

ARTICLE V.

A PROFESSORSHIP OF MISSIONARY INSTRUCTION IN OUR
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

BY REV. A. P. HAPPER, M.D., D.D., MISSIONARY OF THE BOARD OF FOREIGN
MISSIONS IN CANTON, CHINA, FOR MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

It is generally admitted that there is no more important duty laid upon the church than that of preaching the gospel in all the world. In order to qualify men for preaching the gospel to people at home it is considered necessary that the preacher should be well educated. As new activity has been manifested in behalf of infidelity and science and philosophy, "falsely so called," special provision has been made for meeting the new phases of error. At first the subject of pastoral theology received but little attention in our Theological Seminaries; but when attention was called to the importance of special training in this part of ministerial duty, arrangements were made in some of our Seminaries that instruction in pastoral theology should engage the special attention of a professor. The young men who enter our Seminaries have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the philosophy, science, and literature which are current in *western lands*, yet with all their opportunities of forming a general knowledge of these things, the theological student is thoroughly instructed in them by professors who have devoted special attention to these studies.

Very different, however, is the case of those who contemplate the service of *foreign* missionaries. They are called to go forth into lands widely separated from our own. The climate, soil, productions, and industries of those lands are very diverse from those of our own. The people of these lands have systems of philosophy, cosmogony, metaphysics, government, education, and religion the very opposite of

those in our own land, and also different from all the nations of the West, of ancient and modern times, with which systems the course of study in our colleges gives the students more or less acquaintance. The experience of former missionaries has showed that different methods of labor have been successful in different parts of the mission field, according to the character and circumstances of the people among whom the labor has been performed. This experience has been gained at the expense of much time and labor ; and the results of such experience are very difficult to gather up and render useful. But so far as facilities are afforded in our Theological Seminaries to those students who would wish to acquire the knowledge of the above designated subjects, which is so important to him in his contemplated work among the heathen, *there are simply none*. It appears most wonderful and strange that it is so. It will appear almost unaccountable to every one who comes to consider it, that it should be so. This is a probable explanation of the fact: In 1812, when the first American missionaries were sent forth to the heathen in foreign lands, there was, of course, no capability of giving any such instruction. These lands were all unknown. The missionaries went forth to gain that knowledge, by years of patient study and pains-taking inquiry and investigation. The men who went forth in that heroic age of missions were men of such earnest purpose and deep consecration of heart, that by their untiring perseverance they conquered success. Hence it has become a settled and an unhesitating conviction of many minds that what was enough and sufficient for those early missionaries is sufficient and suitable for all their successors. It might as well be said that, because there were many able and successful ministers before the days of Theological Seminaries, therefore Seminaries are unnecessary to train ministers. But as it concerns foreign missionaries, is it a wise economy of time and means to send them abroad to learn those things which they can better learn before they go,—as the knowledge of the religion, the

philosophy, metaphysics, government, and history of the nations in which they are to labor, and the knowledge of which has been acquired by the labors and toils of their predecessors? And now, when there is a wide and varied experience as to the results of different modes of labor, is it wise and economical to send our missionaries forth to gain this knowledge and experience by their own laborious, and in many cases futile and abortive, experiments and labors? We think not. It is certainly not necessary to stop in this discussion to show that the knowledge of all these things is not only desirable and useful, but necessary, to those who would be successful in making known the gospel in heathen lands. The people of India, China, Japan, Siam, Persia, and Syria are not rude and unlettered nations; they each have a philosophy, as marked as the systems of philosophy that prevail in western lands, which the missionaries combat. The inhabitants of some of these lands are remarkable for their dialectic skill. Each land has a religion and superstitions, which extend their baleful influence over all the relations and business of life and society. Those who would seek to labor among these people without some knowledge of their philosophy and religion, are very much like a physician who would prescribe for a patient without any knowledge of the particular habit and constitution of the patient.

