

THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND THE NEW SCIENCES.

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III.—GEOLOGY.—*Continued.*

The last paper dealt with the geological requirement for long ages of time in order to allow of the earth being brought into its present form as a fit place for human habitation, and with the order of events as compared with the Biblical cosmology. In this paper I propose to deal with the geological problem raised by the Biblical story of the deluge. It is desirable to give it some prominence, not so much because the difficulty presses on men's minds at the present time, but rather because the matter has passed so largely out of the public thought that the present position of the question is not generally understood.

Against the possibility of a deluge in itself, geological science has no objection to make whatever. So far from that, it is part of its own teaching that there have been many deluges in the past history of the globe. Every part of the dry land now visible on the earth's surface has been, at one time or another, under water, most of it repeatedly so. And geology furnishes no reason to suppose that the causes which produced these submergences previous to man's appearance might not also occasion one subsequent to that time. In fact, it is known that the same causes are still at work, constantly changing the relative altitudes of sea and land, and they are likely to continue in operation as long as the earth stands.

But to such a deluge as that which seems to be described in the Bible geology has objected on various grounds :

1. That there is no evidence of a universal submergence of all the existing continents at any one time, either before or since man's appearance on the earth, save, perhaps, in the primeval chaos out of which all things have come into shape. Ever since that time some part of the earth's surface seems to have been always above water, though not always the same part.