

**NO. I, II. THE TRUTH OF THE
BIBLE UPHELD;
OR, TRUTH V. SCIENCE.
'MY VISIT TO THE SUN'**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649375257

No. I, II. The truth of the Bible upheld; or, Truth v. Science. 'My Visit To The Sun' by Lawrence S. Benson

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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LAWRENCE S. BENSON

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'MY VISIT TO THE SUN'**

No. 1.

THE
Truth of the Bible upheld ;
OR,
TRUTH *v.* SCIENCE.

"MY VISIT TO THE SUN."

Dedicated

TO THE SAVANS OF ENGLAND,

BY LAWRENCE S. BENSON,

Of South Carolina,

MEMBER OF PHI KAPPA SOCIETY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA; AND HONORARY MEMBER OF
"THE BROTHERS" SOCIETY, VALE COLLEGE.

"Be just and fear not ;
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's." SHAKESPEARE.



LONDON:
SAUNDERS, OTLEY, AND CO.,
66, BROOK STREET, W.

1864.

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TO MY READERS.

THE *plan* of this work is allegorical, but the *design* is real. Philosophers have discarded the teachings of the Bible as untrustworthy; and they have endeavoured, by what they term *observing the operations of nature*, to interpret the laws of nature. This work is to prove wherein those philosophers err, and to point the path to truth. Philosophers have tried to trace in the grand machinery of nature some universal power, and never-failing regulator for all its complicated movements. They regard Heat as the origin of motion and the vitality of force: this work is to show that Light, the attribute of Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Beneficence, and Omniscience, animates the universe; and which is clearly implied in Genesis, i. chapter, 2, 3, 4 verses.

MY VISIT TO THE SUN.

SUFFICIENT time having elapsed, since my return from the most remarkable voyage of either ancient or modern times, for my mind to become quiet and calm, and my thoughts to arrange themselves in their proper order, I will essay to connect the various notes taken in my travels, and give, in a coherent whole, the observations and discoveries it has been my privilege to make. I know "my commentaries" will be placed by some among fictitious effusions; some will be interested from their novelties; some will be startled from the boldness of their expositions; some will be chagrined from the discoveries, which will explode their favourite theories; some will be delighted from the realization of their most dream-like speculations; some will be glad for the opportunity which has enabled me to substantiate truths which bias and prejudice and ignorance have doubted; some will be able to learn from my observations and discoveries lessons of sterling wisdom, and gather pearls, gems, and jewels of erudition; some will see the purpose and object of my voyage—to place beyond cavil and dispute things which have been ruminated over by the wise; which

have interested the minds of the learned ; which have been believed by the good and holy ; which have inspired some of the most gifted poets ; which have given enchantment to the airy-nothings and fairy visions of the dreamer ; which have given food to the hungry mind of the thoughtful ; which have puzzled the clearest intellects, and have made the common sense of the many superior to the genius of the few.

Had I neglected to note down each event at the time and place of occurrence, I would not now be able to give a true and faithful account, because so new, startling, and unexpected were the numerous acts of the most wonderful spectacle, never before witnessed by a terrestrial, or even lunar being, that even now " a mass of many images crowd like waves upon me," that I am compelled to resort to the pages of my journal to give the precedent of time, and the most important circumstances connected with the various incidents of my voyage to, and travels over, the sun.

The philosopher—that lover of truth and wisdom—will be so much occupied with the *result* of my expedition, that it will be of secondary importance to acquaint him of the means by which I succeeded in reaching the sun ; and he will know that mechanical ingenuity is so unbounded, that what seems impossible and marvellous to some, is natural and ordinary to others. The inquisitive—that idler upon the

thoroughfares of knowledge—is so insatiate in his demands for the reasons, and whys, and wherefores, that if I tell him by what means I was conveyed to the end of my journey, he will be anxious to know how many days it took me?—how many persons I met on the way? and a myriad of other questions, which, being told, would thus prevent me from devoting the little time I have to my narrative; and which not being told he can turn his curiosity to account, and learn from my reticence my intention to reveal nothing more than these pages unfold.

Accustomed as I have been to see from *reflected* light only, I felt strangely when I saw everything around me shining with a light of its own, when the natural condition of things was so simple, so self-explanatory, and so clear; and used as I have been from my earliest infancy to have the strong wines of truth diluted for me, that when I stood in the naked simplicity of everything around me, I felt awed and confused, as when on earth some wonderful phenomena have raised emotions of grandeur and sublimity. As our intensest feelings are not of long duration, so I became gradually conscious of the change I had undergone in passing from the sphere which receives its light by reflection to the origin and source of light. My faculties, which seem before only adapted to an earthly state, became, as it were, newly developed, and suitable for that essentially luminous region, and I discovered that what seemed to me

newly-created powers, were only dormant and unexercised before ; since what light, and knowledge, and habits, which called into existence the faculties of my mind, my corporeal senses, and the powers of my body, were so reflected in its nature, so diluted in its strength, and so artificial in their character, that I felt like a new being in the full display and rational exercise of the faculties of my mind, of my corporeal senses, and of the powers of my body. From the pages of my journal I can give the various incidents of my travels : the composition, character, and quality of the soil of the sun ; describe the most paradisiacal scenery, which no terrestrial being has ever beheld ; depict the character, condition, and pursuits of the people I met ; relate my conversations with them, suggestive of many improvements to my earthly fellow-beings ; showing the high state of knowledge among the inhabitants of the sun, in contrast with the process of education resorted to by my earthly fellow-beings in training their minds, which, after what I have seen, is nothing more than straining the reason to adapt itself to an artificial condition necessitated by the reflected nature of light ; indeed so marvellous and wonderful were what I saw and heard, that I can fill volumes with the grandest conceptions of truths, the most ingenious mechanical contrivances, and the most exceedingly interesting manipulations only ordinary and commonplace to the people of the sun. I have no doubt my readers will be better pleased with