

It has been fully discussed by Rauch,¹ Tholuck in his Commentary on John, Hengstenberg on the Pentateuch, vol. 2, 308, Robinson's Harmony, p. 212, De Wette's Studien und Kritiken for 1834, p. 939, Prot. E. Q. Review, 1. 190, an Essay by Dr. Turner.

ARTICLE III.

GEOLOGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANALOGIES.

BY REV. BENJAMIN F. HOSFORD, HAVERHILL, MASS.

THE precise force and value of analogical reasonings from the physical world to the truths of Revelation, are not yet clearly defined. It is even doubted by some whether they deserve any higher name than mere illustrations. But illustrations are sometimes arguments in their effect upon the understanding. They present solid truth in a clearer light, and no argument can do more. Some benefits at least result from a familiarity with such analogies; and it would be as unwise in us not to avail ourselves of their proper uses, as it would be to try to press them beyond those uses.

To a mind troubled about certain truths of the Scriptures, it is a substantial relief to find that the same sort and quality of difficulty runs through the kingdom of Nature also. This indeed does not solve the first difficulty; in one sense it enlarges it; but in showing that it is wide-spread, it shows that it is not peculiar to the Scriptures, but is a something which runs through the various departments of the creation, and therefore must have been comprehended in the original perfect plan of the creation. Convinced of this, we then fall back upon our confidence in the fundamental wisdom and benevolence of the Creator. As our confidence in the gen-

¹ Biblical Repository, Vol. IV. 108.

eral wisdom of His Providence is radical, we cast this particular burden upon it. We conclude that this element of difficulty is no mere exception, not a mistake in one unfortunate department, but is something connected with the fundamental principles of His administration. That we cannot make our intelligence shine quite through it, only indicates that it is a part of the Incomprehensible SELF. Thus, practically, the particular difficulty vanishes in proportion as we become convinced of its universality.

It is both refreshing and invigorating to Christian faith thus to draw from the different departments of natural science—God's old works—new illustrations and confirmations of the old, well-established doctrines of His Holy Word, albeit neither the one nor the other is fully understood. In this way, new analogies from nature clothe old Bible truths afresh, as each succeeding spring *renews* the old, warm earth.

Such analogies are also a convenient weapon with which to foil a captious doubter. Cavillers at Scripture are usually mere naturalists in belief. They admit a God, and nature as the exponent of Him. When, then, they are forced to admit that their store-house of illustrations, Nature, is full of precisely the same sort of element which they rail at in the Divine Revelation, their mouths are stopped. Moreover, the Bible theology can apply the facts drawn from nature to the highest and noblest uses. Their deeper meaning is never touched until they are made to utter *God's* idea in them. This the Bible helps us to do; and in this way it discharges in full its obligations to science for whatever light science may have shed upon the true intent of inspiration in certain passages of the sacred record.

Mere science arranges the wonderful facts of nature in beautiful order, along the ground. With this her peculiar province ends. Infidelity would fasten this chain to the great iron wheel of Fate, or to the no less inexorable "Laws of Nature." Christianity raises one end of the beautiful series and fastens it to the throne of God. Then all the facts shine with a new lustre from above, for the Spirit of the Infinite Intelligence pulsates through them. Christian

faith is always comforted when facts in science can be thus raised above the earth, or wrested back from the grasp of Infidelity, and applied to their highest uses in illustrating and substantiating the truths of Revelation.

This brief essay is an attempt to do a little something in this good cause. If the facts used in illustration are questioned, the writer takes covert under the wing of the best Christian Geologists in the world, who are authority for all the facts of any importance, which he has quoted. Should the method of reasoning from these facts be questioned, he is equally happy to hide himself in the shadow of the many great and good men who have used the same method, and with far better success, but not with a better intent or for a better end.

It is sometimes objected to the commonly received doctrine of the fall of man, that it was too great an evil for God to permit; that, according to the orthodox view of mankind, "the universe is a failure."

