

SOLUTION OF THE WORLD-PROBLEMS

which round themselves into planets; a fourth has become a vast sun whose planets have formed a secondary retinue of moons, and so on. And between them are floating about in space myriads of smaller bodies, meteorites, or shooting-stars, which cross and recross the paths of the planets apparently like lawless vagabonds, and of which a great number fall onto the planets every day. Thus there is a continuous but slow change in the velocities and the orbits of the revolving spheres. The frozen moons fall onto the planets, the planets onto their suns. Two distant suns, perhaps already stark and cold, rush together with inconceivable force and melt away into nebulous clouds. And such prodigious heat is generated by the collision that the nebula is once more raised to incandescence, and the old drama begins again. Yet in this "perpetual motion" the infinite substance of the universe, the sum total of its matter and energy, remains eternally unchanged, and we have an eternal repetition in infinite time of the periodic dance of the worlds, the metamorphosis of the cosmos that ever returns to its starting-point. Over all rules the law of substance.

II.—PROGRESS OF GEOLOGY

The earth and its origin were much later than the heavens in becoming the object of scientific investigation. The numerous ancient and modern cosmogonies do, indeed, profess to give us as good an insight into the origin of the earth as into that of the heavens; but the mythological raiment, in which all alike are clothed, betrays their origin in poetic fancy. Among the countless legends of creation which we find in the history of religions and of thought there is one that soon took