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- ART. I.—1. *The Chinese: A General Description of the Empire of China and its Inhabitants.* By John Francis Davis, Esq. F. R. S., &c. In 2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1836.
2. *The Stranger in China; or, The Fan-qui's visit to the Celestial Empire, in 1836-7.* By C. Toogood Downing, Esq., Mem. Roy. Coll. Surgeons. In 2 vols. 12mo. Philadelphia. 1838.
3. *China; its State and Prospects, with especial reference to the spread of the gospel; containing allusions to the Antiquity, Extent, Population, Civilization, Literature, and Religion of the Chinese.* By W. H. Medhurst, of the London Missionary Society. Boston. 1838.

THE empire of China has for the last three centuries been drawing an increasing amount of attention from western nations. At the present time it is awakening universal interest among commercial and Christian people. It is by no means surprising that it should. Even independently of the commercial advantages which it presents, and the importance of bringing it under Christian influence, it affords subjects of inquiry well adapted to arouse the curiosity of the human

land, was himself at the time drawing very near to the end of his pilgrimage; but having heard a part of Mrs. Hawkes' memoir, he continued to call for the reading of the remainder even until his last day; expressing his highest approbation of the sentiments; and evidently deriving sensible comfort from the Christian experience of this lively, spiritual and devoted servant of the Lord. Such an attestation, at such a time, and from such a man, is a stronger recommendation of the volume before us, than we are capable of giving. And having occasion to mention this excellent man, we take pleasure in saying, that in our opinion, evangelical religion and the foreign missionary cause in England, have been more effectually promoted by the labours of Mr. Simeon, than by any individual who has lived in the age which has just gone by. His memory is blessed; and shall be held in everlasting remembrance. "AND I HEARD A VOICE FROM HEAVEN, SAYING UNTO ME, WRITE: BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD."

G. W. Jacobus

ART. VI.—*Notes, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Genesis; Designed as a General Help to Biblical Reading and Instruction.* By George Bush, Prof. of Heb. and Orient. Lit. New York City University. In two volumes. Vol. I. New York: E. French. 12mo. pp. xxxvi. 364.

PROFESSOR Bush needs no introduction to the public in general, nor to the readers of our journal in particular. That he is one of our most indefatigable scholars, is evident, not only from the growing number of his publications, but from the disposition which he manifests, to reproduce his old books in a more beautiful and perfect form. While we are waiting for a second edition of his Hebrew Grammar, so extensively re-written as to be in fact a new one, he presents us with a handsome and convenient metamorphosis of his notes on Genesis.

Professor Bush's characteristic qualities, as a commentator, whether good or evil, may, we think, be traced to one great merit and one great fault. The merit is, that, whatever he writes he writes *con amore*. His heart is in it, as well as his head. While he, no doubt, has a due regard to reputa-

tion and to the just emoluments of literary labour, it is plain to every reader, that his governing motives are neither mercenary nor ambitious. He seems to take delight in those very processes which, however necessary in the art of book-making, are commonly regarded as most irksome and laborious. The good effect of this is, that nothing is slurred over, or omitted through neglect; and that the composition every where exhibits marks of freshness and vitality, as far removed as possible from the dead and alive manner of most compilations. A bad effect, resulting from the same cause, is, that the pleasure which he takes in his researches often blinds him to the real value of the product, and leads him to regard a thing as highly important only because he had the pleasure of discovering it. And this effect is aggravated by the characteristic fault which we designed to mention: an apparent incapacity or indisposition to appreciate the different degrees of probability, in weighing proofs or arguments together, and a consequent tendency to mistake the possible for the probable, and the probable for the certain. Some of our author's expositions would appear to indicate it as his principle of exegesis, that what may be the meaning is the meaning. To this end has contributed, we think, a strong desire to find new solutions of vexed questions, which, however laudable, must, if carried to excess, pervert the judgment. No one who glances at the exegetical history of certain hard places, can fail to be struck with the general agreement of the greatest intellects. If the ayes and noes, on certain of these *dubia vexata*, should be recorded in parliamentary form, we believe that there would be a clear and almost constant party line between the ingenious and the fanciful on one side, and the profound and comprehensive on the other. That a large proportion of the philological learning would be found among the former, is indeed a fact, and one which seems to lead to the unwelcome conclusion, that we must depend on one set of writers to find out what the sense of scripture may be, and on another to determine what it is. Certain it is, that upon some important parts of scripture, all the minute and accurate philology of modern German critics has thrown far less light, than the perspicacious logic of the older writers. It is a great mistake to imagine that the German grammarians understand the Bible better, as a whole, than the logicians of the sixteenth century. Exactness in little things must be combined with large and comprehensive views of great ones, or the most accomplished critic will be

constantly tempted and betrayed into extravagances. Without this combination, much learning will only make him mad. If Professor Bush has placed himself too far upon the wrong side of the party line in question, it is certainly not for want of adequate resources and abilities. We leave it to himself, and to the public to determine, whether his ingenuity, acuteness, and invention, have not, in many cases, been exalted at the expense of his judgment and his powers of ratiocination; and if so, whether these things ought thus to be. What we have thus far said has reference to Professor Bush's published works collectively, and some of our remarks are, perhaps, less applicable to the work before us than to some which have preceded it. The two cardinal excellencies of this volume will be found in the apt illustrations drawn from oriental sources, and the happy combination of critical matter with sound practical reflection. Portions of the Pentateuch, where men are exhibited in the peculiarities of primitive intercourse, are hurried over in common reading, and perhaps, with an effort of imagination, are now and then vaguely conceived. But when we are introduced to a race in actual existence at this day, among whom similar modes of expression and habits of life have been transmitted in stereotype from earliest dates, we seem to enter into the narrative with new spirit and delight. We can almost see the venerable patriarch, sitting in his tent-door, at the heat of the day, or running to meet the celestial visitants, and bowing himself in respectful deference to the unknown travellers. That portion of the 18th chapter which records the generous hospitality of Abraham to the angels on their way to the devoted cities of the plain, is most happily illustrated. The simple narrative itself has a claim on the admiration, but the unassuming grace of patriarchal manner, and the instinctive generosity of Abraham, are exhibited by the Notes before us, in their most attractive aspect. The dulness that attaches to things long obsolete and antiquated, is signally removed, and scenes enacted in the infancy of our race, are brought to view in all the vividness and warmth of actual existence. In selecting materials for this important department, the author has had recourse to some of the most eminent Eastern travels, quoting frequently from Sir Robert Ker Porter and Roberts, occasionally from Belzoni and Madden. He has drawn however, most largely, upon the treasures of the 'Pictorial Bible,' a work prepared at great expense, and recently published in London. To this he owns himself "indebted

for some of the choicest extracts with which his pages are enriched."

We pass to some notices of the critical department which may substantiate our introductory remarks.

Under Gen. xxi. 31, commenting upon (Shabha) 'to swear'—he remarks that "it comes from the same root as the word which signifies *seven*," and "as the original root of the latter has the import of *fulness, satiety, satisfaction*, it may be that it is applied to an oath as the *completion* or *perfection*, the *sufficient security* of a covenant, that which made it binding and *satisfactory* to each of the parties." The common root to which allusion is made can be none other than (Sabha) which we have been wont to regard as quite another word from (Shabha) under consideration, and wholly unconnected with it as a radical form. The author's own words in another connection force themselves upon us. "If one should like the Ephraimites utter Sibboleth, when he meant Shibboleth, it would of course lead to misunderstanding, dispute and division." Yet in charging him with the inadvertence of neglecting the same distinction, it is no part of our design to pass him off for an Ephraimite, though it be greatly important now-a-days to discriminate in the use of terms. We have been accustomed to observe as real a distinction between the letters (Sin) and (Shin) as between the English monosyllables employed to designate them; and we conceive no other ground than the similarity of the letters, upon which a mutual dependence can be asserted. We should regard it quite as warrantable to deduce (Shabhar) 'to break in pieces' from (Sabhar) 'to meditate, explore,' yet we know of no connection in meaning, equally plausible, with which the affirmation could be recommended; except, perhaps, it be, that *meditation* or *invention* sometimes *breaks* "the harmony of thought."

