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THE BIBLE,
A KEY TO THE PHENOMENA
OF THE
NATURAL WORLD.

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THE BIBLE, A KEY
TO THE
PHENOMENA OF THE NATURAL WORLD.

The stupendous fabric of the universe, part of which we see, and part of which we ourselves are, cannot but become an object of earnest contemplation, to the inquisitive mind. The great majority of men, it is true, pass through life without reflection. Their intellectual powers are so little cultivated, and they are so much occupied with objects of sense, and in making provision for their immediate and pressing wants, that they never attempt to raise their minds to the contemplation of the wonderful works by which they are surrounded: but accustomed from infancy to behold these objects, they excite no surprise, and seldom call forth a single reflection. There have always been, however, among nations enjoying any degree of civilization, men of minds more cultivated than the rest, and more disposed to investigate the causes of those phenomena, which they continually beheld. These sages, when they looked upon the heavens and the earth, upon themselves and other organized and living beings, have been led to inquire, whence all these things? Have they always existed? or have they been produced? To those who have been conversant with the truth all their lives, it may seem, that it would have been an easy thing, for any rational mind to ascend, at once, from the creature to the invisible Creator: but we cannot readily conceive of the perplexity and darkness which surround

the intellect of men, whom no ray of divine revelation has visited. The reasonings of such men are also impeded and perverted by prejudices, and erroneous opinions imbibed from their forefathers; and, not unfrequently, pride and other evil passions, influence speculative men to adopt extravagant opinions, for the sake of their paradoxical character, or because they are naturally grateful to the feelings of depraved nature. It is, therefore, not an unaccountable fact, that men, unenlightened by divine revelation, should have fallen into so many egregious errors, respecting the origin of the world and its inhabitants.

A considerable number of those called philosophers, entertained the opinion, that the universe always existed as we now behold it. They observed, that, from age to age, the heavenly bodies move on in their orbits, undisturbed and unchanged; and that, on earth, the same changes of day and night, of winter and summer, of seed time and harvest, succeed each other, in regular order: and no other power being manifest to the senses but that which operates through all nature, they concluded, that the universe existed without any cause of itself; and that it ever had existed, and ever would exist, as it now appears.

Some, however, observing in all things, as they imagined, a tendency to dissolution, and perceiving in our globe evidences of a former destruction, adopted the opinion, that the universe contained in itself the principles of its own dissolution and regeneration;—that, after running through a period of unknown and inconceivable duration, it falls into a chaotic state, in which catastrophe all organized bodies are destroyed, and return to their simplest elements; but, from this chaos, by degrees, springs up a new order of things, or a renewal of that which before existed; and thus, while they conceived the universe to be eternal, they imagined, that it is in a state of perpetual change, by a kind of circular progression, which has neither beginning nor end.

Others of those called philosophers, who seem to have paid a more minute attention to the curious structure of organized bodies, were of opinion, that they must, by some means, have been formed or produced ; but, not being able to rise to the conception of a Creator—or what is more probable, not liking to retain the idea of God in their minds—they invented the hypothesis of the eternal existence of the elements of the universe, which, they supposed to consist of atoms, or indivisible bodies of all manner of shapes, and in perpetual motion among each other. These atoms, possessing various affinities, came together in every conceivable form of organized bodies, until, by degrees, and in a long process of time, the universe assumed its present aspect, and vegetables and animals, of every species, were produced by the fortuitous concurrence of atoms.

Such a hypothesis might seem too absurd to be seriously entertained by any rational mind, and yet we find among its abettors, men of high and cultivated intellect, among the ancients. It has, however, met with less favour among modern atheists, than the fore-mentioned theories ; although, in point of absurdity, all systems of atheism may be said to stand on a perfect level ; for no folly can be conceived greater, than that which says, “ there is no God.”

