

in Tahiti about the close of the last, tribes restricted to one tract of country, when seized by the madness of conquest, have narrowly escaped extermination. We know that in some instances better have been destroyed by worse races,—that the more refined have at times yielded to the more barbarous,—yielded so entirely, that all that survived of vast populations and a comparatively high civilization have been broken temples and great burial mounds locked up in the solitudes of deep forests ; and further, that whole peoples, exhausted by their vices, have sunk into such a state of depression and decline, that, unable any longer to supply the inevitable waste of nature, they have dropt into extinction. And such may have been the condition of the human race during that period of portentous evil and violence which preceded the Deluge. We know that the good came at length to be restricted to a single family ; and even the evil, instead of being numbered, as now, by hundreds of millions, may have been comprised in a few thousands, or at most a few hundred thousands, that were becoming fewer every year, from the indulgence of fierce and evil passions, in a time of outrage and violence. The Creator of the race may have dealt with it on this occasion of judgment, as a florist does with some decaying plant, which he cuts down to the ground in order to secure a fresh shoot from the root. At all events, the *proof* of an antediluvian population at once enormously great and very largely spread must rest with those who hold with Dr Kitto, that its numbers and extent were such as to militate against the probability of a deluge merely partial ; and any such proof we may, with the good old Bishop of Worcester, well “despair of ever seeing” produced. Even admitting, however, for the argument’s sake, that the inhabitants of the Old World may have been as numerous as those of China are now,—a number estimated by the recent authorities at more than three hundred and fifty millions,—and