

plants upon it. If in these passages they have the latter meaning, then they simply teach that the deluge destroyed the natural life of organic beings. If they have the former meaning, then the inquiry arises, What are we to understand by the destruction here described? It may mean annihilation, or it may imply ruin in some respects. That annihilation did not result from the deluge is evident from the case of men, who suffered only temporal death, and even this was not universal; and we know, also, that the matter of the earth did not perish. We must resort, therefore, to the sacred history to learn how far the destruction extended. That history seems very plain. There was a rain of forty days, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up; that is, as Professor Stuart happily expresses it, "The ocean overflowed while the rain descended in vast quantities." The waters gradually rose over the dry land, and after a hundred and fifty days, began to subside, and at the end of a year and a few days they were gone. Such an overflowing could not take place without producing the almost entire destruction of organic life, and making extensive havoc with the soil, especially as a wind assisted in driving these waters from the land. But there is nothing in the narrative that would lead us to suppose either a comminution or dissolution of the earth, or the elevation of the ocean's bed. The same land which was overflowed is described as again emerging. Indeed, a part of the rivers proceeding out of the garden of Eden are the same as those now existing on the globe. We must then admit that our present continents, (certainly the Asiatic,) are the same as the antediluvian, or deny that the account of Eden, in Genesis, is a part of the Bible. The latter alternative is preferred by Penn and Fairholme. Surely such men ought to be cautious how they censure geologists for modifying the meaning of some verses in Genesis, when they thus, without any evidence of its spuriousness, unceremoniously erase so important a passage.

I might add to all this that the facts of geology forbid the idea that our present continents formed the bed of the ocean at so recent a date as that of Noah's deluge, and that the supposition that all organic remains were deposited during the two thousand years between the six days' work and the deluge is totally irreconcilable with all correct philosophy. Why, during the time when the fossiliferous rocks were in a course