Geology, especially in its record of the carboniferous era, furnishes analogies for an answer.

No ruin could be more complete than that which ended the carboniferous era. It was universal and utter. All the luxuriant vegetation which clothed the earth with a wreath of beauty, was swept off, and hardly a species of the numerous animals which had swum in its tepid lakes, or browsed on the gigantic vegetation which overhung their banks, survived to see their strange but nobler successors. Nebuchadnezzar and Titus at Jerusalem, Alaric at Rome, and the Turks at Athens, only did on a limited scale what was done universally, when the powers of nature were let loose upon the earth at this Geological epoch.

Each stately palm and fern, every leaf and spire of moss in those illimitable forests, as shown by their perfect impress on the rock to-day, was a beautiful and complete demonstration of the being and attributes of God; and yet the whole magnificent record, when as yet no intelligent eye had read it, was swept off into a perfect ruin, and once more the fair earth was *רדו וָבָהוּ* "tohu vavohu." Moreover, all

the Fauna of this period, — the highest types of animal life yet seen upon the earth, — a Fauna, in many respects the most wonderful that the earth has even seen or ever will see, these characteristic races, the only sentient inhabitants of the earth at that time, all went down alive into the pit.

It seemed as if the Great Creator were disappointed with the work of His fingers, and had suddenly turned it to destruction. The shadow on the dial of progress seemed to have leaped ten degrees backward, as if suddenly rebuked by the Almighty.

It may be said that this ruin of plants and animals, however great, furnishes no fair analogy for the ruin of rational and immortal souls by sin. We apprehend that the *quality* of the thing destroyed does not materially affect the analogy.

At that time there were no higher creatures on the earth than those which were destroyed. They were the best which Infinite Benevolence had yet contrived for this sphere.

Moreover, the blank ruin was relieved by no clear promise of anything better to come. It appeared as if the Creator had destroyed forever the very climax of his works, up to that time. Apparently, the whole system was coming to an end, for all its princes were cut off. It was a direful premonition of what actually occurred at a later period, and of which the Christian poet sang :

“ Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost !”

But this terrestrial ruin was only apparent and temporary. It swept the earth with a besom, only that higher orders of creation might have a clean field. The gigantic and clumsy creations of that fertile period were cleared off, root and branch, sire and son, in order that no relics of them might mingle with, and thus degrade, the higher natures and the warmer blood of the races which were to come. The high temperature of that period appears to have been suddenly lowered, causing universal death ; but it was in order

that hardier and more intelligent races might develop in a cooler and more bracing air; and the superabundant carbonic acid in that atmosphere, needful to the luxuriant flora of that period, but fatal to the higher orders of animals which were to come, was gradually drawn out by the superabundant vegetation, changed by the mysterious chemistry of vegetable life into the solid carbon of wood, then softened and finally dried and packed away in a form which renders it entirely harmless to the lungs of succeeding races. Better still; this element, fatal to the higher breathing animals, was not only taken out of the air and converted into a useful solid, but this change also set free a large amount of the vital oxygen, thus adapting an atmosphere still better to the wants and organs of the nobler races which were next to come upon the stage.

Thus that element, the carbonic acid, which once would have swept the earth clean of the human race, had they then been upon it, is now become the solid carbon of the coal fields, without which some of the most enlightened and Christian parts of the earth would soon be swept clean of the greater part of their present industry and usefulness.

Now is ruin, however disastrous it may seem in itself and at the time, to be deplored as sheer ruin when it leads to the existence of a something higher and better than what was ruined? Should it be deplored when it is made to enter as a component element, into that higher and better state?

“That which thou sowest is not quickened *except it die.*”
“It is sown a natural body; *it is raised a spiritual body.*”
Infinite Wisdom has revealed no other method of producing a spiritual body than through the *death of the natural.*

Real goodness is indestructible. The substantial good of each successive Geological era is preserved, and “crops out” in the next. Ruin is not sheer ruin as long as God controls it; and in His sublime providence death is only a sowing for harvests of higher life, and the wanton breach of God’s law in the fall is chosen as an antecedent of the highest possible glory to the law and the Lawgiver.