A satisfactory reason for the association of the number 'seven' in Hebrew with the verb *to swear*, is found in the fact that this was a *sacred* number; hallowed by the rest of the Creator, and the attendant institution of the Sabbath; identified in a measure with the sanctity of the day which it was employed to designate. Accordingly we find throughout the Scriptures many instances in which it bears a sacred import; as in Josh. vi. where, at the siege of Jericho, *seven* priests were commanded by God to bear before the ark *seven* trumpets, and the *seventh* day to compass the city *seven*

times—and at the *seventh* time to shout as the walls of the city should fall, thus impressing all the arrangements with the stamp of *divine origin*, and prompting the acknowledgment from a victorious army, “*the Lord hath given us the city.*”

As an oath was taken *in the name of God*, the individual swearing thus, presumed to involve the divine veracity in the transaction, and make the Almighty a party in the covenant. So that, as Hengstenberg remarks, he who swore to a lie—who proved false to such an engagement, did, *as far as in him lay, make God a liar*. We see the propriety, therefore, of covering in the very designation of the act an allusion to its divine relations and to its rare solemnity.* And this expedient would seem an effectual one, if we estimate the prevalence and force of the association among a people who habitually devoted to God a *seventh* portion of time, and to whom every recurring *seventh* day and *seventh* year would invest the number with new sacredness. Its corresponding use in the ritual also must find its true foundation in this feature of popular sentiment and feeling. The uniformity of its selection in the minute prescriptions of the ceremonial law, where a definite number was to be specified, does in fact recognize the previous existence of such an association in the minds of the people. The sprinkling of the blood and oil, so solemn in its import, received additional solemnity from its *sevenfold* repetition. Levit. iv. 6, &c.

To the same hallowed acceptation of the number in popular opinion must be referred the analogous use made of it in prophetic symbols. The *seven* kine, and *seven* ears of Pharaoh’s dream (Gen. 41)—the *seven* steps of Ezekiel (40: 22, 26)—the *seven* shepherds of Micah (5: 5)—the *seven* lamps, *seven* pipes, and *seven* eyes of Zechariah (3: 9. 4: 2), the *seven* evil spirits of our Saviour’s parable (Matt. 12: 45), together with the *seven* stars, *seven* candlesticks, *seven* churches, *seven* angels, *seven* spirits, *seven* thunders, *seven* vials, *seven* plagues, and *seven* seals of the apocalypse, all find a similar explanation; and surely we are left at no loss to account for the connection of this number with the designation of an oath, and the solemn act of swearing.

* Considered thus, its derivation would convey the same import with that of the Latin noun “*Sacramentum*.” The *Sanscrit*, like the Hebrew, clearly allies the verb ‘to swear’ “*schap*” with the number *seven* “*sap-ta*”—Lat. *sep-tem*.

In his comments on the opening of the Mosaic history Prof. Bush discovers no little solicitude to accommodate the theories of modern Geologists; and none can fail to perceive the effort with which, in a few instances, the inspired text has been *translated* out of its legitimate bearing with this end in view. The unqualified remark upon the word 'created' under Gen. i. 1, wears somewhat of a revolting aspect. "It is a matter," says the author, "rather of rational inference, than of express revelation, that the material universe was *created out of nothing*." We are indeed reluctant to conclude that while he chooses to depart from the received understanding of the first verse in the Bible, he would deny us the clear scriptural testimony against the eternal existence of matter. He cannot have forgotten the passage, Heb. xi. 3, which so explicitly asserts that all things were spoken into being by the "word of God," and "*not made of things which do appear*." This is to our minds sufficiently express, while passages such as Prov. viii., where Wisdom gives the testimony of an eye-witness, are no possibly less conclusive. The author deduces it as a truth most unequivocally evidenced by *reason*, but she is not the wisdom of the Bible, nor can we admit that revelation has left us without the distinct and clear announcement.

The sentiments of the commentator on the substance of the verse are embodied in the following paragraph. "Allowing then that the materials, the primordial elements of the heavens and the earth, were brought into existence at an indefinitely prior period, the term 'create' may be understood as expressing the action of the Almighty agent upon the rude chaotic mass in moulding and arranging it into its present comely order." We would apply the term 'create' in this verse, to the *former* operation, and make the passage allude to the *primary* movement. If, as is here granted, the shapeless materials were produced by the divine energy from non-existence, whether at the opening of the first day or at some distant period of the eternal past, we ask, is it not natural to suppose that an inspired narrative of the creation would embrace this important fact? Would it not seem strange that the secondary statements should be furnished in detail, and the great fundamental matter be passed by? That we should be told minutely when and by whom these elements were modified and fashioned, and be left to *reason* for the interesting and momentous information *whence* all things

had their ORIGIN? And that, especially, when so much weight is attached by the inspired writers to this sublimest exertion of Almighty power,—that of creating from non-existence—as distinguishing the only true God from the vanities of the heathen, (Is. xlv.)

The fact adduced by the author that such a force of the verb is not sanctioned by usage, would establish nothing in substantiation of his view, since, evidently, no use distinct from the present would occur for expressing this precise shade of the idea. And certainly the application of words from a lower sense among men to a more exalted bearing in reference to God, is not unheard of, or unreasonable. Terms which, in their common acceptance, express an attribute in a finite degree, are used of Jehovah as involving an infinite measure of the same. We ask then, will the strictest adherence to philological rule pronounce that *בָּרָא* cannot, in this connection, signify *to create out of nothing*? That no word in any language conveys precisely this idea, would easily arise from the nature of the case. Men, in ordinary intercourse, have no occasion for a term to express an action of which they have known no parallel, an operation confined to this individual instance. On the other hand, the inspired penmen uniformly borrow from familiar discourse, words which, in their application to Jehovah, instantly assume a loftier and more exalted import. It is in this manner that they describe his existence, and speak of his perfections, and not by coining for each specific occasion of the kind, terms wholly peculiar. The context is depended on with safety for the proper modification of the general idea. And, in the case before us, it is from this quarter that we claim for the verb a force such as we advocate. Since, moreover, the special exercise of Divine power in question, is, on both sides, admitted, and the dispute is upon the probability of its *statement here*, we ask which is the more natural presumption? We contend that its expression would furnish just such an idea as we reasonably look for at this point of the Mosaic account.

Nor would this view conflict at all with “ascertained geological facts.” We pronounce not upon the precise period referred to by, “*in the beginning*,” as fixing the date of such a *special* omnipotent act. The author may assign to it a chaotic indefiniteness, or leave the modern science to fix, by laboured computation, the year and day of the work, before old time was born. The phrase naturally refers the

reader to the incipient stage of material existence—whether at the opening of the first day, or far back in the ages of a past eternity—when the rude materials were first ushered into being, which during the creative week were wrought into the comely fabric. Accordingly the historian qualifies the first verse by the immediate context. The heavens and earth, then ‘created,’ are described as *in chaos*. The earth, afterward fashioned with so much symmetry and beauty was immediately subsequent to this prime act, ‘without form and void,’—and the heavens afterward lighted by their resplendent orbs, were yet a dark abyss.

