

friends dismiss their fears. The Author of nature and the Author of revelation is the same. He cannot be at variance with himself. The book of his works and the book of his word cannot be contradictory. On the one hand, we find certain appearances in the kingdoms of nature, which stand upon various and independent grounds of sensible proof; and, on the other hand, are declarations of Scripture which seem to be irreconcilable with those appearances, which are indeed ascertained facts. But we are sure that Truth is immutable; and that one truth can never contradict another. Different parts of its vast empire may and do lie far asunder, and the intermediate portions may be covered with more or less of obscurity; but they are under the same sceptre, and it is of itself and antecedently certain that the facts of nature and the laws that govern them are in perfect unison with every other part of the will of Him that made them. There are declarations of Scripture which seem thus to oppose facts, of which we have the same kind of sensible evidence that we have of the letters and words of the sacred volume; and which we understand by the same intellectual faculties by which we apprehend the sense of that volume. Now those appearances,—facts I must call them,—have been scrutinized with the utmost jealousy and rigour: and they stand impregnable; their evidence is made brighter by every assault. We must then turn to the other side of our research; we must admit the probability that we have not rightly interpreted those portions of Scripture. We must retrace our steps. Let us resort to this renewed examination in the great instance before us.

I. The expressions of universality, with regard to the extent of the deluge, are these. “The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered.”