The transcendent success of the German army in the late terrible war with France is generally ascribed to the fact that all the German officers had accurate and reliable maps of all parts of the country through which their armies had to march. On the said maps were marked all the natural obstacles and difficulties in the way, all the strategic points of the country, the forts and fortifications which had to be attacked. They were also furnished with full and detailed directions as to how these difficulties were to be overcome and the fortifications were to be attacked. In a word, they were furnished with all the knowledge of what they had to do, and how best to do it, that could be obtained beforehand, instead of being left to find out these things by scouts

and otherwise at the time. This knowledge had been obtained by pains-taking care and labor in previous years; and it had been so systematized and arranged by General Moltke, that every German officer was prepared to do his duty in every emergency. A great portion of the heathen world has been carefully explored by former missionaries. A vast amount of knowledge on all the subjects which it is desirable and necessary for the missionary to know has been obtained. It has not, however, been systematized and arranged. It is scattered through numerous volumes of monthly publications and annual reports of missionary societies, and books of history and travels, journals, and disquisitions on the religions and philosophy of the various lands.

The question, therefore, for the church now to consider, is virtually this: Shall we have a Professor who will systematize and arrange this knowledge, as far as practicable, and furnish it to the students who are expecting to go as foreign missionaries, so that in a measure they may go forth to their work fully prepared, in this respect, as the officers of the German army were? Or shall they be left to go forth as the French officers did, without any local and practical knowledge of the fields where the battles were to be fought, and hence meet with disgraceful defeat?

If the United States Government had anticipated such an event as the recent rebellion of the Southern States, and, in preparation therefor, had made accurate military surveys of various parts of the country which were the localities of the most terrible conflicts, how many sad disasters to the army would have been prevented. How greatly it would have shortened the conflict, and how many precious lives would it have saved! Let us suppose that, in connection with our National Military Academy at West Point, where our government has provided for the education of her military officers, it was known that a certain number of the cadets were expecting to serve abroad in countries where the habits of the people were entirely different from our own, the modes and instruments of war were very diverse, their forts and for-

tifications were constructed of different materials, and on different principles, and defended by guns of different calibre and range from those used at home ; but, at the same time, the modes of their warfare, the nature of all their arms defensive and offensive, together with their tactics, were all known to the government. If, under these circumstances, the government neglected to have the said cadets instructed in all that was important for them to know of the kind of warfare they were to be engaged in beforehand, and left them to learn it by sad losses and reverses on the field of battle, would not the government be held inexcusable for such remissness in their plans of instruction ? And would not the government also be held responsible for the reverses to the army, and the loss of life that might be the result of such ignorance on the part of the officers ? It is a matter of history that Braddock, the British general, who had a European reputation as a commander in civilized warfare, owed his defeat, at the place near to Pittsburgh, where his name and his defeat are perpetuated in the name of Braddock Fields, to his being unacquainted with, and unskilled in, the mode of warfare practised by his savage enemies. It is also a well-known fact, that the American militia were a much more successful force against the Indians than European drilled soldiers were, because they were used to the secret and irregular mode of attack and retreat adopted by the Indians.

But the imparting of such instruction in preparation for missionary labor is not a new idea, nor is it a mere matter of theory. The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland has established such a professorship ; and the Rev. A. Duff, D.D., long the able and devoted missionary in India, fills the chair. The missionary societies of the Church of England, and of the English Baptists and Independents, have long had provision for giving special instruction to those who were preparing to go as missionaries to heathen lands. This has also long been the usage of the various missionary societies among the Protestants of the various states of Europe. It has also the still longer sanction of the Roman hierarchy,

— which is unequalled in the skill, with which it prepares and trains men for its work among the nations of the earth. The error in the system of the various societies, in my opinion, is this: They educate their missionaries in separate schools from those in which the great body of the ministers of their respective communions are educated, and with a special and less thorough course of education. I would, therefore, seek to perfect our system of preparing our missionaries, by making arrangements to afford them, in addition to their present course, that special instruction which they need to fit them for the work in the particular fields to which they are to go.

