusion that, at this early period in the history of the globe, the composition of the atmosphere must have been nearly the same as at present." (Ibid § 548.)

whether the axis of the earth was, at its creation, inclined, as now, to its orbit; and if not, when the inclination took place, and the effects thereby produced—when they can declare the character, and results, of all the convulsions that have visited this earth *since the fall*, especially at the time when God descended on Sinai and shook the whole earth in a manner comparable to that last great shaking which is yet to be—when they can explain to me the manner and extent of the change that has passed on animals now known as carnivorous, but which once ate the herb of the field (see Gen. i. 30), and which, in time yet to come, shall again feed thereon (Is. xi. 7.)—when they can tell me whether the moon (whose light in the coming millennial age will be as the light of the sun) and whether the sun (whose light in that coming age will be sevenfold augmented,) (see Is. xxx. 26) had a similar or greater brilliancy and heat in the paradisiacal period, and what were the consequences as to climate, &c., of such heat and brilliancy—when they can tell me whether the physical laws affecting the distribution of heat and cold, the formation of strata, the growth and multiplication of plants and animals, the corrosion of rocks, &c., &c., were the same in the antediluvian age (when man's longevity was so great) as now—when they can declare on what occasions and in what manner God has employed *miraculous* agency in the arrangement or disarrangement of the earth's strata—when they can declare all that He may thus have done, secretly and without the cognisance of man, at the time of the Fall, and at the Flood, and at the descent on Sinai—when these, and other like questions have been satisfactorily answered, then we may admit that geologists are competent to account for, and to form theories on their facts. But till that time comes (and it never will come to uninspired man) the acceptance of conclusions which require for their establishment the possession of Divine wisdom, would be unpardonable fatuity, even if such conclusions did not expressly contradict the Scripture—but what shall we say

when we find that these conclusions are at utter variance with Holy Writ, and necessitate by their reception the rejection of the Word of the living God?

And will not the candour of *some* geologists admit that they have found it not easy to reconcile some of their avowed facts with the theories they have adopted respecting various successive pre-Adamic epochs? If the earth has many times existed as a place of developed life, and has been many times destroyed and renewed, we might certainly expect that these periods (separated, it is said, by countless ages from each other) would be marked as different by the plants, animals, &c., found in different epochs being organically contrasted in their constitution, &c. from each other. We should not have expected to find similarity in the organism of the creatures found in these different creations. Yet it is admitted that there is similarity. What then would such similarity indicate? Would it not tend to show that things that had such similarity must have belonged to the same one creation? We find no difficulty if we think of them in connexion with an earth once created in perfectness, and then suddenly smitten. In the very earliest epoch which geologists have imagined, they find to their surprise, that animals had the same organs of respiration as now—that the composition of the atmosphere must have been nearly the same as at present, and that there has been no progressive improvement (as some have falsely asserted) in animal organization.\* The fact too that *some* (though but a few) of the fossilized species are found scattered

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\* “All these circumstances lead, therefore, to the conclusion that the external conditions in which animals exist have undergone no essential change since the Palæozoic age, inasmuch as the organs of respiration have remained the same, a conclusion which is still further confirmed when, descending from the orders, the genera are examined.” *Lardner*, § 544.

“We arrive, therefore, at the conclusion, as well for terrestrial animals which breathe by trachea, as for marine animals, that the respiratory organs have not undergone any progressive improvement, and that this class in the cradle of nature was what it still is; in fine, that the medium of its terrestrial exist-

throughout all the supposed periods, would in itself be a strong argument to prove the identity of those periods.\* If God was pleased to bring a sudden stroke of ruin on the creation that He had made—if He designed that the greatness and fairness of that creation in its pristine condition should be attested by forms of death entombed within the earth's crust, is it not to be expected that He would establish a certain order and regularity of arrangement in the distribution of these buried forms, bearing witness of the power of death, just as before there had been a certain regularity and order in the mode of His creating them for life? If He has separated, so to speak, the picture of death into many divisions, it is that we might the more easily contemplate it in detail, whilst, at the same time, He has shown by His distribution of a few fossilized remains of like species through each division, that these divisions are not to be regarded as indicating distinct creations. And how monstrous the supposition, that, for countless myriads of ages, the earth should have existed teeming with life, and clothed with verdure and beauty, without any rational creature being found thereon capable of enjoying it, and of owning and worshipping the Creator! And is it not an equally monstrous supposition that the formation and arrangements of the earth's strata should be regarded as the result of the operation of slow

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ence has always been the same, since the first animalisation of the globe to the present time." *Ibid.* § 546.