The idea of the necessity of a cause, wherever we observe what we must consider an effect, is so deeply engrained in human nature, that most men have professed themselves dissatisfied with any system which assigned no cause, or no better cause than chance or necessity, for the existence of all things. Many have been led, therefore, to adopt the opinion, that the universe was God, believing, that whatever distinctness and variety there may seem to be in the world, there existed but one substance or being, of which the heavens and the earth, vegetables and animals, are only so many parts, or rather manifestations. This theory differs from the first mentioned, in this important respect,

that it recognises a great first cause, which is God; but the difference, as to any useful end, is more in appearance, than in reality; for, according to this hypothesis, there is still nothing in existence, besides the universe itself. There is no free, sovereign, independent being, whom we should worship or obey; or in whom we can confide for help or safety. In fact, it differs from blank atheism in nothing, except that it gives the name of God to the universe of creatures; and thus we come to the horrible conclusion, that we and all other things are parts of God.

Although this hypothesis had its advocates among the ancients, yet Benedict Spinoza has the credit of reducing it to a regular system, which he exhibited in the imposing form of mathematical demonstration. As this atheistical theory was published in an enlightened age, and in a Christian country, it might have been expected, that it would attract but few admirers: and, indeed, the number of avowed disciples of Spinozism has been small; yet the same system, new-modelled but not improved, has become a favourite, with a large number of philosophers of the present day, on the continent of Europe, and especially in Germany, under the appropriate name of, Pantheism. And so great is the infatuation of some calling themselves Christians, that they have thought, that this disguised atheism, might be reconciled with Christianity.

A system less absurd than any of the former was, that the world has an all pervading, active, and intelligent soul, which moved and directed all the operations of nature, as the human soul moves and governs the body.

Near akin to this, was the opinion that the planets and stars, were all animated bodies, possessed of the power of moving themselves, and of intelligence sufficient to guide and regulate their own motions.

Many students of the physical sciences, in our times, seem to have adopted a theory similar to that which gives a soul to

the world. They ascribe all effects to *nature*, and to the laws of nature. In all the remarkable contrivances and evidences of design, which abound in the animal and vegetable worlds, they see nothing but the plastic power of nature. The idea of a God, distinct from the world, and from whom nature derives all its powers, seems to have no place in their philosophy.

But sometimes the doctrine of *the soul of the world*, has been combined with that of one supreme God, as in the sublime but mystical theory of Plato.

From what has been said, it is evident, that the human intellect is prone to wander from the truth; and that reason is liable to be perverted, even in matters of the highest importance; and in which the light of evidence seems to us to shine most clearly.

A just and impartial consideration of the universe, cannot fail to lead the sincere seeker of truth to the opinion, that there must exist a great first cause, powerful and intelligent, who has made the world for some particular end. As sound reason would constrain us, if we should find a curiously contrived machine, evidently formed for a useful purpose, to ascribe it to an intelligent artificer, how can we refuse to ascribe the structure of the universe, in which the evidences of design are more numerous and more striking, infinitely, than in any of the works of men, to a wise and powerful architect? If a watch or steam-engine could not be formed by the accidental aggregation of particles, brought together by the winds or waves, how can we suppose, that such a structure as a completely organized animal body, could be formed by a fortuitous concourse of atoms? There is in a small part of the human body, more profound wisdom in designing the texture and organization of the parts for the attainment of a particular end, than in all the curious mechanism of man's contrivance. And if we should even suppose, (absurd as it is,) that such an organized system could come into existence without design, how could we account

for the wonderful adaptation of other things, existing in an entirely separate state, to the necessities and conveniences of the animal body? Without light the eye would be useless, but when we examine the mechanism of this organ, and observe that it is constructed upon the most perfect principles of optics, can we for a moment hesitate to believe, that the eye was formed by a designing agent, to receive, refract, and concentrate the rays of light, for the purposes of vision? The same adaptation is remarkable, between the air and the organ of hearing; and between the air and the lungs: the same is also true, in regard to the stomach and the food which it so eagerly craves. In these, and a thousand other things, the evidences of design are as strong, as they possibly can be. If we can resist these, no other proofs would answer any purpose, in removing our incredulity.