The plan of a Missionary Lectureship would do very well as an adjunct, or supplement, to a professorship, by which returned missionaries could supplement the general and comprehensive lectures of the professor, by special statements and information in reference to their several fields, as derived from their own observation and experience in the particular land where each one had labored. But, as most of our missionaries return home to recruit impaired health and energies, and as their time and attention are very fully occupied in visiting friends and the churches in their respective home localities, and as they are without the facilities for study, how can we expect to find, from year to year, returned missionaries who could prepare a course of lectures adapted to accomplish the desired end? The fact is, that even now the several professors deem it almost impossible to compress into their allotted time what they wish to say on their assigned and appropriate departments of instruction. One of the most successful of our professors has told me several times, that he wished to incorporate in his lectures some suggestions which would be valuable and useful to those who were expecting to be foreign missionaries, but that he had found it incompatible with the general plan of his lectures.

It is my judgment, and I think this will be the judgment of all who will make the matter a subject of consideration

enough to give a well-founded opinion, that nothing but the establishment of a professorship, the duty of the incumbent of which shall be, to systematize the whole subject of missionary instruction, and give to the students the well-digested knowledge which they require, will adequately meet the great and urgent need which now exists.

The range of duties which should be assigned to such a professor would be the following :

1. To present a clear and full statement of the greatness and richness of that inheritance which has been given to Christ in covenant, and which the church has to recover for him from its present usurping possessor. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." The heathen nations occupy a vast portion of the earth still, and constitute a vast majority of its population. Many of their lands are the fairest portions of the earth. What glorious lands they would all be if they were christianized and elevated by the gospel !

2. It would be suitable to give a full notice of each several country in which the missions of our churches are located, comprehending the geography, climate, productions, population, language, government, manners and customs, philosophy and religion of each land, with a statement of the facilities for missionary labor, the progress, the present state, and the prospects of such labor, the nature of the work yet to be done, and the facilities for prosecuting it.

3. To collect and render useful the results of the experience of missionaries for the last seventy years in all lands, as to the modes of labor, and the necessity and advantage of different kinds of labor in different fields. This would, of course, necessitate the expenditure of a great amount of time and research in perusing the records of the various missionary societies, and a wide correspondence with missionaries now in the field. But the success would amply repay the toil.

4. In connection with the above, there would be also the

duty of noting the hinderances to the success of missionary labors in different lands, and the best mode of removing and overcoming them, as made known by the experience of former laborers in the field.

5. Careful and judicious discussions of the requisites to usefulness and success as missionaries ; with a statement of the characteristics of mind and intellect suited to labor among the different peoples, and of the physical constitution adapted to different climates.

6. Pastoral or practical instruction as to the best manner of approaching the heathen, and of discharging all of the various duties of a minister of Christ among a heathen people.

This incomplete sketch of the subjects that might be assigned to a professor of missionary instruction, shows that they are of varied interest and importance ; and that, without encroaching on the departments assigned to any existing professorships, they are such as would demand all the time and the highest efforts of the most gifted and well-informed mind. This chair would need a special library, in order that the professor should be able fully to investigate and prepare his lectures on all the subjects assigned to him. A duplicate of the library now in the Mission House in New York, and also that in the Mission House in Boston, would be a very desirable nucleus for it. But, in addition to that, works on the history, language, government, philosophy, and religion of all the countries of Japan, China, Siam, India, Persia, Syria, Africa, and Brazil would be needed ; and so likewise complete sets of the publications of the various American and English Missionary Societies, from the commencement ; and all the works published by missionaries and others relating to missionary work in these lands. It will also be evident to all, from these remarks, that the lectures of such a professor would require no ordinary amount of study and research. Lectures on the subjects would not only be interesting and useful to the students who contemplate laboring in the foreign field, but they would be interesting to all intelligent and inquiring minds. They

would also be of direct and special use and benefit to all who remain at home as pastors and teachers. It is the settled and wise policy of the Presbyterian church to employ no *special* agents to instruct and awaken an interest among the churches in the foreign work. It is considered to be the proper work of the pastor to do this. But pastors cannot be expected to do it effectually, unless they have such a view of the vast extent and preciousness of the inheritance of Christ as will cause their whole souls to be aglow with a desire to see it recovered to its rightful possessor. Unless pastors become more fully acquainted with the condition and needs of the various nations, how can they awaken an earnest purpose in the minds of their people to send them the blessings of the gospel?