"It must, therefore, be inferred, that at these remote epochs, the medium in which birds and reptiles breathing the air by lungs lived, was little if at all different from the medium in which similar classes now live, which leads to the conclusion that, at this early period in the history of the globe, the composition of the atmosphere must have been nearly the same as at present." *Ibid.* 548.

\* See Lardner § 249. Hitchcock says, "All the great classes of organic beings, vegetable and animal, are found nearly at the earliest epoch, and continue through the entire series of rocks," p. 225. And again, p. 143, "The different rocks that lie above one another do, indeed, contain some species that are common; but the most are peculiar."

ordinary physical agencies, such as those we now see around us, and not the result of miraculous almighty power? "To the question," says Dr. Lardner, "as to the lapse of time during which these successive sedimentary strata have been formed, it is impossible to give any answer even as definite as the estimates of their thickness. All that can be said is, that the deposition from turbid waters being generally a slow process, *it may be imagined* (the italics are mine) that intervals of time of vast duration must have been required for the formation of strata which measure many miles in thickness." (*Lardner's Popular Geology*, p. 53.)

It is very certain that if we once begin to *imagine* the mode of God's operations in making creation what it is, our conclusions will be the offspring of our imagination, and will have that value, and nothing more. If instead of "*imagining*" agencies which never could have been employed (for they are incapable of producing the results before us) we admit the miraculous and unsearchable operation of the Divine hand, we may, no doubt, still find difficulties in explaining and accounting for all the phenomena presented to our view, but we shall find nothing in that to shock or disappoint us; for having admitted that His ways are unsearchable, we should be surprised if we found them searchable. No—they are not searchable, though by and by they will be; when the redeemed shall be endued with other powers, and shall know even as they are known. For that hour we wait; in the meanwhile being very sure, because His Word declares it, that this creation is *one* creation created in six literal days as Genesis records, and afterward smitten—subjected to vanity—to groaning—to the reign of death; and the attestations to that reign of death which we find entombed within the earth's crust, we ascribe to the unsearchable operation of that almighty power which is not accustomed, when acting on occasions that affect the universe, to work by ordinary methods, but to perform its acts in a manner untraceable by

man, and worthy of the glorious power of Him who needs no time for the fulfilment of His plans. He is able to condense into a *moment* operations that might be extended over ten thousand years. "He speaketh, and it is done: He commandeth, and it standeth fast."

## Note on the locality of Hades.

I SCARCELY need observe that the belief that *Hades*\* (Hebrew *Sheohl*) was a *subterranean* place in which the souls of the departed were, was prevalent both among the ancient heathen philosophers, and the Jews. See Josephus as quoted below. †

Among the Fathers the belief was no less prevalent. Tertullian expressly maintains that the *Inferi* are within the earth, and that the souls of the departed went there, as did the soul of Christ, of whom he says, "that He did not ascend into the higher heavens until He had first descended *into the*

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\* It must be remembered that Hades is not *Gehenna*. *Gehenna* (a name derived from the place where carcases and corrupt things were burned without the walls of Jerusalem) is a name applied by our Lord to the *eternal* place of torment—a place which as being eternal must exist apart from the earth which is to pass away. *Gehenna* is no doubt identical with "the lake of fire" into which the wicked are to be cast after the last judgment. The places in which *Gehenna* is used are Matt. v., 22: v., 29: v., 30: x., 28: xviii., 9: xxiii., 15: xxiii., 33.—Mark ix., 43: ix., 45: ix., 47: Luke xii., 5: James iii., 6.—*Hades* is the word used in all other places where "*Hell*" occurs in our English New Testament.