Reason, then, clearly indicates, that this universe is not God, but is the work of God, and that he must be a being of transcendent perfection. But having arrived at this conclusion, who would not wish to have his faith confirmed, by some clear manifestation of this august Being? If he exists and formed our bodies, and gave us our rational powers, surely he can find out ways by which he can make himself known to us. He cannot, indeed, render himself visible to our bodily eyes, because he is a spirit; but he who indued man with the faculty of communicating with his fellows, by the use of speech, can speak to us in a language which we can understand. Now this very thing he has done, by divine revelation. By inspiring chosen individuals, and attesting their communications, he has plainly informed us, not only that he exists, but that he is the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the universe; that he is above all, and independent of all; and that all things were produced by his own pleasure, and for his own glory.

That which reason often missed, or mistook, and at best, spelled out with hesitation, the voice of revelation declares, with decisive authority.

Reason may vaunt herself when the discovery is made, but she owes her clearest light and firmest convictions, to the voice of inspiration.

The Bible furnishes the full and satisfactory commentary on the book of nature. With the Bible in our hands, the heavens shine with redoubled lustre. The universe, which to the atheist is full of darkness and confusion, to the Christian, is resplendent with light and glory. The first sentence in the Bible, contains more to satisfy the inquisitive mind, than all the volumes of human speculation. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Here, in a few words, is comprehended the most sublime of all truths;—the production of a universe out of nothing, by the word of the Almighty. If God created the heavens and the earth, then, he existed before they were brought forth—even from eternity; for he who gives beginning to all other things, can have none himself. Before the world was, this august Being existed, independent and happy, in the plenitude of his own infinite perfections. This first word of written revelation teaches us, what reason in her boldest flights could never reach, namely, that the universe sprang from nothing:—not from nothing as its cause, but from the inconceivable working of almighty power, where nothing existed, from which it could be made. None of the heathen sages ever believed such a creation possible. They universally received it as an axiom, that, *ex nihilo nihil fieri*; but here we learn, "That the worlds were framed by the word of God, and that the things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear." This stupendous work, of giving being to so great a multitude and variety of creatures, is often celebrated in the sublime strains of sacred poetry, and in the commanding eloquence of the inspired prophets. "Thus saith the Lord, that created the heavens and stretched them out, he that spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it." "Which made heaven and earth, the sea, and

all that therein is." "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion."

"O Lord God, behold thou hast made the heavens and the earth, by thy great power."

"The Lord which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundations of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."

The apostles tread in the footsteps of the prophets, in ascribing the creation of the universe to God alone, "The living God, which made the heavens and the earth, and all things therein."

"God that made the world and all things therein." "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead."

"He that built all things is God."

With such declarations as these, coming from the mouth of God himself, how is the mind enlarged and elevated, in contemplating the heavens and the earth! How grand, how beautiful, how wise, how harmonious, is the universe, when viewed through the medium of divine revelation. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night teacheth knowledge."

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens"—
"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him?"

Without the book of revelation, the book of nature would be as a volume sealed; but with this key, we can open its wonderful pages, and receive instruction from every creature of God.

2. But let us descend from the contemplation of the universe, to the consideration of some of its parts. Here is the race of mankind, and multitudes of living creatures, in the earth, the air, and the water; whence have they proceeded? What can reason and philosophy answer? Had man and the other animals, a beginning, or were they from eternity? If the former, from what cause, and by what steps did they arrive at their present condition? On no subject has philosophy betrayed her weakness more, than in her speculations respecting the origin of the human race. It would be poorly worth our while to review the absurd theories of ancient and modern philosophers, which more resemble the dreams of the sick, than the sober deductions of reason. One will give to the earth, I know not what prolific power, to produce men and animals; another chooses to place man, in his origin, on a level with the speechless brutes, from which condition he is supposed to arise by long and assiduous exertion; acquiring for himself the use of articulate and written language, and inventing, from time to time, all the arts which now minister to the comfort of civilized life. But such theories are too absurd for refutation. The idea of the production of animals or vegetables, by what was called equivocal generation, that is, without progenitors, or organized seeds and roots, has long since been exploded. Experiments the most decisive have demonstrated the falsehood of the notions, entertained by the ancients, of the generation of animated beings from mere corruption. The men and animals, now on the earth, belong to a series reaching back to eternity; or, they were formed, and placed on our globe, by an almighty Being. Let us then, for a moment, look at the theory which assigns to man an existence, without beginning. While the individuals die, the species is immortal. If such a hypothesis does not do violence to common sense, it would be difficult to say what does. Each individual is dependent, and yet the whole series of indivi-