Hence these lectures will be, to those who are to occupy the home field, as direct and essential a preparation for discharging this very important part of pastoral duty, as the other parts of their Seminary course to fit them for other parts of their work. But, of course, the more special and direct advantage from these lectures will be to those who contemplate giving themselves to the work in heathen lands. After attending such a course of lectures, covering the whole range of the subjects, young men will come to the consideration of their personal duty with a better preparation to decide the question rightly than they can have in any other way. Each one will be able to consider intelligently where his labors are most needed, to which country and climate his physical constitution is best adapted, and amongst what people his natural and acquired capabilities fit him to labor. All would be able to have some just conception of the nature and difficulties of the work to be done, and to derive benefit from the experience and observations of those who have gone before them. The consideration of the subject of personal duty, with such advantages, by conscientious and prayerful men, could not fail to secure an increased number of well-qualified men for the work. Heretofore it has happened that sincere and pious men have made mistakes as to their duty in this

matter, for want of a proper knowledge of the field and of the work to be done. Many have found, when they have arrived on the field, that the work was very different from what they expected it to be, and some such have very soon retired from the work. This action on their part has been less costly to the Boards than that of the others who have remained in the field, engaging in a routine of work for which they have had but little adaptation. It is not strange, however, that such mistakes should occur; neither is it to be expected that they can be entirely prevented; for at home, where the people themselves make the choice of a pastor, and the ministers have themselves some opportunity of judging of the people among whom they are called to labor, it often happens that experience shows that this or that minister is not adapted to the congregation to which he has been called. But there is every reasonable probability to suppose that, if the young brethren who contemplate such labor, were in possession of more full and accurate information in regard to the fields themselves, the nature of the work and of the difficulties and hinderances to be encountered and overcome, the mistakes would be much fewer.

It would be no small incidental advantage, that the students would have one who was so well qualified to give them privately such special suggestions and advice, as from his personal knowledge of them he might judge to be useful to them. For, from his observations on the field, and his full understanding of the work, he would be able to give the students who might individually seek for it such particular suggestions and information, adapted to their individual cases, as would be of the greatest use to them in arriving at a wise decision. The Boards would also naturally look to such a professor for information as to the capability and adaptedness of those who applied to them for appointment as missionaries. The opinion that prevails widely, that any young man of sincere piety and exemplary life will do to be a missionary, has led to many persons being recommended to the Boards of Foreign Missions who have no other quali-

fications than those for the service. It is, of course, true that sincere piety is an essential requisite in every one who would be a missionary. But it by no means follows that every one who has sincere piety is qualified to be a missionary. It is just as requisite, in order to success in missionary labor, that there should be the proper and necessary qualifications for it as there is in any other calling in life. The expected and necessary assistance of divine grace does not supersede the necessity of natural endowment and acquired preparation ; and as, in the nature of the circumstances, the cost of the voyage of missionaries to foreign countries, and their support during the several years they are acquiring the language of the country, involve a heavy expenditure, as compared with the home work, it is only a wise and proper economy that not only well-adapted persons should be selected, but that they should receive a *most thorough and suitable* training.

But not only is it very desirable and important that a suitable education should be imparted to those who go, but it is necessary that a *greatly increased number* of suitable missionaries should be raised up to go, into the foreign field ; for just as the church has not yet begun to appreciate the greatness and richness of the inheritance which she is called upon to take possession of for her risen Lord, so neither has she come to rightly estimate the extent of the work, or of the number of men who are needed to enter upon the possession thereof. Judging from the past history of the church, these views are not likely to prevail extensively in the church until the pastors and teachers are generally and deeply impressed therewith, so that they shall seek to awaken deep and all-pervading convictions in the minds of their hearers, of their personal obligations and responsibility to consecrate all their efforts to effect this great work. If the whole Protestant church were only aroused to such a consecration and loyalty to Christ, and the glory of his kingdom, as was awakened in the mediaeval church by the preaching of Peter the Hermit to recover the land of Palestine, and especially

