

we have any documentary knowledge. Also, the discovery of what was long called the New World, three centuries and a half ago, brought to the view of Europeans not only traditional notices as possessed by the nations, at that time very numerous, and many of them comprising a large population, of North and South America; but, still further, among the Mexicans and Peruvians, historical and emblematical pictures, which preserve, with more exactitude than could have been expected, the general event itself, and various particulars reflecting as it were an image, distorted indeed but well capable of being recognised, of the narrative which we possess, in its native simplicity, in the book of Genesis. Even the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, so recently brought to the knowledge of Europeans, are not destitute of their tradition, bearing its measure of testimony to the universal impression.* That a statement thus attested by the consent of mankind, did not rest upon a foundation of truth, it would be the extravagance of absurd skepticism to doubt.

Yet it is remarkable that learned writers have not perceived the absence of any logical connexion between the universality of historical tradition, and a geographical universality of the deluge itself. Immense pains have been taken, and very laudably, to collect the traditions of tribes and nations deposing to the fact of an overwhelming deluge in the days of their remotest ancestors; and it has been hence concluded, since those traditions existed in every quarter of the globe, that the deluge had belonged to every region. But it seems to have been for-

* The evidences of these traditions are detailed in the late Mr. Jacob Bryant's *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, several works of the Rev. G. Stanley Faber, and the recently published *Doctrine of the Deluge*, by the Rev. L. Vernon Harcourt. It may be regretted that these estimable authors have not been guarded against the too common error of weakening an argument by an excess of amplification.