

losopher who unreservedly makes known the most legitimate deductions from facts. Such, in truth, is the present condition of things throughout Christendom, the millions being left in the same darkness respecting the antiquity of the globe, and the successive races of animals and plants which inhabited it before the creation of man, as they were in the middle ages; or, rather, each new generation being allowed to grow up with, or derive from Genesis, ideas directly hostile to the conclusions universally received by all who have studied the earth's autobiography. Not merely the multitude, but many of those who are called learned, still continue, while beholding with delight the external beauty of the rocks and mountains, to gaze on them as Virgil's hero admired his shield of divine workmanship, without dreaming of its historical import:—

“Dona parentis
Miratur, rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet.”

The extent to which, in Protestant countries, and where there is a free press, opinions universally entertained by the higher classes, may circulate among them in print and may yet remain a sealed book to the million as completely as if they were still in sacerdotal keeping, is such as no one antecedently to experience would have believed possible. The discoveries alluded to are by no means confined to the domain of physical science. I may cite as one remarkable example the detection of the spurious nature of the celebrated verse in the First Epistle of John, chap. v. verse 7, commonly called “the Three Heavenly Witnesses.” Luther, in the last edition which he published of the Bible, had expunged this passage as spurious; but, shortly after his death, it was restored by his followers, in deference to popular prepossessions and Trinitarian opinions. Erasmus omitted it in his editions of the New Testament in the years 1516 and 1519; and after it had been excluded by several other eminent critics, Sir Isaac Newton wrote his celebrated dissertation on the subject between the years 1690 and 1700, strengthening the arguments previously adduced against the genuineness of the verse. Finally, Porson published, in 1788 and 1790, his famous letters, by which the question was