† Josephus speaking of the Sadducees says—"τας καθ' Αιδου τιμωριας και τιμας αναρπουσι: but that the Pharisees on the contrary, acknowledged both, and regarded Hades as being *subterranean*—αθανατον τε ισχυνται ψυχαις πιστις αυτοις ειναι, και υπο χθονος δικαιοσεις τε και τιμας. Therefore the Jews which thought the souls immortal, did believe that the Just were rewarded, as well as the Unjust punished υπο χθονος or καθ' ἄδου." See *Pearson Creed* Art. v. Josephus too speaks of the soul of Samuel being brought up from Hades: Saul, he says, directed the woman την Σαμουηλον ψυχην αναγαγειν αυτω· ἣ δ'αγρουσα τον Σαμουηλον οστις ην, καλει τουτον εξ ἄδου. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. vi. 14. It was true indeed that Samuel came: but the woman, by her powers, did not bring him up: God to her terror and amazement sent him. See note on p. 115.

*earth's lower parts* (nec ante ascendit in sublimiora cælorum quam descendit in inferiora terrarum): and again, "you have to believe that the region of the Inferi is subterranean," (habes et regionem Inferum subterraneam credere).\* So also Euthymius†: "Hades is a place under the earth apportioned off to the souls of the dead." (τοπος γαρ ὁ αἴδης ὑπο γην αποκεκληρωμενος ταις των αποθνησκοντων ψυχαις.) So Leporius‡ gives "the lower parts of the earth" (inferiores partes terræ) as the explanation of "*Inferna*," into which, he says, Christ descended. Indeed even heretics such as the Arians allowed it, for in the Creed made at Sirmium and produced at Ariminum, we find the words, "who was crucified, suffered, died, and descended into the subterranean places," (σταυρωθεντα και παθοντα και αποθανοντα και εις τα καταχθονια κατελθοντα)—words which Bishop Pearson shows must, in *their* use of them, have referred, not to the burial of the body of Christ, but to the descent of His soul into Hades.

Referring to the text in the Ephesians—"now in that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" Bishop Pearson observes; "This many of the ancient Fathers understood of the descent into Hades *as placed in the lowest parts of the earth*; and this exposition must be confessed so probable that there can be no argument to disprove it." (Pearson Art. v. p. 226 folio.) Pearson subjoins the following note: "This" (*i.e.* the manner in which the words in the Ephesians were understood by the Fathers) "appeareth by their quotation of this place to prove or express the descent into Hades as Irenæus does. Book v. ch. 31. folio. [The words of Irenæus are, "Dominus legem mortuorum servavit ut fieret primogenitus a mortuis, et comoratus usque ad tertiam diem *in inferioribus terræ*"—"the Lord conformed to the law of the dead, that He might be the

\* Tertullian, as quoted by Bishop Pearson on Creed Art. v. p. 237. folio.

† Euthymius as quoted by Pearson. Art. v.

‡ Leporius as quoted by Pearson. Art. v.

first-born from the dead, and tarried until the third day *in the lower parts of the earth.*"] So also Origen Hom. 35 in Matt.—Athanasius Epist. ad Epictetum—Hilarius in Ps. 67. *Inferiora autem terræ infernus accipitur ad quem Dominus noster Salvatorque descendit.*" (Jerome in locum.)

Now it is indeed quite true that no value whatever is to be attached to the opinions of men on this or any kindred subjects unless they can be sustained by Holy Scripture—the one only test of Truth. Nor do I here refer to other *erroneous* thoughts which many of the Fathers had respecting Hades, such for example as its being the place to which the souls of the righteous *now* go at death: I am referring simply to their opinion as to the locality of Hades. Is then that opinion in conformity with the Word of God? The Scripture, in very many passages, speaks of Hades or Sheohl in such a way as decidedly to sanction the belief that prevailed even in the heathen world respecting its being *beneath us—beneath our feet* in whatsoever part of the earth men may be supposed to stand. Thus in that remarkable passage, the death of Korah and his company in Numbers xvi. 29.—“If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they *go down quick into Sheohl* (Hades); then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, *went down alive into Sheohl*, (Hades) and the earth closed upon them.”