The author excepts to the English rendering of the word תַּנִּינִים , Gen. i. 21, as “decidedly failing to represent the true import of the original.” Several passages are referred to, to show “the inconsistency of our translators” in their version of the term. While it must be confessed that Scriptural usage leaves us in doubt respecting the species of animal denoted by תַּנ : plur. תַּנִּינִים , the author creates needless obscurity by considering this word as a different form of that in the passage before us. The plural noun which here occurs is from the sing. (tannin) wholly distinct from (tan) above mentioned. The confusion has doubtless arisen, first from the fact that both are sometimes rendered ‘dragon;’ and chiefly, perhaps, from the circumstance that in two instances Ezek. xxix. 3, and xxxii. 2, we find the irreg. sing. (tannim) written for (tannin) by a familiar change of ת for י and once also, Lam. iv. 3, the plur. form (tannin) irreg. for (tannim.) Alike, however, in both cases, the sense of the passage determines the irregularity: forbidding the former to be mistaken for the plural, or the latter for the singular.

Were תַּנִּינִים but a variation of תַּנ , and תַּנִּינִים of תַּנִּינִי the alteration which the author suggests of “great reptiles” for “great whales,” would surely be convenient to cover the whole.

Though the distinction is not always preserved in our English version, yet a reference to the instances of their respective occurrence will show that the word here found is elsewhere termed a dragon of the *sea*, Is. xxvii. 1. In Ezek. xxix. 3, it is described as “the great dragon that lieth *in the midst of the rivers.*” See also Job vii. 12. While in the single instance where (tan) is rendered as an inhabitant of the sea, (Lam. iv. 3, “a sea-monster”) the rendering is not sustained by the description which immediately fol-

lows, where the animal is represented as “drawing out its breast and giving suck to its young.” This version of the word was probably induced by the irregularity of the form in which it there appears, confounding it with sing. (tannin.) The noun (tan) moreover, is generally distinguished from (tannin) by its prevalent application to a *land* animal in our English version, as in Is. xiii. 22, xxxiv. 13, Ps. xlv. 19, and Is. xliii. 20.—“The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls,” Jer ix. 11, x. 22, xlix. 33. It is sometimes denominated the dragon of the wilderness; and is represented as the tenant of desolate, waste places, Malachi i. 3, Micah i. 8.

Accordingly Gesenius defines (tan) “*Bestia quaedam deserticola.*” And on the other hand (tannin) “*Bellua marina; piscis ingens.*”

The Arabic preserves a like distinction, rendering (tinnon) *lupus*, and (tinninon) *serpens ingens, draco*—Freytag. The Syriac furnishes a still clearer distinction which translates 𐤓𐤒 by the word (yoruro) which signifies “a howling beast of the wilderness”—𐤓𐤒𐤓 on the other hand, by (ten-yono) a dragon, or *serpent of the deep*.

These facts, especially those from the cognate languages, have induced eminent orientalists, as *Pococke*, &c. to understand by 𐤓𐤒 an animal such as *the wolf*, in which case the phrases “dragons of the wilderness,” “den of dragons,” “dwelling of dragons,” in which connections the word generally occurs, will be perfectly intelligible; while the howling wail ascribed to them in Micah i. 8, will be easy of conception. Rabbi Tanchum, an old Jewish critic, designates the animal as the *Jackal*, and modern travellers tell us that at the East, this creature is noted as the dismal tenant of waste places, where, at night, companies of them may be heard responding to each other, with a most hideous yell, aptly denominated *wailing*.

Ch. i. vs. 5, יום אֶחָד Heb. *day one*.

From the use of the cardinal instead of an ordinal adjective here, the author deduces a theory which, though ingenious, can scarcely be substantiated by an appeal to Scriptural usage. A few instances are brought forward, to attach to אחד “an idea of something *peculiar, especially distinguished* from others of the same class.” We are able to find but two passages in which the word may probably have this force, and even in these we consider it by no means established.

Ezek. vii. 5. Thus saith the Lord, an evil, an *only evil*, behold is come." The context would rather attach to it a sense hinted at in our version, making the idea to be, that a calamity is at hand so utterly wasting that no other is needed; such that there shall be room for no more. This is confirmed by the following sentence. "An *end* is come, *the end* is come," as in Gen. vi. 13. Such a force surely obtains in 1 Sam. xxvi. 8. "Now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth *at once* (but one stroke,) and *I will not smite the second time.*" But allowing all that is claimed from the passage above cited, and Cant. vi. 9, we cannot admit the same in regard to any of the others referred to. In 1 Kings xix. 4, "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under *a juniper tree.*" We see no ground to conjecture that it was a "*peculiar*" juniper "distinguished above all others of the class."

So of 1 Kings xx. 13. "And behold there came *a prophet* unto Ahab."

Gen. xxxvii. 20. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into *some pit.*

The author infers from this use of אחר that "the evening and morning constituted a *certain*, a *special*, a *peculiar* day, a day *sui generis*;" and understands that "a *series or succession of twenty-four hour days constituted a period of undefined extent.*" "And so of the subsequent days of the creative week."

If a specific reason must be assigned for the use of אחר here, would it not be quite as plausible to find it in the circumstance that no other day had as yet existed in reference to which this primal succession of day and night could be denominated *first*: that it was rather *numbered "one,"* in relation to the similar intervals which should follow? It is not uncommon, however, in enumeration, where the numbers explain themselves, to use cardinals for the first and second, passing to the ordinal in the succeeding; as in *Suetonius* we find consecutively, unus-alter-tertius, where the connection renders the force sufficiently clear.

A use of אחר singular indeed, is met with in Exodus xviii. 4, where, nevertheless, nothing "*peculiar*" can be denoted. "Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, and her two sons; of which the name of *the one* was Gershom—and the name of *THE ONE* was Eliezer."

But as yet no passages have been referred to, where אחר

occurs in a connection similar to that under consideration. Precisely parallel is its use Gen. ii. 11, where the four rivers are enumerated. The name of *the one* האחד (not the *first*), is Pison; "the second," "third," "fourth," as here, being expressed by ordinals. We turned to the author's notes on this passage, expecting to find something "*peculiar*" respecting Pison, based upon this phraseology, but were disappointed nearly as much as to observe such a course adopted in the connection before us.

However strange the reading be considered in either case, it will surely not be pronounced *singular* upon reference to the parallel instances.

Even where this cardinal adjective does not stand connected with a series of ordinals, which, as in this case, serve to determine its true meaning, it is by no means uncommon to meet with it where it must necessarily have the force of the ordinal; and that without augmentation. Haggai i. 1, "In the sixth month, in *the one* day of the month."

Gen. viii. 5, "In the tenth month, on *the one* day of the month." So vs. 13, "And it came to pass in the one and six hundredth year, in the first month, *the one* day of the month." Here the ordinal in one case, and the cardinal in the other, must have precisely the same force—and moreover the data are furnished in the context, to show, by actual computation, that אחד must mean simply and only "*the first*."

So Ezra x. 16, 17, 'in, the day one'—'by the day one'—surely יום, here cannot on account of אחד denote "an INDEFINITE PERIOD."

Nehemiah viii. 2, "And Ezra, the priest, brought the law upon *day one*, and read therein from the light until mid-day."

Analogous is the use of a cardinal for "the first" in Greek, Acts xx. 7, 'Εν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων.

Nor is this peculiarity confined in Hebrew to אחד. In 2 Kings xii. 1, we find, 'In the year *seven*' (for *seventh*.) Esther i. 3, 'In the year *three*' (for *third*.)

