

*surface, for most glorious purposes ; in which a newly formed creature should be the object of those manifestations of the authority and grace of the Most High, which shall to eternity show forth his perfections above all other methods of their display.*

This portion of the earth I conceive to have been a large part of Asia, lying between the Caucasian ridge, the Caspian Sea, and Tartary, on the north, the Persian and Indian seas on the south, and the high mountain ridges which run, at considerable distances, on the eastern and the western flank. I venture to think that man, as first created, and for many ages afterwards, did not extend his race beyond these limits ; and therefore had no connexion with the extreme east, the Indian and Pacific clusters of islands, Africa, Europe, and America ; in which regions we have ocular demonstration that animal and vegetable creatures had existed, to a vast amount, uninterruptedly, through periods past, of indescribable duration.

This region was first, by atmospheric and geological causes of previous operation under the will of the Almighty, brought into a condition of superficial ruin, or some kind of general disorder. With reverence I propose the supposition, that this state was produced by the subsidence of the region, of which the immediate cause might be the same that we know has often operated to work a similar effect in various districts upon the earth's surface ; namely that which is probably the cause of earthquakes, a vast movement of the igneous fluid mass below. Extreme darkness has been often known to accompany such phenomena. This is the meaning of the two words rendered "without form and void." Those words in the Hebrew Bible are elsewhere used to describe ruined cities, wild wastes of desert-land, and figuratively any thing that is *empty, unsubstantial, or useless.*

The sacred record presents to us the district describ-