

**THE VEIL WITHDRAWN, AN  
ESSAY ON THE  
FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD  
CHAPTERS OF GENESIS**

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The veil withdrawn, an essay on the first, second and third chapters of Genesis by M. E. Stone

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**M. E. STONE**

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THE  
VEIL WITHDRAWN ;

AN ESSAY

ON THE

FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD CHAPTERS  
OF GENESIS.

BY M. E. STONE.

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"But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon  
their heart."—2 Cor. iii. 15.

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## THE VEIL WITHDRAWN.

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WHAT apology shall I make to the public for thus placing my own personal views of this portion of Holy Writ before them? Be it understood that I have no desire to force any of my readers to adopt them; but, having read so many controversies and speculations respecting the literal interpretation of the Mosaic cosmogony, and the apparent contradiction it offers to the science of geology, I am tempted to cast my own opinions into the scale with those of others, who must feel, if they do not say, that many passages of the Old Testament, as well as the New, contain a twofold meaning, the literal language being used to convey and clothe some beautiful spiritual sense; and I sincerely hope that by so doing, God helping me, I may succeed in throwing some light upon what at present appears to be a most difficult question to solve. If it is not given me to accomplish this aim, I will spare myself the conviction of having done

any harm to the cause of religion, by carefully guarding against confusing the reader, or bringing forward any theory which I am unable to corroborate and confirm by texts extracted from the Bible. It is to this scriptural corroboration that I look for support. Resolved to base every observation strictly upon it, I am content to leave the success or failure of this little volume in the hands of an all-wise Power.

Not having, as yet, read any of the Colenso doctrines relating to the Pentateuch, I do not either, knowingly, refute or uphold them in these pages; nor am I anxious to do either one or the other, my chief aim being only to show how the language of the chapters I have taken in hand may be made to support scientific facts "such as have been made known during the last few years," or, if not actually supporting them, be rendered thoroughly neutral by being deprived of every antagonistic quality and sense whatever.

Geological discoveries have rendered it necessary, absolutely necessary, for the welfare of those who may come after us as well as ourselves, that we no longer remain easily contented with the



mere literal sense of the Mosaic cosmogony, but that we rouse ourselves out of the lethargy we have fallen into, and strive for the discovery of its hidden meaning.

Those who make Scripture their study know full well how futile it is to confine themselves to only one, and that a natural and literal interpretation of the doctrines and records of the Old Testament writers. There remain but very few passages of Scripture now that have not been reviewed in various ways; and what glorious truths, "by this method of studying them," have been revealed! There are some portions, however, which have been left uninterpreted—passed over, it would seem, by our bishops and pastors, for obvious reasons; put by for a time, because their hour was not yet come.

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform."

People, hitherto, have been simply contented with the literal sense of the Mosaic records, all the while nothing in the appearance of creation presented itself in opposition, or cast a doubt upon it, we have been satisfied, and thus have done the

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writer and author of the Pentateuch great injustice; we have acknowledged him to be an inspired writer without awarding his works a due share of spiritual interpretation. But the time has at length arrived for us reason-endowed beings to search the Mosaic testimony as well as other portions of Scripture, not remaining content and satisfied with its plain language, but earnestly setting ourselves to the task of discovering, beneath these apparently plain records, that in their straightforward simplicity seem more relating to terrestrial than celestial things—beneath this earthly veil a string of spiritual truths, woven and interwoven with expressions relating to natural circumstances and things, so delicately and subtly as almost to have become, in the usual course of reading, inseparable from them.

The time has at length come, I say, for man to be no longer content with this state of things—this knowing in part the contents of the Bible. Before he can advance another step in the sciences of geology, cosmogony, anthropology, and many other sciences, the cloud of uncertainty hanging over the literal form of the Mosaic testimony

must be cleared away ; he must seek in Scripture reading to divest it of that natural form, and see in it a spiritual rather than an earthly signification, not *entirely* passing over the plain sense, or treating it as altogether unworthy of our notice, but considering it as we should the outward charms of a beautiful and accomplished person.

Exterior beauty of form and figure are the very first things to enlist our sympathies in favour of a new acquaintance. After a little while spent in their company, " unless in the meantime we discover in their dispositions sterling worth and goodness, equal to or surpassing the charms of their person," the effect of this outward loveliness is felt no longer, the spell is broken, and we turn, " if not with disgust," with utter indifference, from so much empty beauty. But if, on the other hand, loveliness of person be united to a truly noble, beautiful mind, we may continue in that presence every day in the year, and feel, at the end of a long acquaintance, more real actual sympathy and friendship towards the object of our admiration, than mere outward beauty alone could have called forth. It is thus with the language