

the geologists would have to describe it as beyond comparison the most remarkable oscillation of level which had taken place within the historic period, they would certainly regard it as no more miraculous than the great earthquake of Lisbon, or than that exhibition of the volcanic forces which elevated the mountain of Jorullo in a single night sixteen hundred feet over the plain. And why have recourse, in speculating on the real event of four thousand years ago, to supposititious miracle, if an event of apparently the same kind would not be regarded as miraculous now? May we not in this matter take our stand beside the poet, who, when recognising a Providence in the great Calabrian earthquake, and in the overwhelming wave by which it was accompanied, pertinently inquired of the sceptics,

“ Has not God
Still wrought by means since first he made the world?
*And did He not of old employ his means
To drown it? What is His creation less
Than a capacious reservoir of means,
Formed for His use, and ready at His will?*”

The revelation to Noah, which warned him of a coming Flood, and taught him how to prepare for it, was evidently miraculous: the Flood itself may have been purely providential. But on this part of the subject I need not dwell. I have accomplished my purpose if I have shown, as was attempted of old by divines such as Stillingfleet and Poole, that there “seems to be no reason why the Deluge should be extended beyond the occasion of it, which was the corruption of man,” but, on the contrary, much reason against it; and that, on the other hand, a Flood restricted and partial, and yet sufficient to destroy the race in an early age, while still congregating in their original centre, cannot be regarded as by any means an incredible event. The incredibility lies in the mere human glosses and misinterpretations in which its history has been enveloped. Divested of these, and viewed