In Job we find the expression, “*going down*” into Hades, frequently occurring. Thus Job vii. 9, “he that *goeth down*

to Hades :” and xvii. 16, “They shall *go down* to the bars of Hades :” and xxi. 13, “in a moment *go down* to Hades :” and Ps. lv. 15, “let them *go down* quick into Hades.” And Is. xiv. 9, “Hades *from beneath* is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming :” and xiv. 11, “thy pomp is *brought down* to Hades.” And Amos ix. 2, “though *they dig* into Hades.” There are an abundance of such passages—all showing the position which Hades holds in relation to man standing *on* the earth. It is always spoken of as *beneath* us and *in* the earth. Else we should not find the expression “*dig into*” it.

In Psalm lxiii. 9, we find the words, “they shall go into the lower parts of the earth.” Now as this is said in reference to the wicked *whilst on the earth*, it is evident that it cannot be understood of them except as removed from the earth’s surface into another part of the earth below ; and accordingly, this passage has been continually referred to by the Fathers and others, as bearing out the interpretation already given of the words in the Ephesians, “what is it but that he descended first into the lower parts of the earth.”\*

In the New Testament Phil. ii. 10 we find a remarkable expression strongly corroborative of all that has been said, “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things *under the earth*.” (*επουρανιων, επιγειων, καταχθονιων.*) This is a very important passage. It evidently speaks not of things inanimate or unintelligent, but of beings capable of bowing the knee intelli-

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\* On this passage Dean Alford observes—“Nor can it be said that the descent into hell [Hades] would be irrelevant here—or that our Lord ascended not from Hades but from the earth : for the fact of descent being the primary thought, we have only to ask as above, how far that descent is carried in the Apostle’s mind.” The greater the descent the greater the ascent . . . . ‘this ascent what does it imply but a descent, and that even to the lower parts of the earth from which the spoils of victory were fetched?’ And this meaning seems to be upheld by the *ινα πληρωση τα παντα* which follows, as well as by the contrast furnished by *ιπερανω παντων των ουρανων*—“high above all heavens.” This interpretation is upheld by most of the ancients. *Alford in locum.*

gently ; and it expressly teaches, not only that all intelligent beings on the earth, but that all intelligent beings in subterranean places,\* shall finally be made to bow ; the latter, indeed, not bowing the knee of allegiance, or of worship, but of forced unwilling acknowledgment. I scarcely see how we could refuse to admit on the evidence of this passage alone, that the interior parts of the earth are at present the prison of certain souls—the souls of the lost. Bishop Ellicott commenting on this passage says, “The three classes here mentioned are not to be understood with any ethical reference . . . . . but simply and plainly, angels and archangels in Heaven—men upon earth—and the departed under the earth.” He also refers to Theodoret, whose words are, *επουρανιους τας αορατους δυναμεις, επιγειους δε τους επι ζωντας ανθρωπους, και καταχθονιους τους τεθνεωτας. Theodoret in locum.*

Another strong evidence of the connexion of Hades with the earth is this, that when this Adamic earth is destroyed at the close of the millennium, when the new heavens and earth are created, then Hades is destroyed likewise. It is seen cast into the lake of fire. See Rev. xx.