duals, independent. The absurdity and contradiction of such a theory, is only concealed by the darkness of eternity. By running back until we are overwhelmed with a subject which our minds cannot grasp, we are apt to lose sight of the unreasonableness of a supposition, which on a limited scale, every one can clearly see. As if one should say, here is a chain suspended, consisting of a thousand links, each one depending on the next above it; could such a chain of a thousand links remain suspended, without any thing to support it? To such a problem, every child would give the correct answer. The thing is manifestly impossible. Well, suppose the number of links be increased to a hundred million, could the chain support itself any better, than when it consisted of a thousand, or even ten links? Certainly not; would be the answer of every person of common sense; and such a person would be apt to say, the more links there are in the chain, the more support does it require, seeing its tendency to fall will be in proportion to its weight. But then, suppose the links so increased, that our minds can no longer conceive of the number, will such an increase, however great it may be, render a support less necessary? The answer ought to be as decisively as before, in the negative. We have seen that the increase of the number, while within the limits of our conception, did not lessen the necessity for a supporting power, and why should such an increase as goes far beyond our power of imagination be supposed to have this effect? The idea of a series of men without beginning, and without any Creator, to give them being, is one of the greatest absurdities which can be conceived.

Besides, when we consider the number of men; when we trace their history;—when we reflect upon their small advancement in the arts and sciences; and how recent the most useful inventions are; how can we, unless we renounce our reason, believe, that mankind have existed on this globe from eternity? The thing is impossible. The only reasona-

ble hypothesis, therefore, is, that the human race, together with the various species of animals and vegetables, had a beginning; and that they were created by a wise and omnipotent Being, by whose care and sustaining power, they are still preserved.

But man feels too little satisfied with his own reasonings, to rest contented with such conclusions, as he can himself deduce. He wishes to see the face, or hear the voice, of his great Creator. He wants an explicit declaration from the mouth of his Father in heaven, assuring him of the truth of his own reasonings; and authorizing him to claim the relation of a creature, formed by the power and goodness of God.

Such a desire of divine instruction, is neither sinful nor unreasonable, in creatures situated as we are. Who would not wish to know his own earthly father? And who would like, on such a subject, to be left to reasonings founded on abstract principles? But how much more interesting is it, for us to know our heavenly Father, to whom we owe our very being, with all its faculties and capacities? - Now this reasonable desire, the great Creator has condescended to gratify. He has, in the revelation which is contained in the Holy Scriptures, informed us, not only that he is our Maker, but has given us most particular information, of the time and circumstances of man's creation. After the heavens and the earth, and beasts, fishes, and birds, were formed; in short, after all things on earth were created, God, speaking in the glorious council of his own being, said, "Come let us make man in our own image, and after our own likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth."—"So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him." "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: and man became a living

soul." "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone, I will make an help-meet for him.*" "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and he slept, and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man; and Adam said, this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man."

I have, somewhere, met with an account of an infidel, more ingenious than wise, who proposed to put the Mosaic history to the test, by examining whether man was deficient of a rib, in one of his sides. It would have been as reasonable, to have examined, whether every male descendent of Adam had the scar of the wound, made in the side of the first man. If Adam had remained, all his life, destitute of the rib which was taken away, why should it be supposed that this defect should be transmitted to his posterity? But he laboured under no such defect, for the opening made was closed up with flesh instead of that which was taken away. The rib was not taken on account of any difficulty to obtain materials, but to show that a man and his wife were one, and that a man should ever cherish his wife, as his own flesh. The word here translated *rib*, properly means, *a side*; for aught that appears, the whole side of the man might have been taken, to form the woman; but this is a matter of no consequence.