The current doctrine of the fall and recovery of man, finds an illustration and counterpart in the primeval destruction and present restitution of the luxuriant vegetation of the carboniferous era.

Perhaps the objection assumes this form: "The restoration, if admitted, is not complete." In other words, "the plan of redemption does not work perfectly." We can answer this best by separating it into parts.

(a) "The recovery is not *immediate* upon the ruin." But who can number the ages during which the coal fields remained uncovered? How long did God leave this untold wealth of light and heat and force, to be unused and unknown?

It appears to be a principle with God to reserve valuable blessings until man is sorely pressed with a sense of need. Necessity is the divinely appointed mother of discoveries, as well as of inventions. God keeps silent as to His gracious provisions for lost man, until the heart is breaking, and out of the depths cries for help. So did He wait long for the best time to manifest His eternal love in the appearance of His Redeemer-Son; and so is He now waiting for the best time to make known His coming to the nations for whom He appeared.

"The recovery is not immediate; how could Jehovah endure the long, dark, and sad interval before the restoration?"

In itself considered and disconnected from its consequents, how dull and drear must this Geological period have seemed to the All-Wise Creator! Not one gleam of rationality shooting athwart the horizon of night; not a creature that could survey and contemplate the scene; not one aspiration towards Himself to relieve the universal earthiness; not one hope of immortality springing up from all the universal sowing of death; on all the face of the round earth, not one emanation of delight in God; not one thought of God, nor even one capability of loving or knowing God! What could be *more* blank and dreary than this, in itself considered?

But the Divine foreknowledge shot rays of light all through

that dark profound. The ripened future, *our present*, was *then* present to God. In what that irrational age was to introduce ; in its rich store-houses of materials for the happiness of future races ; in the fact that He foresaw that these treasures would be opened and used by the highest order of creation, a race made in His own image, and would subserve their highest necessities in a thousand different ways, and would even become indispensable, in many places, to the existence of His church and the spread of the gospel of His Son, — in all this *then future* He found a *then present* delight.

So in looking down the centuries upon the deluge and the cities of the plain, upon the reeking wickedness of Greece and Rome, and the stale monotony of a mere animal existence in the populous nations of Asia and Africa, — did the Infinite mind find relief in *fore-seeing* that to which this state of things would ultimately lead. So, too, in the rough, wicked and provoking experiences of His chosen people, together with His severe chastisements of them for the same, His eye rested with delight upon the materials which these temporary destructions were furnishing for the instruction and comfort of His infinitely more numerous people in all later Christian ages. To the Omniscient eye, the remote, glorious consequences were all visible in their earliest antecedents.

The Lamb was “ slain from the foundation of the world.” The Divine Architect, therefore, while slowly laying these solid material foundations of the earth, — an inferior and irksome work in itself, — could yet find a lively satisfaction in dwelling upon the glorious fact, then present to His mind, of His Son appearing upon this earth and dying to redeem men, and actually redeeming a great multitude which no man can number.

What to-day were it worth to a tribe of Caffres to be told that their Kraals were standing upon the richest coal basin in the whole world ? But the time may come when that information, if it were true, would be invaluable to them ; and it would help us to endure their present dulness, could we

foresee for them such a future. So the Father of mercies saw that an earlier appearance of His Son upon the earth would not so well have answered the benevolent end of His appearing. It would not so well have met the wants of those He came to bless. It would have been like discovering the coal treasures to Celts and Mound-Builders, or like uncapping those rich deposits ere their substance had solidified, and when it would have wasted away in useless or noxious exhalations. So God bears to-day with many nations, whose blindness and sottishness prevent His sending immediately to them the knowledge of His Son.