After the author has satisfied himself that אחד may have this *peculiar* signification, he proceeds as a second step in the argument to assume, that יום may, in *this connection*, designate "a period of indeterminate length." That it *sometimes* has this wide sense he has shown by ample reference. The difficulties in the way of adopting it *here*, he has not removed. We suggest a few of them briefly. I. That we are furnished with no intimation of any change in the mean-

ing of this word as we pass to chapters iv. v. vi. and vii.; and yet no one will suppose that when God said to Noah, “*Yet seven days*, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth, it was understood in this acceptance. But why confine this indefinite length of the day to those occupied by the work of creation? We are told that the use of יָמִים warrants it; and that the latter clause of verse 5, we must paraphrase thus: “A succession of evenings and mornings constituted a peculiar kind of day; a day, a period of undefined extent.” But we have not the same pretence for a like conclusion respecting the *remaining* days. In all the following cases, the ordinal, not the cardinal adjective is used. And yet the author claims the same construction for the rest, and arbitrarily extends it no further.

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 II. If the six days of creation were, indeed, periods of unknown and indeterminate length, we are forced to conclude that the *seventh* was so likewise, and that when “he blessed the seventh day,” God blessed an *epoch* of untold limit, not a *day*, as we have apprehended. This must entirely alter the aspect of the Fourth Commandment. The ground upon which God instituted the Sabbath was his own holy example, which he deigned to assign as a reason for the command that we set apart one day in seven to himself. This then must be the tenor of the statute: “Six epochs shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work—FOR in six epochs (or, indefinite periods of time), the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh epoch, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbatical epoch and hallowed it.” Even *figures* can fix no definite idea to such a command.

III. A third objection, and connected with the former, is, that the great principle of devoting to the Lord a *seventh portion* of our time cannot be urged with the author’s interpretation. Inasmuch as these periods must have been wholly unequal, marked only by the *irregular* as well as far-between events in the process of creation, the seventh would bear to the former no assigned proportion, and be related to them only in the order of *sequence*. The same feature in the Mosaic institutions, met with in the Sabbatical year, with its peculiar ordinances, must lose its greatest interest, thus divested of its most important relation to the intervals of the original week. It seems preferable, therefore, that those who consider more than six ordinary days to have been necessary for the Deity

to complete the work of creation, should assign some definite and uniform length to these "*peculiar*" days, that when the second, third, fourth, &c., are spoken of, we may understand at least the successive lapses of some *fixed period*, and still regard the seventh as *a seventh portion* of the whole.

To affirm that the day blessed and hallowed was a day of ordinary length, while all the preceding were extraordinary, is to mar one of the most beautiful features of the ritual economy. But we can conceive no possible ground for such an assertion. When, in the inspired narrative, a period is designated as the sixth day, and one directly following as the seventh day, without at all notifying the reader of any *peculiar* meaning in either case, who could believe that an interval of twenty-four hours was intended by one, and an indefinite number of weeks, months, or years, by the other?

Again—When the Deity could as easily have perfected the work of creation at a bidding, as he could fashion a full grown man, or "build a woman on a rib," the most plausible reason for his occupying any space of time in the transactions, would seem to be, that such a course might subserve some important design for the *future*; and how admirable the symmetry of these arrangements, when we view the procedure as intended to lay the foundation for a most important institution to be observed through all generations. If this were indeed the grand motive for such a distribution of the work, how much more natural, simple, and congruous, the division generally understood, than that which this theory proposes.

But the author seems to claim from usage more than will answer his design. He asks for אָחַד as here used, the sense of "peculiar, especially distinguished, from others of the same class," and understands יוֹם here to mean "a day of indefinite length." Combining the words as in the original, we have 'יוֹם אָחַד,' signifying, according to Prof. Bush, "*a peculiar day of indefinite length.*" This would prove the first day to have been peculiar, and especially distinguished from the following days of the creative week, if it would prove any thing.

The prohibition of blood as an article of diet, the author clearly deduces from Gen. ix. 4; but in touching upon the design of such an ordinance, he presents not, as we think, the main idea with sufficient prominence. The peculiar sacredness which attached to blood in religious worship

finds its grand reason in the fact that it was *the specific emblem of expiation*. The article of death, evidenced by the flowing life-blood, was the indispensable requisite for remission. The special, solemn regard with which the blood, even of beasts, was to be treated, eminently tended to impress the mind with its sacred importance in the economy of grace; and the scrupulous abstinence with which they were to refrain from it as an item of food, would naturally add to the reverence with which the Israelites looked forward to the precious blood of the *great sacrifice*. The passage in Levit. xvii. 11, furnishes an explanation. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Here, as we conceive, it is not merely stated that "life goes for life," but that *blood is specifically emblematic of expiation*, pointing with sacred, reverential import, to the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," whose blood cleanseth from all sin; through which he should "make peace," and men have redemption—Coloss i. 20; Ephes. i. 7. Thus would the ritual worshippers be forcibly reminded not to ascribe *vital efficacy* to their bleeding victims, but to look forward to the Heavenly Lamb, whose blood alone was savingly efficacious. This language would convey the idea that in some way, the blood was to be regarded as *vital*; and yet, forbidden as they were, to appropriate this part of their animal oblations, they would be pointed elsewhere to that which should give life; and could not fail to recognise the striking propriety of the whole upon reference to the sacred, life-giving blood of the atoning sacrifice; which should be spiritually administered to his people by the New Testament, and of which they should drink to the life and salvation of their souls. John vi. 53—56.

We cannot think the author happy in the turn which he gives to the sentiment of the next verse. (5.) "And surely, your blood of your lives will I require—at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man—at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." The whole rests upon his version of the first clause, according to which the remainder is modified, "And surely your blood *for your lives*;" i. e. "in return for the life-blood which you have shed." This is plainly forced, and the violence which it does to the drift of the paragraph, as well as to the original phraseology, must decide against it.

Man was to be secured against the attacks of rapacious animals by that fear of him with which they should be impressed, (verse 2). This instinctive awe of the human form should be a safeguard to Noah's diminished company against the wild ferocity of the brute creation. Moreover, he should be at liberty to slay them at his will for his nourishment and support, (verse 3), with this only restriction, (verse 4), "*But flesh, with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.*" "And (verse 5) surely if the blood of the brute creation is thus to be held sacred, *your* blood of *your* lives," or your life-blood, will I require, i. e. *avenge*. Thus was Noah's band to be protected also against the jealousy and rage of their fellow men, no less than from the wild fury of the lower animals. God declares that *their* blood should be avenged upon the murderer: upon every beast that should destroy human life: upon every man that should brutally assassinate his fellow; and in verse 6 it is specifically ordained that man himself should be the instrument by which Divine justice should visit the sacrilegious deed upon the perpetrator. This we consider as the only natural and true connection; and this view of the passage is demanded by the phraseology.

The verb שָׁרַף, though frequently used in an absolute sense, has an established meaning when found in construction with דָּם. To "seek blood," according to the manifest usage of the Hebrew Scriptures, is not to seek it like a beast of prey, or a blood-thirsty assassin. It is by no means equivalent to the English phrase to "seek one's life;" i. e. to aim at his death. But inasmuch as the murderer who *takes* another's life is regarded as having it in his possession, as the spoil of robbery, the Hebrew phrase to "seek blood" means to *search for it*, as thus *plundered*; and when the life of the murderer is taken in return that of the murdered is recovered. This is an established idiom of the language, and to the sense of a passage its observance is very material. To take each word independently and use it in its absolute signification is wholly unwarrantable where the expression is known to be idiomatic. In this case the meaning is completely metamorphosed. How would it answer thus to disregard the idioms of any other language? In the Latin, for example, we have "*dare pœnam*," which all are familiar with, as meaning "to suffer punishment." But "*dare*" absolutely signifies "*to give*." Who would on this ground assert that the expression may mean, "*to ad-*

minister punishment?” We can conceive of cases, to be sure, in which it would be quite *convenient* for one immediately concerned to turn the tables thus, by urging a literal interpretation, but the technicalities of Roman law could not thus be nullified. If liberties of this kind may be taken in one case, where no necessity requires, we see not why the same may not be adopted elsewhere on the most trivial grounds.