As then the grave is regarded in Scripture as the prison-house of the body, so Hades is regarded as the prison-house of the disembodied soul ; evidencing, consequently, the power of death. In order, therefore, to prove the completeness of His submission to the real power of death, and in fulfilment of His own words respecting His being three days and three nights *in the heart* of the earth, the soul of our blessed Lord was in Hades during the time that His body was in the grave. The text from the Psalms quoted by Peter in the Acts, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades,” unquestionably proves this.†

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\* *καταχθονιοι* is not the same expression as *υποκατω της γης*, which last might be understood of creatures under the surface of the ground. *καταχθονιοι* is evidently equivalent to the Latin “*inferi*.” It is translated by Wycliffe, “*hellis*,” *i.e.* beings in Hades ; and by the Rheimish version, “*infernals*,” following the Vulgate *infernum*.

† “In death the soul doth certainly pass by a real motion from that place

The same truth is likewise taught in His words just quoted respecting His being "in the heart of the earth,"—for, "*heart of the earth*" is not an expression that the Lord would apply *only* to the sepulchre in which His body was laid. If He had intended to refer only to the grave, He would no doubt have made especial reference to His body, saying, "the body of the Son of Man shall be three days in the earth;" whereas, His words are not so limited. "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be

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in which it did inform the body, and is translated to that place and unto that society which God of His mercy or Justice hath allotted to it. And not at present to enquire into the difference and distance of those several habitations (but for method's sake to involve them all as yet under the notion of the infernal parts, or the mansions below) it will appear to have been the general judgment of the Church that the soul of Christ contradistinguished from His body, that better and more noble part of His humanity, His rational and intellectual soul, after a true and proper separation from His flesh, was really and truly carried into those parts below, where the souls of men before departed were detained: and that by such a real translation of His soul, He was truly said to have descended into Hell." (Hades).

"Many have been the interpretations of the opinions of the Fathers made of late; and their differences made to appear so great as if they agreed in nothing which concerns this point: whereas there is nothing which they agree in more than this which I have already affirmed, the real descent of the soul of Christ into the habitation of the souls departed. The persons to whom, and the end for which He descended, they differ in, but as to a local descent into the infernal parts they all agree. Who were in those parts they could not certainly define, but whosoever were there, that Christ by the presence of His soul was with them, they all determined."—*Pearson on Creed*, p. 236.

It should, however, be added, that many of the Fathers by their want of apprehending the perfectness of a believer's justification, and by their mingling another question which is perfectly distinct, (*viz.*, the meaning of 1 Peter iii. 19) with the present question respecting the place of the disembodied soul of Christ during the three days that His body was in the grave, have introduced difficulties which do not properly belong to the subject; and have by many rash and unscriptural statements laid the foundation for the accursed doctrines that have since been promulgated respecting Purgatory—doctrines which, if true, would destroy all that Christ has taught respecting salvation.

That Hades is not the grave is manifest from this, that it is continually spoken of in Scripture as a place of consciousness; which the grave is not.

three days and three nights *in the heart* of the earth" (Matt. xii. 10)—words which cannot be understood so as to exclude reference to His soul with which consciousness and feeling remained.

Whilst then the Scripture plainly declares that the soul of our Lord was in Hades during the time that His body was in the grave, it is equally evident that that part of Hades in which His blessed and holy soul was, was not a place of torment, or of suffering. On the contrary, though it was a place of confinement bearing witness to the power of death, even as the grave is a place of confinement bearing witness to the power of death, yet to the soul of Jesus it was a place of rest, and peace, and communion with God. All the penal suffering that had to be borne for us by our great Substitute terminated at the Cross when he bowed His head and said, "It is finished." Then the cup of suffering that He had to drink for His people, was drained to the dregs; and all after it was peace, rest, and triumph. He soon proved that the gates of Hades had no strength to resist the mighty power of Him, whose soul, for a season, was enclosed within its bars.

Nor is the fact of the soul of our blessed Lord having been three days in Hades, the only reason that we have for affirming that there was one part of Hades separated off from the rest, and allotted to the righteous.