(b) "The restoration is not *commensurate* with the ruin;" meaning, I suppose, that a *greater number* are lost than are saved.

Numbers are fallacious data for reasoning, unless the things compared by number are identical or exactly equivalent, which is rarely the case. Figures often do lie, by inference. With the Supreme Wisdom the guiding principle is *multum* rather than *multa*.

What, to God, was the whole vegetable and animal world of the carboniferous era, compared with England or America now? What that whole Geological period, long and fertile and teeming with animal life as it may have been, compared with that part of England and America which to-day subsists entirely through what survives from the destructions of that period? Are gigantic ferns and reeds and club-mosses, the food of gigantic lizards, comparable with the wheat and the tree upon which philosopher and poet and Christian feed? Can mathematics make out an equation between millions of monster Saurians and one living man, an image of the Incomprehensible?

We dare not affirm with quite a *perfect* confidence, but with the Bible open before us, we dare affirm with great confidence, that man can make no equation between a soul safe without sin, as the unfallen angel is safe, and a soul saved from out of sin by Jesus Christ. The Bible places man redeemed above the angels unfallen; — one soul recovered by Christ above the many remaining lost. Fallen hu-

manity thus recovered, is worth more in the Divine estimation than humanity in its original form; even as carbon is worth more to the world in the solid and practical coal, than when floating as an invisible mordant poison in the atmosphere of the carboniferous era.¹

Again: the time has not yet come for man to attempt a numerical comparison between the ruin and the recovery, and certainly not for saying that the recovery can never equal the ruin.

We can understand in some measure the extent of the spoliation that attended the exodus of this Geological era; but the present extent and prospective value of those buried spoils to civilization and christianity, are not yet known or imagined. Coal was worthless stuff for untold ages; only yesterday, as it were, was it put to its higher uses, and its highest uses may not appear till the morrow.

Let redemption have proper time to unfold and mature, and thus vindicate itself. It were just to allow it at least as long a time for repairing as the ruin has been in coming on. The reign of sin on the earth, however long or disastrous, may bear no greater ratio to the future successes of redemption, than the temporary destructions of the carboniferous era, bear to all the ages in which coal shall enter into the well-being of mankind.

The time for the objector to make his confident assertion,

¹ Should we do a wrong to one of the sublimest strains in an inspired argument, if we introduce it here as an indirect illustration and confirmation of our position? "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift: for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

has not yet come, nor can it ever fully come on earth. Let him take his point of view in heaven, at that remote period when the yearnings of infinite love over lost man are satisfied; when loud hosannas to the Lamb that was slain "fill the eternal regions;" when the myriads of the redeemed, "without number, numberless, uttering joy," lead off in their peculiar and prominent part in the chorus of praise to the Infinite Excellence; when the glowing pictures in the apocalypse, are all realized, then might a numerical comparison between the ruin and the recovery be less out of season, and less likely to deceive.

A man, in this early morning of the work of redemption, speaking of it as a failure, were like what the last of the goggle-eyed Saurians would have been, deploring in behalf of the world the untimely extinction of all these ancient and honorable families, and their paradise lost forever. But an angel in heaven, looking down upon that transpiring ruin, and comparing it with the chart of God's future purposes for the earth, — what would *he* have said of the ruin? What but this — and with a meaning hardly less sublime than that of the words in their original application :

"Ye wheels of nature, speed your course;
Ye mortal powers decay;
Fast as ye bring the night of death,
Ye bring eternal day."