the holy sepulchre of our Lord, from the pollution of Moham-
medan possession, half the cost of life and treasure that
were wasted in those useless crusades to recover the Holy
Land would enable the church to take possession of the
whole earth for Christ. Every lover of his race deploras
the terrible sacrifice of human life that was endured during
the eight successive crusades from Europe, during the
eleventh and twelfth centuries, to Palestine. Yet who does
not feel a glow of ardor pervade his mind as he reads of
that feeling of loyalty which then pervaded so many hearts,
and which led many of the noblest princes and rulers, as
well as tens of thousands of all classes and conditions of
men, to engage in these self-sacrificing efforts to recover the
Holy Land to Christian possession. But alas for the apathy
and worldliness of the Christian church! that when Christ,
her adored head, as Lord over all, has opened up the fairest
and most populous kingdoms of the world to the evangel-
izing efforts of his church, there is no enthusiasm of con-
secration aroused, nor any wide-spread feeling of loyalty
evoked, leading his people to take the adequate measures
to go up and possess the land for its rightful Lord!

In the year 1819, when the whole heathen world was
closed to any efforts of Christians to diffuse the gospel, the
deepest feeling and interest were awakened throughout all
parts of the United States by the news that was published
that the Sandwich Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, having
some three hundred thousand inhabitants, had thrown away
their idols; and very earnest and continuous efforts were
immediately put forth to send them the blessings of the
gospel. The wonderful providence of God in opening up
the great and wide kingdoms of India, China, Siam, and
Japan, with their six hundred millions of inhabitants, scarcely
arouses as much interest, or calls forth as earnest and self-
denying efforts now to send them the gospel, as did the
opening of the Sandwich Islands at that time. And in
many ways and places the church is actually guilty of "a
penny wise and pound foolish" policy, because, while she

acknowledges the duty to disseminate the gospel, and sends some few missionaries to the heathen, yet she sends too few to be efficient in effecting the desired object. The glorious and blessed results which were experienced at the Sandwich Islands are due, under the divine blessing, to the fact that the instrumentality used was, in some measure, adequate to the object to be accomplished. At one time there was a missionary to nearly every *three thousand* of the population ; and the whole church has rejoiced and given praise for this gracious result. Such also has been the fact in the South Sea Islands, where such blessed results of missionary labor have been experienced. In India, to which the church has been sending missionaries for seventy years, and where there is every facility of laboring for the evangelization of the people, there is now, after the lapse of two generations of men, one missionary to every *four hundred thousand* of the people. In China, which, in answer to the prayers of the church of God, which were continued for nearly forty years, God in his providence opened to missionary efforts, there are now, after a lapse of thirty years, or nearly one generation of men, perhaps one hundred and fifty missionaries, or one to every *two million* of the inhabitants. The most wonderful revolution in the government and policy of a nation, that ever occurred in the history of the world, has been, in the providence of God, accomplished in Japan, opening that most secluded of all lands to evangelistic efforts. This call of Providence has been before the church for some fifteen years, and there are now some fifteen missionaries there, or one to every *two and one-third million* of the population, as given by the government itself ; that is, fifteen missionaries among a population nearly equal to the population of the United States.

While reading the statement of such facts, what Christian does not feel his face blush with shame ? We profess to serve the Lord Christ, and that *all* which we have and are is his, and to be used to his service. His last command to his disciples is, " Go ye into all the world, and preach the

gospel to every creature." And it is estimated that there are from four to five hundred millions of the earth's population which have never heard of the name of Jesus, "the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved." And this not for want of opportunity or facility of communication or access to the people, nor for want of means or of men; but because the people of God do not set themselves, with earnest devotedness of heart, to carry out the command of their ascended Lord. Is it any wonder that, in such a time of ease-loving and pleasure-seeking, infidelity and worldliness everywhere increase in nominally Christian lands? And is it any wonder that when men of the world now travel over the globe, and see the treasure and labor and men that are given to carry out worldly enterprises, and the manifest results thereof, they scoff at and ridicule the few results of missionary labor? In view of the facts above stated, will not the church arouse itself to the fact, that if it would accomplish the work which she has been commanded to do, she must send forth an instrumentality in some degree adequate to the work to be accomplished? And has she not the promise of infinite truth that, if she "will bring all the tithes into the storehouse," by giving of her sons and daughters as laborers in the work, and her wealth to carry on the needed agencies, he will pour out a blessing upon Zion, "until there shall not be room to receive it." Is not the God of providence also the God of grace? and when he has so miraculously prepared the way for the gospel, will he not also, in answer to the prayers of the church, in connection with the use of the appointed means, pour out his Spirit upon all flesh until "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth"? "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Will not the love of Christ in the heart of his blood-bought followers excite them to a spirit

of consecration and devotedness to his service, such as characterizes the world in carrying forward its enterprises? Notwithstanding all the past apathy and remissness of the church, I believe she will yet arise and give herself to this work, with a zeal and devotedness that will put the world to shame, and that, as the result thereof, "the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord Christ."