In the parable of our Lord concerning the rich man and Lazarus, it is very evident that Abraham and Lazarus were in a state of blessedness, for it is expressly said that Lazarus was "comforted;" but Abraham and Lazarus are not spoken of as being *in Heaven*. On the contrary, they are spoken of as being separated by a vast and impassable chasm (*χασμα μεγα εστηρικται*) from the place in which the rich man was; and *he* is expressly said to have been *in Hades* in torment. Would the Lord have spoken this parable if there had not been (I do not say now *is*) in Hades a place of blessedness as well as a place of torment? That the expectation of the Old

Testament saints was to go to Hades (Sheohl) is manifest from the words of Jacob when he mourned for the supposed death of Joseph. "All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down to Hades (Sheohl) unto my son mourning." (Gen. xxxvii. 35). And again, "then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Hades" (Sheohl). Gen. xlii. 38.\* Yet in expecting to go into Hades they must have regarded it as a place (not to them of sorrow or torment) but of rest and blessedness: otherwise they could not have died, as they did die, in peace. They regarded it too, as a temporary state in which their souls were to wait only for a season, for "they looked for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." I do not see, therefore, how we can avoid accepting the conclusion, that there was in Hades a division prepared for the souls of the blessed, and another division called "the lowest Hades" (Deut. xxxii. 22,) assigned to the souls of the lost; and that the souls of those who died in the faith of a *promised* Saviour did, until the resurrection and ascension of that Saviour, remain in that division of Hades that was allotted to the souls of the blessed, being there sustained and comforted by the power of God, and proving the words of the Psalmist, "if I make my bed in Hades, behold thou (Jehovah) art there." Ps. cxxxix., 8.†

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\* See also Gen. 44, 29 and 31, where Judah twice repeats to Joseph the words of Jacob—"Ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheohl." (Hades). See also 1 Sam. ii. 6. "He bringeth down to Hades and bringeth up:" and Ps. xxx. 3. "Thou hast brought up my soul from Hades:" and Ps. xlix. 15. "But God will redeem my soul from the power of Hades:" and Ps. lxxxviii. 48. "Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of Hades." When Samuel too was raised and appeared to Saul, he speaks of himself as brought up or caused to arise. "Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?"—and the woman describes what she saw as the appearance of "gods ascending out of the earth." The woman had evidently designed to deceive Saul by causing a spirit to *personate* Samuel, for she had no power over Samuel, or over any of the dead: but instead of the spirit, whom she expected, appearing, God, to her terror and amazement, sent Saul himself.

† Jerome on the third chapter of Ecclesiastes says: "Ante adventum

Since, however, the ascension of our Lord into His glory, it is very evident that the soul of all believers at death depart to be with Him in Paradise: and that Paradise is not Hades (as some of the Fathers thought) is evident from this, that St. Paul speaks of Paradise as the third heavens.\* Compare second and fourth verses of 2 Cor. xii. Nor did St. Paul speak of Hades, when he said, "to depart and be with Christ (*σὺν Χριστῷ*) is far better;" nor when he spoke of absence from the body being presence with the Lord. 2 Cor. v. 8. These texts put it beyond a question that the souls of believers do not now go to Hades, but are with their Lord in Heaven, awaiting the resurrection hour.

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Christi omnia ad Inferos pariter ducebantur, unde et Jacob ad Inferos pariter descensurum se dicit; et Job pius et impios in Inferno queritur retentari: et Evangelium, "Chaos magnum interpositum apud Inferos." In another place he says, "Unde et Abraham, licet in loco refrigerii, tamen apud inferos, cum Lazaro, fuisse scribitur."

\* The notion that Paradise was in Hades, seems to have arisen in part from a misunderstanding of the words of our Lord to the repentant thief, "Verily, I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Our Lord, as being God, one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, had a title to speak of Himself as being in Paradise, even whilst His body was in the grave, and His soul in Hades. When on earth He spake of Himself as the Son of Man, *ὁ ὢν* (the Being One) in heaven. On this ground He might speak of the thief being with Him in Paradise, even during the time His body was in the grave.