Infidels have been fond of turning this simple and beautiful history, of the formation of the first man and the first woman, into ridicule; but if man had a beginning, and was created by the Almighty, what account could be imagined more natural and reasonable, than this? Let the scoffer produce his own hypothesis, and subject it to the test of examination—but he has none. He laughs at the Bible history, and at the same time has nothing to answer as a substitute.

But to men of sober minds, who wish to be acquainted with their own origin, this narrative is most satisfactory and instructive. We know that man must have had a beginning, and consequently a Creator; but reason could not inform us how, or in what circumstances, he commenced his existence: *that*, therefore, which we wish to know, and need to know, is distinctly revealed, and plainly recorded in the Bible. Man, instead of being from eternity, is of yesterday;—instead of springing, like a mushroom from the putrid earth, he came from the forming hand of the great Creator; instead of being at first an ape or ourang outang, he was made in the likeness, and after the similitude of God. The Bible, then, explains to us, our own origin, and the origin of all creatures. It teaches that man was made out of the clay of the earth, but this clay was wrought into shape, and wonderfully and fearfully organized, by a divine hand.

3. The physical history of man exhibits some very remarkable phenomena; among which, none have attracted the attention of the inquisitive so much, as the striking variety, in the complexion, hair, size, and figure of the species, in different countries. Of complexion we find every shade of colour from white, to sooty black; and of hair from the silken or flaxen locks of the North of Europe, to the crisped and curled wool of the guinea-negro. In the formation and prominence of the nose, lips, and cheeks, there is also a remarkable difference in different nations. These striking and numerous varieties have led some philosophers to adopt the opinion, that mankind are not descended from one stock; but that originally, there must have been parents, corresponding with the several classes of men. It is an obvious objection to this theory, that the several complexions of mankind are not distinctly marked, but run into each other, by imperceptible shades; so that, if we suppose more species of men than one, we know not where to stop. If every considerable variety must be the foundation of a distinct

species, we must adopt the hypothesis, that originally, God created a multitude of human beings, of different complexions.

It is also a fact unfavourable to this hypothesis, that there are striking varieties in complexion, hair, &c. among those known to have proceeded from one stock. In the same nation, some whole families or tribes are distinguished by fair hair and a ruddy complexion; while others are equally remarkable for dark complexion and black hair and eyes. These varieties in the same nation are known also to be transmitted from father to son, for many generations. But we are unable to account for this variety; and if such a difference may take place, when the external circumstances are nearly similar, why may not the greater varieties of the human species be owing to the great difference of climate and other circumstances, of the nations of the earth?

Since a more accurate knowledge has been obtained of the numerous tribes inhabiting the islands of the great South Sea, some very interesting facts have been brought to light, respecting the origin of these insulated savages. The information collected by Dr. Prichard and published in his *PHYSICAL HISTORY OF MAN*, goes far to prove, that men who have at a remote period, sprung from the same stock, may so diverge from each other, in features, complexion, hair, &c., that they form distinct classes, and seem to be as widely apart from each other as almost any of the differing tribes of men. The identity of the origin of some of these islanders, whose appearance is so dissimilar, is ascertained by the radical sameness of their language; and it is a thing unknown in the history of savages, to change their vernacular tongue. It is manifest, therefore, that there are natural causes in operation, whether we understand what they are or not, sufficient to produce all the varieties observed in the human species.

The diversity of features and complexion in the Jews,

who have long resided in widely different climates, and who it is known do not intermix with other people, affords a strong confirmation of the same truth.