But with many there has been no difficulty in seeing the importance and need of such a professorship; but they do not see how it can be established at this present time. With me, however, there is no insuperable difficulty in its establishment, if only the need and importance of it is felt by those who are interested in the cause of foreign missions. A plan which has been suggested to me appears quite practicable for a trial measure, subject to subsequent modifications. For the present, let the professorship not be connected with any one of the Seminaries. Let the arrangements be made by which the professor will deliver his course of lectures at each of the Theological Seminaries once in two or three years, as may be considered desirable. The subjects of the lectures are such that the whole three classes in each Seminary could hear them at the same time, and be equally profited thereby; because it would not be necessary for the Junior Class to have attended upon any of the Seminary course as a prerequisite for attending them. And the students of the Junior Class may as properly consider the question of their own personal duty to the heathen at an early period of their Seminary course as at a later period.

It may be proper to present an answer to some of the objections that may be made to the establishment of such a professorship. By some it will be objected that it will take away a man from the place where he is very useful now to fill this new chair. This is, indeed, true. And the very best man for the situation ought to be sought. But if the necessity and importance of the professorship are as great and urgent as they are represented to be, then it will be a wise and proper position for the most useful and gifted

man ; for it is a received axiom in such cases, that the man who trains others for greater usefulness in the ministry is doing more for his Saviour and his fellow-men than he could do by his own personal labor in the ministry.

The expense of the endowment of another professorship will be to some an objection. But to me this appears a very small matter. The endowments of all our seminaries together must amount to several millions of dollars. But not one dollar of this amount is with direct and specific reference to the foreign work of the church. When it is considered that this foreign work is regarded as of the very first importance, and that it is the most difficult ; and when a single religious denomination aims to expend four, five, or six hundred thousand dollars annually in the cause of foreign missions, can it be considered an unwise expenditure to use some three thousand dollars in paying the salary of a professor to give suitable and specific instruction to those who go forth to carry on the work ? I would consider it a most wise and judicious expenditure ; and so would it be considered in every well-conducted worldly enterprise. But besides this, it has not unfrequently happened that great expenses have been incurred by men being sent to a field for which they were not adapted. In some cases the physical constitution of the missionary has been entirely incapable of enduring the climate ; in other cases the mental endowments and acquirements were not suited to the character of the people ; and hence these parties have very soon retired from the field. Very many of such mistakes would be obviated if the young men had the requisite information before making up their minds as to their field of future labor.

By some it will be objected, that the time of the students in their theological course is so fully occupied already, that it is difficult to see how or when time can be secured for attendance on a new course of lectures. [This and some other objections will be answered in a future Article on a subject of the same nature with the preceding].

ARTICLE VI.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE ORIGINAL TEXT OF GENESIS
I. AND II.

BY REV. SAMUEL HOPKINS, MILTON, N. Y.

§ 1. CREATING.

THE Genesis of the material universe has long been a sealed book. Modern science has broken its seals, and revealed to us some of its primary lessons, such as these :

The entire matter which constitutes the present cosmos was originally in a gaseous state. By process of natural causes, involving immense time, this primal mass was separated into individual masses ; and these masses were gradually consolidated into those worlds and families of worlds which now, without speech or language or voice, declare the glory of God.

These and kindred matters are announced to us, not as the results of profound thinking merely, but as facts ; as facts grasped by dint of laborious research and exhaustive calculations ; as facts attested by the most eminent masters in the different schools of astronomy, physics, chemistry, and geology. Consequently, the several results, supported by such testimony, are rightly accepted as above controversy and beyond doubt.

