

and shell animals cannot live in salt water, and others not in fresh. The difficulty also was mentioned, if we suppose that the resting place of the ark was the Mount Ararat pointed out by tradition, of conceiving how the eight human persons and their accompanying animals could descend adown the precipitous cliffs; a difficulty which amounts to an impossibility, unless we call in the aid of divine power operating in the way of miracle.

Another circumstance was adduced as proving that the Deluge of Noah was not absolutely universal: the existence of trees, in the equatorial regions of Africa and of South America, which, by the known method of ascertaining the age of exogenous trees, are shown to be of an antiquity which goes farther back than to the date of the Deluge. What was said in that lecture, and will be advanced in the Note on this subject,\* renders it needless to add any more.

I may also remind my auditors that the opinion which ascribes to the Deluge, the vast amount and variety of animal and vegetable remains found in all parts of the earth, is flagrantly inconsistent with a correct attention to the circumstances in which they occur.

From any of these considerations, the probability of a universal contemporaneous flood is, to say the least, rendered very small: but, their united force appears to me decisive of the negative to this question.

I cannot doubt but that some alarm and anxiety may be produced in the minds of many, by the hearing of these statements. They will be thought to be in direct contradiction to the sacred narrative; and we cannot justify to ourselves any twisting and wresting of that narrative in order to bring it into an apparent accordance with the doctrines of human philosophy. But let my

\* See Supplementary Note, C.