It is also as remarkable as it is obvious, that, for the most part, men of a certain complexion are found in a particular latitude, unless they have been recently removed from their own country. We do not find the black skin and crisped hair in high latitudes; nor the fair complexion and light-coloured hair, under the equator. From the first glance, therefore, it would seem, that there is some connexion between climate and the complexion. Whether a difference of climate is sufficient of itself to account for these varieties, need not be determined. There may be other causes combined with this, some of which may be unknown to us. Animals carried from the temperate regions, far to the North, become white, and their fur becomes much thicker and warmer. The final cause of this change is manifest, and indicates the wisdom and goodness of the great Creator, but we know not how to account for it. The fact is certain, but the process of nature by which it is brought about is concealed; at least, it has not yet been discovered. Now, there may be, in the constitution of man, a principle which accommodates itself to different climates, for purposes equally important. Indeed it is a well known fact, that black people can endure a tropical sun, much better than white men.

The analogy derived from other animals and vegetables, also, forbids the multiplication of the human species. The changes produced in the different species of animals, which can live in climates widely different, are as great, and in some, much greater, than in the human species. Take, for an example, the canine species. How great the difference between the large mastiff, and the diminutive lap-dog. These varieties in animals of the same species, extend not only to their size, colour, and shape, but in a very remarkable degree, to their instincts.

Seeing then, that this is the common law of animal nature, why should we expect that the physical nature of man should be exempt from changes, induced by a diversity of climate? And when we observe, that the varieties of the human race have a manifest relation to the climate of the respective nations, the conclusion, upon all just principles of natural science, must be, that the human species is one.

In all cases, where there is a difference of species, there is a marked difference in the internal structure of the body; but among the different tribes of men, no such diversity has been observed, as can be the foundation of a diversity of species. The most exact anatomical dissections have discovered no permanent parts or contrivances, in one nation, which are not found also in all others. They all have the same bones, the same joints, the same system of nerves, the same number, use, and position of muscles, the same blood-vessels, glands, and digestive organs. Not only is the external appearance of the parts the same, but the interior texture and constituent particles composing the respective parts of the human body, are the same in the white man, as in the black, the olive, the red, or the yellow.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that all men have the same external senses, and the same bodily appetites, the same instincts, the same susceptibility of forming habits, and the same natural passions and desires. Those things in the constitution of man which have no resemblance in other species of animals, are found in all the nations of the earth. The risible faculty, and the faculty of weeping; and especially the possession of articulate speech, all serve to prove, the identity of the human species. And if, from the body and its functions, we ascend to the mind, here we find the same original faculties, in all the varieties of the human race: We observe in all, not only perception, consciousness, and memory, of which the inferior animals seem to partake, but the power of reasoning; the faculty

of imagination ; the power of association and abstraction ; and what is more decisive still, the moral sense, of which there is no vestige in the brutes ; and the faculty of taste ; for all men perceive a difference between right and wrong and feel moral obligation ; and all men have some sense of beauty and deformity. Moreover, all men are capable of improvement, and those nations which are now the most learned and refined, were once among the most barbarous of the human race.

This perfect similarity in mind and body is sufficient to lead all impartial men to the conclusion, that the human race are all descended from one pair, and that the varieties are accidental ;—the effect of a variety of causes, all of which we are unable to explore.

Some philosophers, have, however, thought themselves justified, in considering men of different species, not so much from the variety in their complexion and external appearance, as from the different degrees of flatness or rotundity, in the skulls of different nations. On this ground, the learned Blumenbach, has reduced the whole human race to five classes or species. But in the first place, the examination of human skulls has not been sufficiently extensive to furnish correct data for such a classification ; and in the next place, if the difference exist, it affords no philosophical reason for supposing an original diversity of species. The causes which have operated other changes, may as easily have produced a difference in the mere form of the skull : and those who give credit to the discoveries of the craniologists, will find no difficulty in accounting for any varieties which are found, in the skulls of men of different tribes.

Some time since, a radical difference of intellect, was insisted on, as a criterion to determine a difference of species : but since our acquaintance with the most degraded and stupid of the human race has become more accurate ; and especially, since we have witnessed the improvements

which these are capable of, and the rapid advancement of some of them, in knowledge and civilization, the whole ground of this opinion is taken away.