There would be no difficulty, therefore, in the statement, even if we follow the usual pointing of the passage and regard "*this day*" as attached to the latter clause. But if we read the passage thus: "Verily I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise," all shadow of difficulty is removed. The thief had asked that the Lord would remember him for blessing when He came in His Kingdom. The Lord replied that He would bless Him *then*—that He would pronounce the authoritative sentence of blessing upon him, even on that present day whilst He was yet hanging on the Cross. "Verily I say unto thee this day" (*i. e.* I wait not till I come in my kingdom, but I say to thee this present day) "thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Which-ever of these interpretations be followed, it is evident that the passage affords no warrant for identifying Paradise and Hades. "Si paradysum accipiamus Regnum æternæ beatitudinis, aptius erit ut ita distinguamus, *Amen dico tibi hodie, atque hic posito hypostigmate, subjiciatur, mecum eris in Paradiso.*" *Zeger. Critici Sacri.*

Nor can there be any doubt that the souls of the saints of the Old Testament are also in the Heavens. The Apostle in speaking of the one family of faith, speaks of it as divided into two parts only; namely, those still militant on earth, and those who are in the Heavens. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and on earth (*εν ουρανους και επι γης*) is named." Eph. iii. 14. He would not thus have written if part of that family had still been *καταχθονιοι* in Hades.\*

Nor is there any reason to doubt that when the Apostle, speaking of the Ascension of the Lord, says, "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive," he did by these words refer to the Lord taking with Him into Heaven, as an evidence of His triumph over Hades, the souls of all His saints who had till that time been there detained; thus proving that He had the keys of Hades. Soon He will equally prove by raising their bodies from the grave, that He has the keys of death likewise—death being more especially connected with the grave, seeing that *there* its power is peculiarly shown in the dissolution and corruption of the body.†

I have already observed that the text in 1 Pet. iii. 19 (on

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\* For proof that "whole family" is the correct translation, see "*Occasional Papers*" No. I. p. 24.

† Bishop Pearson observes; "Of those (of the Fathers) which did believe the name of Hades to belong unto that general place which comprehended all the souls of men (as well those which died in the favour of God as those which departed in their sins) some of them thought that Christ descended to that place of Hades where the souls of the faithful from the death of righteous Abel to the death of Christ were detained; and there dissolving all the power by which they were detained below, translated them into a far more glorious place and estated them in a condition far more happy in the heavens above." Thus Cyril Catech. iv. "He descended into the *subterranean* places that thence he might liberate the righteous." (*κατηλθεν εις τα καταχθονια, ινα κερκειθεν λυτρωσθηται τους δικαιους.*) Augustin also refused to pronounce the opinion absurd. *Si enim non absurdè credi videtur, antiquos etiam Sanctos qui venturi Christi tenuerunt fidem, locis quidem a tormentis impiorum remotissimis, sed apud Inferos, fuisse, donec eos inde sanguis Christi ad ea loca descensus erueret, &c. De Civ. Dei. l. 20, c. 15.*

the interpretation of which I will not at present enter) has no reference to the question of Hades being the place where the soul of our blessed Lord was, during the time that His body was in the grave. No one who understands the completeness of His sacrificial work upon the Cross, will for a moment believe that His soul endured any suffering afterward; or that Hades could, either in His case, or in the case of any of His ransomed saints, be any other than a place of blessedness. To say, on any pretext whatsoever, that anything except blessedness could by any possibility pertain to the justified after death, is to overthrow all that Scripture teaches us respecting Christ's salvation.

My present object, however, in touching on this subject is not to discuss it in all its many branches, but merely to show that as we have to connect locality with Heaven, so we have to connect locality with Hades, and that it is *καταχθονιον*—*subterranean*. And seeing that Hades, even in its relation to Christ and to His people, was, like the grave, a witness of the temporary triumph of death; and that another part of Hades was, and still is, a place of penal suffering to the lost, I maintain that no such place existed when the earth was at first created in its paradisiacal state of perfectness, and when every thing that God had made was pronounced "very good." And finding that geological theories omit all reference to the formation of Hades, and to all the consequences that must have flowed therefrom, I do, on this ground alone, decline to receive conclusions which are based upon an induction of facts so manifestly imperfect.

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