

Can we place ourselves in view of the scenes which then existed? Creation is in its incipient stages. The long line of events, which is to end in the installation of man in possession of the earth, lies before us. Methods and plans are now to be adopted whose carrying out is to be extended into the distant future, and which shall comprehend and provide for the endless variety of exigencies which are to grow out of the gradual development of the destined order of things. How inadequate would be a human intelligence to an occasion like this! But to the mind of the Infinite Intelligence the whole creation already existed, and not a feature of the original plan has been abandoned in the long process of its actualization.

But whence the state of things which we are proposing to picture? Was this the "beginning?" In truth, we are forced to admit that science authorizes us to predicate a molten condition of the globe as the consequent of a vaporous one. What are the states of matter but the product of temperature and pressure? We style the liquid the natural state of water, because that is its ordinary condition under our own eyes. But where the mean temperature is below the freezing-point, the solid is its ordinary state; and where the mean temperature rises above the boiling-point, the gaseous is its ordinary state. To men who exist (if such there are) where the climatic temperature never rises to the thawing-point, water is known only as ice; it is quarried as a rock; it may be built into temples, or fortifications, or used for sidewalks. Could man exist, on the contrary, where the climatic temperature never falls below the boiling-point of water, this substance would only be known as a gas, like hydrogen or carbonic acid. There are regions where water, and even mercury, maintain the permanent condition of solids. There are regions where they can exist only as vapor. The pressure