

Augustine, Luther, Koppe, and others. Luther says, in his lively way, 'God will make, not the earth only, but the heavens also, much more beautiful than they are at present. At present, we see the world in its working clothes; but, hereafter, it will be arrayed in its Easter and Whitsuntide robes.'

"I cannot but feel astonishment," says Dr. John Pye Smith, "that any serious and intelligent man should have his mind fettered with the common, I might call it the vulgar, notion of a proper destruction of the earth; and some seem to extend the notion to the whole solar system, and even the entire material universe; applying the idea of an extinction of being, a reducing to nothingness. This notion has, indeed, been often used to aid impassioned description in sermons and poetry; and thus it has gained so strong a hold upon the feelings of many pious persons, that they have made it an article of their faith. But I confess myself unable to find any evidence for it in nature, reason, or Scripture. We can discover nothing like destruction in the matter of the universe as subjected to our senses. Masses are disintegrated, forms are changed, compounds are decomposed; but not an atom is annihilated. Neither have we the shadow of reason to assert that mind, the seat of intelligence, ever was, or ever will be, in a single instance, destroyed. The declaration in Scripture, "that the heavens and the earth shall flee away, and no more place be found for them," is, undoubtedly figurative, and denotes the most momentous changes in the scenes of the divine moral government. If it be the purpose of God that the earth shall be subjected to a total conflagration, we perfectly well know that the instruments of such an event lie close at hand, and wait only the divine volition to burst out in a moment. But that would not be a destruction; it would be a mere change of form, and, no doubt, would be subservient to the most glorious results. 'We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'"—*Lectures on Geology and Revelation*, p. 161, (4th London edition.)

Says Dr. Griffin, one of the ablest of the American divines, "A question here arises, whether the new heavens and new earth will be created out of the ruins of the old; that is, whether the old will be renovated and restored in a more glorious form, or whether the old will be annihilated, and the new made out of nothing. The idea of the annihilation of