But additional violence is done to the passage before us, by taking קָרַן in a sense almost, if not quite, unparalleled. We recollect of but a single case where it *can* be understood of *instrumental agency*, viz. Mal. i. 9; and this is in an obscure connection, where the bearing of מִיַּדְכֶם is not agreed upon; and where also it occurs in construction with הִיהֵא. The authorized and uniform expression for “by means of” which the author claims from מִיַּד, is בְּיַד as in Mal. i. 1. “The burden of the Lord *by* (b’yadh, by the hand of) Malachi.” Exod. iv. 13, “Send, I pray thee, by the hand of (b’yadh,) him whom thou wilt send.” So Jer. xxxvii. 2.

But there can be no doubt respecting the force of (קָרַן) when construed with the verb (דָּרַשׁ), and that especially in connection with (דָּרַשׁ). Though the phrase is idiomatic, no English reader familiar with the Scriptures, fails properly to apprehend it; and it is only with an effort that in the minds of the learned, the legitimate meaning becomes superseded. In Ezekiel, chapter xxiii. all understand the import of the phrase, “his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.” So verse 8, “If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but *his blood will I require at thine hand.*” In Scripture usage, “Sanguinem repeterere ab aliquo,” is equivalent to “cædem ulcisci.” The blood sought, is blood already spilt. It matters greatly whether we are to consider the person from whom ‘ab aliquo,’ (מִיַּד אִשֶּׁר), it is to be recovered as one who is to obtain it, as an agent, from the murderer, or as himself the individual upon whose person it is to be found. And that the same language should convey both ideas is, in the nature of things, impossible. Just so in the Latin expression, analagous for our purpose, “*petere pœnas ab aliquo,*” the person from whom punishment is sought is the culprit the individual who is *himself to suffer*, and not by any means, he who is to *administer justice* upon the offender. To interpret these words literally, we must understand that instead of *to punish another*, they

mean "to seek the execution of judgment upon one's own head." Ideas radically opposite we should think; and that they may be interchanged at pleasure, or that by the same phrase both may be conveyed in any one connection, will not, we presume, be contended.

But there need be no difficulty in accurately rendering the first clause of vs. 5. The English version reads, "and surely your blood of your lives will I require." Our author's paraphrase is, "I will require your blood in return for the life-blood which you have shed," understanding *דרש דם*, "to require one's blood" as *to slay one*, in face of its established signification "*to avenge one's blood as already slain.*"

This latter sense we consider the genuine and only proper one of which the phrase is capable.

The Notes before us adduce references which determine this material difference against themselves. Gen. xlii. 22. "Therefore behold also his blood is required." Joseph's brethren by this language, surely did not mean that the life of their brother was to be taken. They supposed alas! that he had already fallen a sacrifice, and stood in fearful expectancy of an *inquisition* for *his blood*. Ps. ix. 12. A strict adherence to the "forms of words" is our best security for arriving at "substance of doctrine."

The blood even of beasts must be held sacred, (vs. 4.) And surely (vs. 5,) *your* life-blood I will *avenge*. Taking the author's meaning of *דרש*, the sentiment runs thus, "To the blood even of beasts there must be attached peculiar sacredness. And, surely, *your* blood will I *shed*; an incongruity which he seeks to relieve by turning the essential idea upon the force of *ל* and assigning to it a very unusual bearing. But allowing for this all that the author claims, we have, "Your blood will I *shed* in return for your lives (i. e. the lives of your brethren); I will *shed* it, by *means* of every beast—*by means* of man—*by means* of every man's brother will I seek the life of man. In this last clause, we see not how he avoids the idiomatic force of (*darash*), except he would have us consider it as covertly involving the *curse of Ishmael's posterity*. This indeed, would seem quite as legitimate as "a tacit reference to *Goëllism.*"

Again.—There appears no evidence in the actual state of things either then, or since, of a divine 'provisional expedient,' by which every beast was charged with the destruction of a murderer. The quotation from Job, simply embodies in

poetic language, the idea that to the children of God there should be perfect security from the various forms of evil. It is written also in the same connection, "At *destruction* and *famine* thou shalt laugh;" yet this affords no ground for supposing that by means of *famine*, also, the murderer's life was taken. We consider the language as conveying nothing more than that of the Psalmist xci. 3, 5, 6, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence." "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night nor for the arrow that flieth by day," &c. summed up in vs. 10. "There shall *no evil* befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

Our view of the passage receives confirmation from the fact that by the Mosaic law the blood of a man was enjoined to be 'required at the hand of' or *avenged upon*, the beast that should murderously violate the sanctity of human life. Exodus xxi. 28.

Again.—According to the proposed interpretation, vs. 5 is merely tautological of vs. 4, and however it may be referred to "a different state of society," no intimation of the kind is furnished by the context, vs. 4, "*By means of every man will I seek your blood—by means of every man's brother will I seek the life of man,*" vs. 5, "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood *by man* shall his blood be shed."

The author's view of the following clause would also seem to conflict with his version of this passage. The reason assigned for ordaining man as the instrument by whom God would avenge wilful assassination is, as he conceives, "that man bears a visible impress of the divine image in the legal sovereignty with which he is invested." But how then could there be committed to the brute creation the same charge involving such representative capacity? Is it a reason applicable only "at a more advanced stage of society?" But surely, if it was necessary to commit the execution of justice in any degree to the agency of beasts when the whole race of man belonged to a single circle, and when an escape from the avenging stroke of his fellow were scarcely possible, would it not *much more* have been required in later times when the assassin could escape detection—could lose himself amid a crowded population, and effectually elude the most vigilant and persevering search of his fellow-men? In *present* circumstances we could well accommodate the author's theory, and plainly recognise a propriety in *reversing* the arrangement he proposes, making man alone the

executioner in Noah's day, while in ours, man and beast alike should be commissioned to execute the divine vengeance; and he that should escape unwhipt of justice through the crowded avenues of a city, should be torn in pieces on the highway by the ravening beast.

The general view taken of this section in his opening remarks, p. 149, 150, will further substantiate the propriety of the reading for which we contend.

Hence it appears that the language of vs. 5 was rather to assure the confidence of Noah and his company, than to utter a denunciation which should avail as a restraint upon their own passions. Not so much by an intimidating threat, to prevent them from the perpetration of such a foul offence, as to quiet their fearful apprehensions from the violence of man and beast.

The transition from the blood of lower animals to that of man, authorizing the former to be shed with impunity, while the life-blood of the latter should be summarily avenged alike on the rational and the irrational offender, presents a glaring contrast for which the mind involuntarily asks a reason—a reason, indeed, familiar to us, but one which it were by no means inappropriate to suggest to Noah and his associates. Alike with them, representatives as they were of our race, God had preserved a specimen of creation in its inferior orders, providing by his wise direction alike for all, and protecting them alike from the desolations of the flood. But now, the beasts are again to subserve the interest and comfort of the 'lord of creation:' not merely for sacrifice, but to be slain, whenever the cravings of appetite demanded. But the life of *man* was to be preserved with sacred jealousy, and its violation followed with fearful retribution, *because he was created in the image of God.*

Thus would the human race be notified of the surpassing value attached by their Creator to that impress of himself with which he had stamped the noblest of his works. If thus jealous of his *natural* image, how much more of those *spiritual features* which the first pair, alas! already had lost, and which it is the glory of redemption to restore.