It is sometimes said, as a covert objection, that it would have been economy for God to create a new race, rather than attempt the restoration of a fallen race. Perhaps so; and so it might have seemed economy in Him to have created the coal, as it was needed, out of its component gases, instead of preparing it through the slow processes of vegetation, decay and transformation, thus losing interest on so large a stock of raw material, for so long a time; *but so He did not*. The eternal Creator does not leap at results as man would in the circumstances. Stumble at it as we may, the fact is fixed and stubborn, that God's wise and benevolent providence over this earth does not pro-

gress evenly, but by alternate retrocessions and advances, by deaths and resurrections, by defeats and then victories, — the forward victorious movement always going beyond the previous retreat, — the retiring wave, gathering strength by a momentary calm to roll on beyond the previous high-water mark, thus showing that the great tide is steadily though slowly gaining upon the shore. As evenings and mornings made up the primitive days, and as time still advances by alternate light and shade, so moves on God's great scheme of grace. Whether as individuals, or as parts of his church, we must lose life in order to save it; and dying behold we live.

“ So in the light of great eternity,
Life eminent creates the shade of death.”

The fall of innocent and holy man, and then his recovery through Christ to a still higher position in the universe; his fall from a something but little lower than the angels, and then his exaltation, through the Lord of Angels, to a something so high that angels count it an honor to be judged by him, — all this is part and parcel of the great scheme by which the uplifted summits of one Geological period have been ground into sand, in order to lay the foundations of the next higher in the order of Providence; by which the vegetable and floral glory of one period is dissolved, that it may meet a necessity of higher existences in a subsequent period; and by which, at the close of the current Geological period, the earth shall be burned up, that out of its ashes may start up a new earth, worthy to be a shining member of the new heavens, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

God's great store house garners up all that is worth preserving out of what we seem to lose. Goodness, truth, worth, and life, perhaps, are indestructible.

Thus each Geological period is imperfect in itself, and prophetic of something higher and better. The carboniferous period looked onward and upward. It was the first which revealed a distinct reference to man. Only its inferior uses were for the then present. Its true life was to die, and then

its strength was to lie still for ages, until man appeared, and even until he had slowly worked his way far upward towards his high destination.

Does not Redemption, in like manner, look forward to a something far higher and better than the present best? Are there not apparent inequalities and roughnesses on the surface of Christendom, which only ages of experience and attention will wear down? Are there not apparent undulations in the crust which imply a central repose even now, and which are prophetic of a perfect stability and rest, ere-long, through the whole mass? Are there not still deep deposits of meaning in Christ's nature, and sufferings, in his love and his words, which only time and development can make plain? And will not time and development make them plain?

The New Testament, in this respect, is peculiarly prophetic. It demands and promises a long future on earth, and a longer future in heaven, in which to unfold the inexhaustible meaning and glories of redemption. Confident of such a long and triumphant future, it is not over anxious to solve all difficulties at once. It can afford to wait. As God did not hasten to lay the riches of the coal measures bare to the vulgar and stupid gaze of primitive and untutored men, so He does not now make haste to parade the riches of his grace in Christ, before those who cannot appreciate it, or be benefited by it. Sometime the whole race will be fully prepared to appreciate it, and therefore it will sometime be fully unfolded.

“EPHES. 3: 10. “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he proposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

It may be said that the analogy of geology would lead us to expect a new creation, rather than the recovery of a fallen race.

The creation of the new race was not necessary. The Fall was not a destruction. Man fell, but his *man-hood*

survived. He was still as distinct from, and as superior to, the brute as ever. He was still man, only fallen. He could be raised up. All that was necessary in order that he might become, or be made into, a saint, remained. With some important modifications, he could still be used for the original purpose of his creation, viz: glorifying God and enjoying Him forever. As the corrosive carbonic acid was eliminated from the atmosphere which it poisoned, leaving it a far better supporter of animal life, so could the element of sin be eliminated from fallen humanity, and then that humanity restored, rise to a higher degree of personal happiness than before, and to a loftier tone of praise to God.

To change the figure once more;—the genial temperature of the moral atmosphere into which man was created was suddenly and greatly depressed by sin; but the change was not so great as utterly to drive the life of humanity out of him. *Man could yet be saved.* Jehovah was not reduced to the necessity of creating a new race in order to secure his plans in regard to man from a perfect failure. He will yet fully answer the original intent of his creation.

