

struction is stated to have been effected. *Three* only are mentioned. *All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.\**

1. *All the fountains of the great deep were broken up.* The radical idea of the word here rendered *broken up* is that of division or disruption, therefore the meaning is that those fountains by which the waters of the great abyss issued ordinarily upon the earth to water it by numerous streams and rivers, were so cleft, disrupted, and broken up, as to form vast chasms vomiting up the fluid contents of the womb of the earth, and sending forth torrents of incalculable force and volume. The vestiges of such clefts in the earth's crust are still to be traced in many places. Malte Brun, in his *Geography*, observes, with respect to valleys—"Those which are found between high mountains are commonly narrow and long, as if they had originally been only fissures† dividing their respective chains, or for the passage of *extensive torrents*. The angles of their direction sometimes exhibit a singular symmetry; we see in the Pyrenees, says M. Raymond, some valleys whose salient and re-entrant angles so perfectly correspond, that if the force that separated them were to act in a contrary direction, and bring their sides together again, they would unite so exactly, that even the fissure would not be perceived."‡

2. *The windows of heaven were opened*—is stated by Moses to be the *second* cause by which the deluge was effected. The word§ which, in our translation of the Bible, is here and in other places rendered *windows*, does not mean

\* Gen. vii. 11.

† בִּקְעָה is Hebrew for a *valley*, and נִבְקַע is the verb used to express the disruption of the fountains of the great abyss.

‡ System of Geography, I. i. 168. E. Tr.

§ אֵיבֹת.