

**NATURE AND MAN BEFORE AND
AFTER THE DELUGE: BEING A
BRIEF DEFENCE OF THE LITERAL
READING OF THE FIRST TEN
CHAPTERS OF GENESIS**

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Nature and Man Before and After the Deluge: Being a Brief Defence of the Literal Reading of the first ten chapters of genesis by P. R.

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NATURE AND MAN

BEFORE AND AFTER

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THE FIRST TEN CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

BY

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NATURE AND MAN.

THE keen, philosophic infidel, is not alone in his disbelief of the BEGINNING OF THINGS, as divinely revealed in the first chapters of Genesis, and the succeeding history of those events which have made memorable the course and end of the earliest phase of the world, and which inaugurated, amid a terrible judgment, a new era of Time. We regret to say that men, professing faith in the inspired canon, themselves deny the literal reception of the plainest narrative of the Creation, of the Fall of Man, and the subsequent destruction of the whole human race—with the exception of eight persons saved in the ark—by a Universal Deluge.

Unfortunately for the moral and religious welfare of society, a mischievous disposition to question the Divine authenticity of the Jewish Scriptures, and indeed of all Revelation as given in the Old and New Testaments, is daily becoming more manifest, bold, and active. Two classes of men form the phalanx of skepticism: the first have the advantages of education, are more or less acquainted with the weak side of human nature,—its self-love

and impatience of control ; have full faith in Phrenology and Mesmerism ; and study the structure of the earth for the sole purpose of refuting the Mosaic account of creation ; and, ignoring the *study* of the Scriptures—which they do not entirely reject—as the only fountain of truth, are, nevertheless, strange to say, among the most superstitious of mankind. The second class is the antipode of the first-named ;* composed of persons possessed of a vicious tact and cunning, either entirely unlearned and ignorant, or with barely a superficial knowledge of any thing ; and includes the vulgar, depraved, and impious,—men absolutely free from the thralldom of superstition, and altogether destitute of reverence for a Supreme Being. It is this conclave of pride and ignorance who arraign the Holy Scriptures at the bar of human reason and human depravity, in the character of a criminal ;—as a pernicious disseminator of doctrines and commands, conflicting with the native freedom of man to will and to do his pleasure ; and a record of historic facts and solemn declarations, which, being admitted, make him an accountable creature, passing over the stage of action to the tribunal of award—which is, positively or indirectly, questioned and denied.

Passing over the account of Creation, in the consecutive order in which it is given in the first chapter of Genesis,—the particular consideration of which is not deemed essential to the argument, we

* The apostles and converts to modern spiritualism.

propose to speak, first, of the perfected world of nature at THE BEGINNING; and respectfully request the company of the reader in a survey, and an attempt to depict, with some minuteness, the celestial beauty and beneficent harmony which prevailed throughout the earth, and the exalted beatitude radiating from all sensitive life. The Scriptures affirm many wonders, both of Creation and Providence, which we are bound to receive by a simple act of faith, or belief in what is revealed; remembering that what is withheld in the Book of God is either beyond finite comprehension, on the one hand, or, on the other, within the grasp only of an ardent, humble mind, searching after truth,—not from a vain curiosity, but from an admiration of the works of creation, and a sincere desire to honor and magnify the mighty and glorious Architect. With whom, think you, the Creator took counsel, “when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth?” And if the highest rank and the loftiest intellect among the Angelic hierarchy was incapable of the reception of infinite knowledge, and could only wonder and admire, and “shout aloud for joy;” how much less shall fallen man, wrecked, depraved, obscured in his physical, moral, and intellectual being, unveil the occult germ of creation, and comprehend the action of that Word “which spake, and it was done—which commanded, and it stood fast!”

The question has recently been asked, in the

blindness of rationalism, and the pride of finite reason, "*Were there no clouds and no rainbow before the flood?*" and the reply which it calls for, involves the truth or falsity of every statement made in the first ten chapters of Genesis, and by a logical sequence, the integrity of the entire Scriptures. With this brief introduction, we assume the negative, and proceed to offer some thoughts in proof of, first, what is believed to have been not only possible, but in a high degree probable, that, anterior to the Universal Deluge,

IT RAINED NOT UPON THE EARTH.

It is admitted that clouds of the lightest texture: fleecy, and barely opaque, did freely course the upper air, a relief and ornament to the otherwise monotonous appearance of the firmament, but never collecting in large masses, either by the force of winds or mutual attraction, because of their great rarity, and the purity and elasticity of the medium in which they floated; and, as a natural deduction, never acquiring sufficient density to precipitate themselves in rain-storms. These clouds were scattered sparsely, above the lower earth, and received very trifling accessions to their volume by evaporation from beneath, which, in a perfectly equable clime, undisturbed by extremes of heat and cold, would be very limited indeed; and when become too dense from this cause, which at times would

occur, they were attracted by the *primeval* mountains, upon whose summits they deposited their superabundant moisture.

In the second chapter of Genesis we read, "for the LORD GOD had not *caused* it to rain upon the earth:" and in immediate connection, "But there *went up a mist* from the earth, and *watered the whole face of the ground.*" The reader will please note, that we *italicize* certain words in our quotations from the Sacred record, to draw and fix his attention, because these and like passages will be taken up or referred to again, as we proceed in the elucidation of the subject.

In looking back toward the past, through the long vista of ages,—obscured to human perception by its remoteness,—for a solution of the how and the when,—the period and the manner, of the Beginning of Things, we require a data, and a ground whereon reason may take her stand, and survey, as from an elevation, the otherwise incomprehensible scene. That data and that stand-point is the Jewish Scriptures. There is no other volume in the world which reveals to man the true GOD, the creation of the heavens and the earth, and his own quickening,—"*fearfully and wonderfully made,*"—whereby the clod of the valley, touched by the breath of the DIVINE SPIRIT, was transmuted into "*a living soul.*"

And it was right and proper that God, in endowing a finite, accountable creature such as man, with an intelligent and moral nature, whose ever-