So that while we clearly recognise, in verse 6, a Divine warrant for the civil magistrate to take the life of a wilful murderer, we prefer to consider the last clause as pointing to the ground of such a constitution in the fact that man was invested with God's image, and that, even the dim traces of it yet discernible, saving in morals, are not without their

value—cannot be thus daringly effaced; and that he who is guilty of the capital sacrilege, shall pay the forfeiture to society and to God, *with his own blood.*

Chapter xv. 6, “And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Upon these words Professor Bush comments thus: “This particular act of faith was counted to him (Abraham), as in its own nature it truly was, as a righteous, *that is, an acceptable, an excellent, a praise-worthy act.*”

This view we consider entirely to fail of the essential import. Though it is not opposed by the grammatical construction, and not unparalleled in usage of terms, it is quite inconsistent with the interpretation furnished by the Apostle Paul. The whole argument in his Epistle to the Romans, where (iv. 3) he avails himself of the inspired testimony concerning the father of the faithful, presents the passage in another light. Every allusion which he makes to it throughout the chapter shows plainly that a more important meaning was attached to the language; and to understand his quotation as our author would have us paraphrase it, would not only not subserve the argument of Paul, but tend directly to impair its acknowledged force.

The Apostle was presenting the doctrine of *gratuitous justification*, as the only hope of the sinner. The law once broken only condemns. Being “weak through the flesh,” it never can effect the salvation of a soul, and they alone who are “*justified by faith*” can live. And to substantiate from inspired truth this fundamental position, he adduces the case of Abraham. “For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” Even *he*, therefore, had not whereof to glory, in works, before God. He simply believed the Divine promise with a saving faith, and it was imputed to him (set to his account) in order to his justification. But we are told, that “the example of Abraham is adduced, *by way of illustration*, as an *analogous*, not an *identical* act of strong and acceptable faith.” As one which, by reason of some minor resemblance, might be accommodated to his purpose. But the passage is cited as *proof*, to fortify an argument, and therefore must have its direct and obvious import. To show that the sinner’s justification before God could be only by means of faith, and not on the ground of works, he declares that thus was justified the *father* of believers, and proves the

assertion by the very Scripture before us. If the version advocated by our author, convey indeed the legitimate and full sense of the passage, how does it subserve the design of the Apostle? Would Paul have quoted it in that connection, and especially would he have assigned to Abraham's example so great a prominence, were not the exercise of faith here recorded of him, properly and truly justifying in its nature? It would have gained him not the least for his reasoning. The mere testimony that this act of faith was judged *commendable*, approved by God, and recorded to the patriarch's honour *as such*, would by no means have established the position that Abraham was gratuitously justified. It would have made directly for the opposite conclusion. It would have conveyed the idea (remotest from the true design), that in faith so strong—overcoming so many obstacles—believing against all natural grounds of belief, there was involved *something meritorious*; and further, that such an act, *in itself considered*, might *now*, in the case of the sinner, secure the acceptance of God. Pointing out, as the Apostle confessedly is, the *method of justification*, the inference from a quotation so understood, would surely be, that the sinner might have something whereof to glory. And accordingly, in his subsequent appeal to David, we should expect to be referred to his testimony concerning Phineas (Ps. cvi. 31), as perfectly accordant. But what do we find? "*Even as David also describeth*"—showing the harmony of his evidences—"Blessed is the man," *whose act of faith is credited as highly commendable?* No; but "to whom the Lord will not impute sin." The zealous act of Phineas was "rewardable," and when we are told that it was "counted to him for righteousness," we may doubtless understand that it was approved by God according to its nature, and "recorded to the credit of the performer to all generations." But how utterly incongruous would have been the presentation of *this* case in furtherance of the Apostle's reasoning, none can fail to perceive. And if the Scripture quoted concerning Abraham is to be understood as our author would have it, Paul will, for the first time, be chargeable with a blunder in logic. But the same Divine Spirit, who dictated the sentiment before us, guided also the Apostle in his construction of the phraseology, and in his natural, legitimate application of it to his important end. And indeed, as though to leave no room for misconception, suggests the *design* of the record, (verses 23, 24,) expressly stating that it was written, to furnish all who

should follow, with a signal specimen of *justifying faith* as the means of acceptance with God.

If, as we are told, the Apostle adduces the case of Abraham merely to show that *saving faith* must be exercised under *similar discouragements*, the reasoning, in our view, loses very much of its force. True it is, that obstacles equally formidable oppose the appropriating act of the sinner from every other consideration, than the mercy and faithfulness of God—that “what He hath promised he is able also to perform.” In this particular, therefore, Abraham is an illustrious example. But the special appositeness of his case lies in the fact that his faith had reference to a promised Redeemer, and credited the testimony which God gave of his Son. When summoned to leave his country and set his face toward Canaan, Jehovah had declared that he should be a blessing, and that in him “all families of the earth should be blessed.” The great, the stupendous results were thus obscurely presented, but *how these things could be*, was the formidable difficulty. He casts his care upon the Lord—avows his apprehensions, and thus elicits a promise which “*shuts him up to the faith.*” “As the stars of heaven for number, so shall *thy seed* be.” This covers the whole ground—brings before his believing vision and his fond hope his own numerous progeny, pre-eminent among whom was “*the seed,*” “as of one which is Christ:” Gala. iii.

Our Saviour attributes this view of the promise to the patriarch, when he says, John viii. 56, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day—he saw it and was glad.” It is thus that the Apostle establishes the important position that the method of salvation in all ages has been, and must be essentially unchanged. That justifying faith recognises the same promised Redeemer, and derives its saving character from the fact that alike in prospect and in retrospect it fixes upon the same Deliverer. That the *object*, too, of Abraham’s faith, was truly the same with that of ours, is shown from verses 17, 24. He believed in the Almighty as promising to raise him up “a seed, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.” We are to believe in this *same God*, considered as having raised up this long-promised seed and deliverer, and as having “declared him to be the Son of God, with power by the resurrection from the dead.”

That צְרִיקָה, and δικαιοσύνη, translated “righteousness,” may, legitimately, be understood in the sense of “justification,” will not be questioned, and we see not therefore any

solid ground for rejecting the Apostolical construction so plainly apparent. The *necessity* of adopting it, indeed, seems obvious, on reference to verses 22—24; where, if we incorporate the author's version, we shall read, 22. "And therefore it was counted (imputed) to him for a *commendable act*. 23. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; 24. But for us also to whom it shall be imputed *as a commendable act*, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

The great objection opposed in the Notes before us, to the more obvious rendering of the passage, is drawn from Hebrews xi. 8, 9, where faith is attributed to the patriarch at a time previous to this promise. Whence it is concluded that he must have been already in a justified state, and therefore that *this particular act* could in no sense have been *in order to his justification*. This, however, is, in our view, a non sequitur at least. It is no where affirmed that each instance of faith alluded to in Heb. xi. is to be considered as saving in its nature, and justifying in its immediate results. The faith (verse 3) "by which we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God," may exist without the slightest reference to a Saviour.

Fuller, on this passage remarks—"Much has been said as to the meaning of both Paul and Moses. The truth appears to be this: it is faith or believing that is counted for righteousness; not, however, as a righteous act, nor on account of any inherent virtue contained in it, but in respect of Christ, on whose righteousness it terminates. Whatever other properties the magnet may possess, it is as pointing invariably to the North that it guides the mariner. So whatever other properties faith may possess, it is as pointing to Christ and bringing us into union with him that it justifies."

Whatever may have been the nature of any prior acts of faith, on the part of Abraham, this is, *that particular act* which laid hold on Christ, according as he was divinely promised, and being imputed, or set to his account, secured his justification.

That the Notes, on the other hand, may explain themselves, we find at the close of the comments on verse 7, the author's abstract of Paul's argument so far as the patriarch's case is concerned. He says, "As Abraham, in the face of great discouragements and impediments, firmly believed God, and thereby is said to have had righteousness accounted to him, much more the believing sinner, who, in spite of all the

obstacles in the way, gives credence to the Gospel promise"—(supplying from the context)—has *his* faith accounted to him, "as in its own nature it truly is, as a righteous, i. e. an acceptable, an excellent, a praise-worthy act!"

