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THE BIBLE COSMOGONY.

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“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” This sentence I regard as a paragraph by itself. It is an independent, a most important, and I will add,—considering the circumstances under which it was written—a most wonderful declaration, announcing that, at some time, at some remote period of antiquity, in the beginning of His work, God did *create* the heaven and the earth. He created from nothing—brought into being—the *material* from which the heaven and the earth were made. There is not a verse in the Bible which bears the impress of Divine inspiration more strongly than this.

At what period in the lapse of eternal ages this great event took place, we are not informed; nor have we any information as to the appearance or consistence of the newly created material, or as to the manner in which the worlds were subsequently organized from it; nor, after the formation of this world of ours, have we the slightest information as to the changes and revolutions which passed upon it, or as to the forms of animal and vegetable life which it bore upon its surface during the remoter periods of its history. These were emphatically the geological ages of the world; and the geologist had space enough here for his deepest, widest researches. He has room enough for any conclusions to which he may reasonably come, without the slightest danger of trenching on any of the enunciations of revealed truth.

That a vastly long period intervened between the proper creation of the world, spoken of in the first verse of the Bible, and the commencement of the six days' work, recorded in the following verses, there can be no doubt. It was during this period that the earth assumed a solid form; that it became fitted, in a measure, for the sustentation of life; and that the lower species of animal and vegetable life appeared upon its surface. Multitudes of marine and amphibious animals—some of them of huge and terrific forms—lived and died, and their remains are found embedded in the rocks. Vast quantities of vegetable matter also accumulated on the earth, and were treasured up beneath its surface in the form of coal, for the future use and benefit of man.

The most respectable geologists have decided that the earth, during this long period, underwent frequent and terrible revolutions. Its internal fires were raging in their prison-house, and often bursting through the crust which confined them. Mountains were upheaved from their deeper than ocean beds, trap-dykes were formed, and the stratified rocks were tilted from their original horizontal positions—as we now see them—in every direction.

It was subsequent, as I think, to one of those terrible convulsions, which had torn the earth to its very centre, merged the greater part of it beneath the ocean, and destroyed almost every trace of animal and vegetable existence, that mention is