There is another book of Genesis, written by the Hebrew prince who delivered his people from bondage ; written in his vernacular, now an unspoken language for more than two thousand years. This book also sets forth a history of a creation. The wise and the good of many generations have cherished it with devout reverence ; and Christian sages of the present age study it the more eagerly and the more profoundly, because of the new Genesis which science has brought to light.

As these two revelations are continually brought into comparison, it is proper that we distinctly define our own position with reference to each, before entering upon our attempt to expound the venerable document before us. We therefore give the following statements as covering the whole ground from which we make our survey. We do not give them as axioms, or as the results of demonstrations; but as simple points which may fairly be assumed and conceded by all.

Postulate 1. — The cosmogonic doctrine of modern science, as stated above, is true.

Postulate 2. — The Mosaic account of creating is consistent with itself, and with all other statements bearing upon the same theme which occur in the Hebrew scriptures.

Postulate 3. — The language of the Mosaic narrative, whether shaped under divine supervision or not, is to be interpreted according to the known and universal laws of human language. In other words, as a writer, the Hebrew narrator stands on the same level with other writers, and is to be judged by the same rules.

With these simple points constantly in mind, and with a tremulous conviction that the health and thrift and moral power of the Church, the religious interests of the world, and inspiring views of God, are critically involved with right and wrong in the reading of the Bible's first leaf, we proceed at once to our investigation of its original text, and shall endeavor honestly and strictly to evolve the true force of its several parts. We shall aim also to give *our reasons* (such as they may be) for every expository step; never allowing ourselves to rest upon any mere conjecture, however plausible.

“In the beginning.” There is no such thing as a “beginning” *absolute*. In all languages, the word is a *relative* term. Like the words “end,” “middle,” “whole,” “part,” “surface,” “centre,” and many others, it *must*, Hebraically speaking, be in the “construct state.” It can never be written without a genitive after it, expressed or implied. In Deut. xxxiii. 21, its genitive is implied, and is to be found

by reference to the historical fact (Num. xxxii. 1-5, 33-36), that Gad "provided" for himself "the beginning of" the allotments of the several tribes. In Isa. xlvi. 10, the genitive is also implied: "declaring from the beginning of" — everything — "the end of" everything. In the case before us, the genitive is expressed by "the heaven and the earth." "In the beginning of" them (i.e. "in their beginning") God did create the heaven and the earth."

The word "create" (בָּרָא) requires our careful examination, with an eye particularly to the dictum of schoolmen, that "its true idea is that of creation, out of nothing, of matter in an unformed state." Our only proper authority for appeal is Hebrew usage.

After carefully examining every single case in which this word occurs, and observing its several contextual relations, it seems to us very clear that it denotes uniformly the forming of matter after and beyond its mere being. In our view, it seems to stand always avowing, by its relative positions, its own definition without ambiguity, and without equivoque: "To produce something by operating upon some object, or objects, already existing." More laconically: "To produce something new out of something older." We refrain from citing each text in which it occurs, only because it would be a tedious and thankless task. And yet, even if this our conclusion be conceded, it does not prove that בָּרָא "to create," means in Gen. i. 1 the same which it means elsewhere.

We therefore take another step. Our writer uses the two words, בָּרָא "to create" and עָשָׂה "to make," to express the same divine acts. We give examples: God purposed "to make" man. (Gen. i. 26). What he did, was "creating" him (i. 27). If, now, the two words have different meanings, then did God purpose one thing and do another! But if they mean the same, then, with God, "creating" was the same as "making." "God *created* man in his [own] image" (i. 27). But also: "In the likeness of God, he *made* him" (v. 1); "in the *image* of God he *made* him" (ix. 6). "God *created* the heaven and the earth" (i. 1). "God *made*

the earth and the heaven" (ii. 4). "I will do [עָשָׂה] make] marvels such as have not been created [בָּרָא, English version 'done'] in all the earth" (Ex. xxxiv. 10). Thus these two words are used interchangeably and indifferently, by the same writer, to express the *self-same* divine acts. Therefore, in his mind, each word when applied to the Divine Being, had the same meaning.