There is another criterion of the identity of species, which by some naturalists has been considered decisive. It has been found, that although animals of different species may be made to propagate a mongrel breed, their offspring are, for the most part, barren, and are seldom known to propagate. But the various classes of men mingle as freely and propagate the species with as much facility, as people of the same tribe. Of late, however, some doubt has been expressed respecting the correctness of the fact first stated, on which the whole argument rests. It is alleged, that sufficient experiments have not been made on the subject of the natural want of fertility in mules and other hybrids; and that, as far as experience goes, they are found to be fruitful in as many cases, as they are barren. Leaving, therefore, the degree of barrenness in such animals in doubt, it is clear, that no new species, capable of continuing itself by propagation, has been formed, by the union of animals of different species, and that there exists a natural obstruction, which does not exist in the case of men of the different classes.

But why might not a number of pairs of the same species, or exactly similar in parts and powers, have been produced, as well as one? To which we answer, that although the thing is possible, yet sound philosophy never resorts to such a supposition. Naturalists always go on the principle that more causes of the phenomena of nature than are sufficient, are not to be admitted, and where every effect can as well be accounted for by supposing one original pair, as by many, the hypothesis of more than one, ought, on general principles, to be rejected.

Having seen that reason itself leads us to believe that all the various nations of men are derived from one stock, and

form but one species, it cannot but add strong confirmation to our belief, that the Sacred Scriptures clearly inform us, that when God created man upon the earth, he created them male and female;—one man, and one woman—from whom proceeded all the nations of the earth.

The idea which some have entertained, that there were men before Adam, is destitute of all shadow of proof. The apostle Paul, in his discourse before the Senate of Areopagus, explicitly declares, what reason and revelation unite in teaching, to be the truth. “And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” One word from the inspiration of God, goes farther to establish our minds in the belief of the truth, than volumes of arguments, depending merely on the fallible reason of man.

The Bible teaches us that every man of every tribe and of every colour, whether his skull be flat or prominent, is our brother, and has a claim upon us for all the kindness and beneficence which it is in our power to show him. The same God is the Father of us all; and the same man is our common earthly father; and we are all rapidly tending to the same judgment, and to the same eternity.

But if any should, after all, be of opinion, that the diversity among men cannot be accounted for by natural causes; yet it does not follow that the Mosaic history is false, or that there are several species of men, entirely distinct from each other. At some period of the history of man, for some special reason, the Governor of the universe may have given a distinctive colour to one or more families of the earth. And some believers in the Bible are so fully impressed with this idea, that they have undertaken to affirm, that we have an intimation of this very thing, in the sacred history. While some, however, would refer the black colour of the skin to the mark set upon Cain, (which is irreconcilable with the history of the deluge,) others, with more probability, refer it to the curse upon Canaan, the son

of Ham. As his posterity were doomed to be the servants of servants, it is thought that some peculiar mark was set upon them, which, it is presumed, was the dark colour of the skin, and the crisped and wooly hair. And in confirmation of this opinion, they allege, that the black people are the descendants of Ham, and that they are the slaves of all the world, until this day.

While I am willing to admit, that God might, for reasons unknown to us, have miraculously changed the complexion and features, of a part of the human race, I must think, that the idea that the black colour was inflicted as a disgrace and a curse, is a mere prejudice. Why should not the white colour be considered as a mark of God's displeasure? for, no negro from the burning sands of Africa, can appear more shocking to the inhabitants of northern regions, than the white man does to the people of the interior of that continent.

It seems, moreover, to be a prejudice without foundation, that the colour of the whites was that of the first man. Much the larger part of the inhabitants of the earth, are of a complexion nearly midway between the two extremes. Is it not, therefore, much more probable, that our first parents were red men, or of an olive or copper colour? And this opinion derives some support from the name of the first man; for the radical signification of *Adam* is *red*. And if this be assumed as a fact, then it will be much easier to account for the various complexions of men, from natural causes, than if we suppose that either white or black was the original complexion.

But from what has been said, it will be seen, that no valid argument against the truth of the Bible can be derived from the variety, in the human species; whether that variety can be accounted for by natural causes, or not.

Note.—Other observations, omitted for want of room, will be deferred to some other occasion.—A.