Again, with a slight variation of the objection, it may be said that the course of creation, as indicated by geology, favors the idea that man's period, like that of the races which have preceded him, will sometime end, to be followed in due time by the appearance of a race still higher than himself.

Answer.—No higher race is needed to know, use, and exhaust the earth. Already man rides master of the seas; he subdues the stubborn soil; he chains or tames the savage beasts; he yokes the mighty energies of nature to his chariot; he retains the lightning to whisper his messages along the air from state to state; he has put it under bonds to flash them from continent to continent, along the depths of the seas; he probes the solid earth, and brings up its hidden wealth; he analyzes her complex substances, and seals up her elements where he can study their nature and their laws; he *knows* the earth, and *knows that he knows it.* No higher

order of being is needed to exhaust its capabilities or control its forces. This could not be said of any preceding race. It is admitted that all other races have had in themselves the prophecies and germs of a higher race to come; for no ruling house ever perished without first giving promise of a nobler family to succeed. The mourner over expiring dynasties therefore mourned not as without hope. But for all these races, the earth was the only field they needed. None of them ever panted for more room, or wept for want of wider realms to subjugate. Nay the earth was already too wide and too wonderful a field for them. Among all her inhabitants, there was not yet one which could separate her metals, measure her crystals, or use her coal. Her rich deposits lay slumbering in her bosom, awaiting the appearance of some one to discover, survey, and use them. They lay there as mute and yet unfulfilled prophecies of a something higher than saurian or mammal.

In man these prophecies are all fulfilled. His appearance solves all previous enigmas. He proceeds at once to exhaust these capabilities. He therefore is the glorious "coming one" for whom all the earth had been groaning and travailing in pain, through all the geological ages. At length the earth has brought forth a creature who can discover, survey, analyze, admire, and use the wondrous coal. At his word, this dull, cold, heavy substance comes forth as in resurrection; it softens for him his winters; turns night into day; and drives him, with all his heavy merchandise, over land and sea, with the speed of the wind and the force of the storm. What he does with this particular material he will ere long do with all, according to their destined uses. Thus does he take full possession of the earth.

Like the races before him, he has indeed the germs of a something higher than his present self, but these germs can unfold only in some broader sphere than earth. In his highest and best nature he is still prophetic, but it is no longer a prophecy of a footstool. It reaches unto the skies. He will never be superseded by a loftier race here, for the sphere is already too strait for himself. He is fast exhaust-

ing the earth. Ere long it will be to him like a rifled and abandoned mine. Whatever prophecy therefore he has within himself of a better state, points upward into the deep, eternal heavens. When he has exhausted the terrestrial geology, the celestial astronomy offers him for a while an observatory and a home.

ARTICLE IV.

ESSAY ON INSPIRATION.

BY PROFESSOR JOSEPH TORREY, D. D., BURLINGTON, VT.

It is noticed by a late writer in the North British Review, as a prominent and remarkable feature in the controversy respecting Inspiration, that "in the vocabulary of recent discussions the terms *revelation* and *inspiration* have so entirely changed their significance as to mean the very opposite, well nigh, of what they meant before;" and he adds that "under the shelter of this ambiguity, a considerable portion of the argument or declamation of recent opponents of Scripture infallibility, amounts to not much more than an attempt, — oftentimes a dexterous, though it may be an unconscious one, — to shift the conditions of the problem and misstate the *status questionis*." How far this representation may be true as to fact, we are not concerned at present to inquire; but of the evil which must unavoidably result, in discussing the question of inspiration, from looseness or ambiguity in the use of the most important terms relating to the subject, we do not entertain a doubt. At the same time, the laying down of definitions for which the way has not been prepared by some previous opening of the subject in hand, showing their necessity, seems to us a rather unsatisfactory mode of proceeding, except within the domain of pure science. We shall not, therefore, at the beginning of this essay,