

again together. And we learn from Scripture, that the same irresistible agent will be employed for the destruction of the present earth and its atmosphere or heavens, which are *reserved unto fire, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.** As the opening of the windows of the heavens seems the consequence of the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep, it is therefore mentioned in the *second* place.

3. The *third* instrument of Divine Power to produce the deluge was *rain. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.†* It is a common form of expression,—It rains as if heaven and earth would come together; and this probably was the character of the rain that now fell for forty *Nycthemera*, or entire days of twenty-four hours; a circumstance that does not require further explanation.

By the united operation of these three mighty agents, guided by the Almighty hand of the Deity, *whose way is in the sea, and whose path is in the great waters, and whose footsteps are not known,‡* the waters kept gradually rising and prevailing more and more, till they overtopped all the high mountains§ that were under the whole heavens fifteen cubits,|| by which the Divine decree to *destroy* the earth with *all* its inhabitants, both rational and irrational, except those in the ark, was fully executed. With respect to the earth itself, when we consider the violent action of the ascending and descending waters, and of the firmament rushing downwards; the disruptions, dislocations, intro-

* 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10.

† Gen. vii. 12.

‡ Ps. lxxvii. 19.

§ Gen. vii. 19. In our translation, הָרִים in this verse is rendered *hills*, and in the 20th *mountains*.

|| Ibid. 20.