Accordingly the author couples the case of Abraham with that of Phineas, (so did not Paul), making the faith of the one and the zeal of the other, alike accounted "as heroic, praise-worthy actions." "The conduct of each was so remarkable, so noble, so commendable, in the sight of God, under the circumstances which gave rise to it, as to gain the particular, the marked approbation of Heaven, and to cause it to be distinguished by a corresponding emphasis of honourable testimony. This, we conceive is what is meant by its being 'counted' *in both cases* 'for righteousness,'" p. 244. And yet this testimony of Moses, concerning Abraham, is expressly declared to have been written for our instruction, (vs. 24), as exhibiting the plan of justification in the economy of grace. If it be *thus*, that faith is set to our account, then surely we have whereof to glory. But it is not so before God, "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."*

It cannot be concealed that Prof. Bush's respect for Geology has followed him from the antemundane period, to the time when a confusion drearier far than that of chaos fell upon the cities of the plain. All this might be considered trivial, were there not developed a corresponding inclination to underrate the miraculous character of those dispensations which stand forth in such fearful prominence on the pages of inspired history. We own that miracles are not to be affirmed where neither the record nor the case demands it, but we maintain also, that they are not to be denied, where the explicit statement of the one, or the necessity of the other makes it necessary.

In noticing at length the fiery perdition of Sodom, Gomorrah, &c. he goes with De la Martine, Madden and Volney, to the ground to learn that there are *now* certainly characteristics of the soil, volcanic features of the country which probably furnished *their own fire*, when the Mosaic account explicitly asserts that the *Lord rained* upon the impious land, brimstone and fire. And as if to shut out such unwor-

* See, on this passage, *Jo. Fr. Buddeus. Hist. Eccles. Vet. Test. Period I. Sect. III. p. 382.*

thy conjectures, it is repeated that it was rained "from the Lord," and "out of heaven." Could language speak more distinctly? Hebrew idioms are often made use of for convenience, and passed over as often where they demand attention, but is the last specification of the three an idiom, or are the others without their emphasis? And shall we *thrice* be told that the fiery flood was poured from the *skies*, and yet conclude upon examination, that it came out of the *earth*? The language of the original strikingly associates this catastrophe with that of the deluge of waters. Here the Lord is said to have "rained," (Heb. caused to rain). There, Gen. vii. 4, he says "for yet seven days and I am causing it to rain, &c." The verb too is construed alike in both instances with the same preposition, denoting action *from above*. Every individual word of the remarkably expressive phraseology leads us to the same conclusion, and compels us to believe, in justice to the record, that just as truly as the waters poured from heaven at the deluge, the liquid fires streamed from the skies at God's authoritative bidding. This we gather from the inspired narrative. *This* must be the appeal of paramount consideration and it is only now that we are prepared to examine the territory. In such a course of procedure what estimate should we probably form of the bituminous and sulphureous properties of the soil and the hidden reservoirs of fire that even yet are smoking, fit emblem of that smoke which "ascendeth for ever and ever!" Shall we think of inverting the statement and finding a cause in the effect? Let this be the resort of those who know no better, higher cause: who like Volney labour to prove unintelligent nature one and the same with Nature's Governor and God. With all our respect for Prof. Bush, we confess ourselves astonished here. That he should discover a manifest effort to refer the grand event to second causes, when geological and historical facts so plainly corroborate the simple Mosaic account. Balancing, solicitously between a theory which reduces the whole to a shaft of lightning, firing the combustible magazines "as the flash from steel and flint ignites gun-powder," and one which explains it of a volcanic eruption burying the devoted cities. In fine, preferring the latter though less consonant with the inspired description, than the former. We hesitate not however to pronounce either of them unworthy of the occasion—signally unworthy of the Almighty's end; and falling very far short of the impression which the whole narrative conveys.

Though the sober belief of the author led him to denominate the work miraculous, how vastly does he derogate from its character as such by the adoption of a lame theory, to account for that which God himself has accounted for in a more congruous and satisfactory way? Prefacing the discussion with a remark which prepares us fully for the sequel. "It does not *perhaps* detract from the supernatural character of the visitation to suppose that the Almighty saw fit to employ natural agencies in bringing it about." p. 315. As though the possible interference of such an hypothesis with the scriptural representation were not enough—as though it were the part of a Christian commentator to make choice of human theories, and determine only which of them is best.

Of either theory we say, that it is far beneath the great design which Jehovah had in view. The judgment was to be so manifestly preter-natural that all should acknowledge it of God. Yet if the neighbouring Edomite or Horite, as he gazed upon the conflagration, recollected only the combustible properties of the soil, why need he think of a vindictive Judge, or why refer the catastrophe to the impious character of the inhabitants, when a single dart of the electric fluid, straying from a thunder cloud, could fully, to his mind, account for the event. Or how should the modern traveller judge otherwise, if he might attribute the calamitous event to volcanic eruptions, belonging to the nature of the territory? Vesuvius and Etna have swept their heated billows over an unsuspecting population, not pre-eminent in crime; and where, apart from revelation, would be the evidence that in special, direct interposition for crying enormities of sin, Jehovah appeared over Sodom and Gomorrah 'in flaming fire taking vengeance?' The Almighty would leave the judgment beyond all question, and doubtless would thus have emptied the vials of his burning wrath upon the guilty cities however otherwise had been the geological attributes of their soil. This was a method of punishment which carried with it awful evidence of its origin, and therefore it was chosen.

Diodati thus interprets, v. 24. "The Son of God who had appeared unto Abraham and Lot made this rain to fall by some word or token, which rain was caused by God's omnipotency, and showered upon the land *without any natural cause.*" Explained upon the rational hypotheses the event presents us very much the same aspect of divine interposition as does the burning of Moscow, by the Russians. In

either case, second causes appear under the controlling direction of Providence. But who does not make a wide and important difference here? Who, that is familiar with the Scriptural representation, does not recognize the combustible ingredients of the land, as the smoking remnants and mementos of a curse, which seems to have saturated the very earth?

Not long before, "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan that it was even as the garden of the Lord," (Gen. xiii. 10); and Moses threatening upon other lands the fearful doom of these cities, clearly describes the characteristic properties under consideration as the effects, not the instruments of the Divine wrath, and expresses the convincing clearness with which the lines of judgment should be traced upon the very face of the country. "So that the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when he shall see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it, *the whole land thereof, brimstone and salt and burning* that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon, like the overthrow of Sodom, &c., which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath—even all nations shall say, *wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land?* What meaneth the heat of this great anger?" Deut. xxix. 22, 23.

Even if the geological attributes of the soil were originally such as Prof. Bush maintains, would the Almighty probably have accomplished the work by such natural agents, when a prominent object was to show it preter-natural? We can rather conceive, that the existence of such combustible properties already in the soil, would have prompted the adoption of some other method, lest men, so prone to look downward, should find the moving, operating cause, below the skies.

"There is," says the author, "nothing that we can see at variance with the *really* miraculous character of the event—for it was Omnipotence that waked the sleeping subterranean fires at that particular juncture;" adding (what seems to have been the great consideration,) "nothing but what is in strict accordance with the geological phenomena that now distinguish this remarkable region." On this paragraph we beg to offer a few comments. Was this, we ask, a dispensation which, in its immediate occasion and great design, admitted of being barely miraculous, and not palpably so? Was the reference of this sudden, awful judgment to a Divine hand, to

be arrived at by the slow, rare process of faith, after that sound, orthodox belief of a general Providence had done its utmost? Is this an event which God intended to be classed with the "falling of a sparrow?" Was it enough that men, if they would soberly reflect, might conclude that this work of death was the Lord's? And that Christian commentators in succeeding ages, might remind them of a Providential hand, that doubtless "waked the sleeping fires?"

