

have fixed upon that mountain as the resting-place of the ark is not strange, considering that there is no mountain in all Asia so striking to behold.

But upon the whole, the probability is strong that some other elevation, less lofty and steep, was the radiating point of the postdiluvian races of man and other animals. The fact of Noah's sending forth a dove from the ark, which came back in the evening with an olive leaf in her mouth, strengthens the preceding view. For neither upon the present Ararat, nor around it, does the olive grow, because it is too cold. Indeed, all its upper part is covered with perpetual ice. But if the Ararat of Scripture lay nearer the tropics, the olive might find upon it a congenial spot. A distinguished botanist adduced the fact about the olive as evidence against the Bible. But how easily refuted, if the theory now under examination be true!

In favour of this supposition, I might have urged another consideration, which, in my mind, has no little weight. It is impossible that the waters of the deluge should have covered the earth for a year, without destroying nearly all the existing vegetation. Yet nothing is said of the preservation of seeds in the ark; and if they had been preserved, certainly nothing but miraculous power, and that of the most remarkable kind, could have scattered them through the remotest continents and islands, so as to form distinct botanical districts, such as have been described. The olive, from which a leaf was plucked by the dove sent out of the ark, was probably situated upon elevated ground, and where it remained but a short time beneath the waters, and therefore did not lose its vitality.

It is probable that the theory which makes the deluge limited in extent will meet with more favour than any other, with candid and intelligent men, to meet the suggested difficulties of the case. But some, who are unwilling to abandon the idea of the universality of the deluge, avoid these difficulties by supposing a new creation to have taken place at that epoch. That such a new creation occurred at the commencement of several geological periods can hardly admit a doubt. And a presumption is hence derived in favour of a similar act at the beginning of the postdiluvian period, preceded as it was, like the other geological periods, by an almost entire destruction of organic life.