How should we receive such an explanation of the deluge? And yet, doubtless, if strata of air, in its various states through all past time, could be resorted to, as are the layers of earth, by some adepts in the "Geology of the Heavens," the sternness of that terrible dispensation would be speedily and effectually softened down, and be pronounced a miracle, only because in sacred and profane history among all nations, heathen and Christian, rain has been looked upon as the special, peculiar act of the Almighty. The deluge of fire under consideration is *called miraculous*, because it was the hand of Omnipotence which waked the slumbering flames! Does not the same Omnipotence keep the fires of every volcano and rouse at his pleasure their burning contents? And is every eruption a miracle? Rather would we say, if this be the only evidence of a preter-natural interposition, it has no claim to the name or character of such; and the stranger, as he looks upon the smoking desolations, would be apt to say, not "Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto this land, and what meaneth the heat of *this great anger?*" but, "alas! what a disaster!" and drop a tear of sympathy over the doom of Sodom. The philanthropist may mourn that they should have had so unfortunate a location, and in sincere compassion wish that they could but have known the perils of the place, and have been advertised of the fiery sea that boiled beneath them. Even now, we hear of the terrors of the earthquake at Martinique. What Christian does not refer the calamity to a Divine hand? Yet who pronounces it miraculous? Who thinks of it as such? And with all the natural causes, conjured up at the bidding of Geologists from the original vale of Siddim, who can resist the reflection that those craters would some time have burst, even though it had been upon "the plains of Mamre," or though "fifty righteous" had been found there? If the author would admit the miracle, why need he explain it away? Hear Chateaubriand—who, from his extensive acquaintance with volcanic sites, was well prepared to judge—declare on a personal compari-

son of this region, the improbabilities of such a theory; that "the presence of hot-springs, sulphur, and asphaltos, furnishes no certain proof of the anterior existence of a volcano." "With respect to the ingulphed cities," adds this celebrated traveller, "I adhere to the account given in Scripture, without summoning physics to my aid."

We follow the inspired narrative to verse 26, where we are told that "the wife of Lot looked back from behind him, and she became *a pillar of salt*." Upon which our author comments thus: "We may suppose with great probability that the saline and sulphureous matter, which, in consequence of the eruption, was showering down from the atmosphere, gathered around the unfortunate woman, as a nucleus forming a thick incrustation which gradually became hardened, till at last she stood a massive pillar of this mineral matter," &c.

Though this is quite in character with what precedes, we feel the additional surprise that Professor Bush, calling up such a picture before the imagination, could have transferred it to paper. We should as soon think of referring the death of Ananias and Sapphira to apoplexy, or of Nadab and Abihu to the accidental firing of their garments in their official duties, as to find here any plausible account of this visitation. It is, we confess, heartily revolting to our feelings, to follow such a *rational* description as throws in the back ground the terrible presence of an avenging God. We ask no naturalist to tell us what ingredients *could* have formed such a solid compound—from what neighbouring crater they might have come—or how the heated naphtha, nitre or bitumen, might have dashed against the devoted object. When God needs such ready magazines to furnish him with means of vengeance, or when we can believe it any part of his object, to conceal this signal judgment under the cover of natural causes, we will attend to this embalming process. But the sacred text suggests to us physical difficulties in the way of such an hypothesis. We are told (verse 25) that Lot entered into Zoar as the fiery fluid poured upon the plain; and the phraseology of verse 26, shows us that his wife *was close* behind him. This would convey the idea that she had already advanced beyond the range of the showering flames, and could not easily have been involved in the catastrophe of Sodom. And why suppose one miracle merely to avoid another? Some critics, anticipating this difficulty, have inferred that she must have returned to the city, and perished

in the common ruin! And this is but consistent. It seems, indeed, as though men were intent on substituting their own *miraculous theories*, for the simple statements of inspired truth, patching together any device, however incongruous, to evade the obvious force of words, and that too when there appears no shade of inducement whatever. Accordingly, we find the author's conclusion thus stated: "The truth is, the literal mode of interpretation is not demanded by the terms of the text. Salt is a symbol of perpetuity, and 'a pillar of salt' conveys the idea of a lasting monument, a perpetual memorial of the sad consequences of disobedience." The fearful catastrophe, which, even in the Evangelist's day, a single intimation could call up vividly to the mind, is reduced to this cold, shadowy nonentity: "*Remember Lot's wife!*" that she looked back, and became a "*perpetual memorial.*" How, we are left to conjecture. For aught we are informed by such an interpretation, she might have been buried as far from view as ever Moses was. Give us the embalming operation in preference to this exhausting, annihilating process. If the former were legitimate in explanation of this event, then from the same natural causes, many an impious Sodomite must have been incrustated by this streaming lava, and have stood as truly "a pillar of salt" as she. If the latter be the purport of the Mosaic language, then Cain was a "pillar of salt." Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea were so many "pillars of salt;" either of them far more worthy of the designation than the wife of Lot; for inspiration informs us of the direct interposition by which they met their doom, while of her, we are obscurely told that she became a "perpetual memorial" of the sad consequences of disobedience.

We contend for principles, important as they are true, in the interpretation of miracles. When we are plainly told that our Saviour at Cana of Galilee, "turned water into wine," we ask not to be shown how, by the admixture of certain ingredients, this could be *tolerably* done—We understand the statement as it is. And so in the miraculous events under consideration. Our God is competent to the work without the avail of physical resources. And why prevaricate when the letter of the record is so explicit? German critics do it, but first adopt as a principle of their hermeneutics, the revolting position, that *a miracle is an impossibility*. Professor Bush would never lend them intentional countenance; but in his admiration of their learned ingenuity, he has copied the manner of explaining

away miracles, without recollecting that his own belief in the reality of such interpositions renders all such explanation at once needless and unlawful.

We pass with pleasure from the philological department to the critico-practical features of the work.

And here, we think, Prof. Bush has succeeded to admiration. As a writer of vivacity and warmth he has long been favourably known to the public—but it is in a practical application of Bible truths that we have the full value of his talent, as an eloquent English writer. It is doubtless his favourite occupation. It must be so. He gives no symptoms of constraint except of such as is engendered by the swellings of emotion. The ‘necessity laid upon *him*’ is by the accumulating force of feeling, breaking down all barriers to expression. And accordingly, when he writes, it is with a ‘fountain-pen.’ And when he draws his sketches we *feel* that is with an ‘ever-pointed pencil.’ Very often one is startled as suddenly, and happily little incidents of historical narrative are turned to practical account. Gen. xvi. 7. Gen. xviii. 15.

Not unfrequently the Notes are enriched with an appropriate sentiment from Bishop Hall or Fuller, expressed in their own nervous and direct style. In other instances, the author has adopted their praise-worthy practice of looking upon *all Scripture* as “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, &c.,” and we fancy ourselves sometimes among the old divines of the preceding centuries, as the concealed weapon is drawn upon us, or we receive the powerful thrust when least aware. No inconsiderable portion of the volume is occupied in deducing from the conduct and treatment of our first parents—from the general character, the particular deportment, or the marked deliverances of Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Lot, &c., materials for most profitable reflection: while the calamitous but deserved doom of antediluvian unbelievers—the signal discomfiture of the rebel builders—and the fearful overthrow and fiery perdition of the cities of the plain, are faithfully held up—to warn a scoffing multitude of God’s threatenings, that they betake themselves to the ark; to notify towering, vain ambition, that it shall ‘build a Babel to its own confusion;’ and to advertise the profligate and stubbornly profane, that theirs shall be a “portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.”

We hope to hear from Professor Bush again.