To the mere English reader, the expression (Gen. ii. 3) "which God created *and* made," and more especially the marginal reading, "which God created to make," seems to indicate a difference of meaning. Each phrase seems to represent making as a product of creating. But neither phrase is a translation of the Hebrew. The proper translation, we think, is this: "which God created even unto completeness," or "perfection"; and this does not affect the point now in hand, — that the two words had the same meaning in the mind of the writer when applied to God.¹ Therefore, in our view, when Moses wrote in God's name (Ex. xx. 11), "*in six days* the Lord did *make* the heaven, the earth," he meant just what he meant when he wrote "God *created* the heaven and the earth."

The point which we make is this: If the creating of the

¹ We are bound to justify our translation. The phrase "created *and* made" is inaccurate, because in the Hebrew there is *no copulative*; because there is a *preposition*; and because the latter verb is in the *infinitive* mood. The phrase "created to make" preserves the infinitive, but *omits* the preposition. We have here a Hebrew phrase which is purely idiomatic; which cannot be translated *literally* except thus: "which God created *unto* to make." This is dark. The Hebrew gives us the infinitive of עָשָׂה "to make" with the preposition לְ "to" or "unto" prefixed. In this peculiar position the infinitive has the force of a *gerund*, for which it is indebted to the preposition (Gesenius, § c.); while the latter has here, indicated by the connection, the signification of "even unto" (Ibid. A. 2). Again: the verb עָשָׂה "to make" seems here to *require* its occasionally *emphatic* signification "to effect," "to accomplish," "to complete" (Ibid. עָשָׂה, I. 2.1.). The verb, with this definition, when used of Jehovah, included, of course, the idea of accomplishing unto *perfection*. We therefore, render thus: "His work which God created even unto completing"; by implication, "even unto *perfecting*." This rendering is grammatical, clear, pertinent, in perfect harmony with the other instances in which the writer so evidently uses these two words as having a common signification. — See Noldius, Concordance of Hebrew Particles, pp. 413, 414.

heaven and the earth extended over six days, then "to create out of nothing" is not the meaning of the word קָרָא in *this* place: Because — and it is self-evident — there could be no lapse of time between "is not" and "is"; between "no matter" and "matter." Because there never was a supposable point of the great past when there was something in a state of transition from nothing — something which partly was, and partly was not; because whenever, if ever, the potential will evoked universal matter, at that instant *nothing* ceased; *something* was. Moreover, at that instant "creating" ceased, in the philosophic sense; and if the creating of the heaven and the earth was, in *this* sense, a creating, it did not extend over six days. No matter whether it was a creation of molecular matter, or of a garnished world, or of a quick congregation of worlds. The creating described by Moses was, therefore, *not* a creating from nothing; for it was not *one* divine act, but a succession of divine acts. Far from beginning when it ended and ending when it began, it was a work of *six days*. Therefore, we iterate, — having followed another clew, — when Moses wrote "God created," he did not mean "God created out of nothing."

But we turn to yet other testimony. "Thus saith Jehovah who created the heaven, God himself who formed the earth and made it; 'He hath established it. *Not* a desolation (וְהוֹרֵאֵם) did he create it. He formed it to be inhabited'" (Isa. xlv. 18). It was "*not* a desolation" which was wrought out when God "created the earth." On the contrary, his *creating* it was his "forming it to be inhabited"; literally and grammatically, "even unto an inhabiting." (The same Hebrew idiom as in Gen. ii. 8, *ante*). Moses states that "the earth was a *desolation*" (וְהוֹרֵאֵם) the very word given by Isaiah. He says that such was its condition *before* God said "Let light be"; that is, before the six days began, or before its creating began. At that point, God's word "created" (as by Isaiah) was not applicable to it. It was an uncreated (וְהוֹרֵאֵם) desolation. This pre-existing "desolation," this *not* nothing, he took in hand as his material.

He "created it." How? By so forming it — the then "not created desolation" — that it was a habitable thing, adapted to living beings. By forming out of it a habitation; by forming out of it inhabitants; in short, by forming it "even unto an inhabiting." We are, therefore, constrained reverently to believe that the creating specified in the first line of the Bible was the very creating which the Creator, by Isaiah, has defined — the creating of the six days, which began with light and ended with man.

Instead, therefore, of the earth having been first created and then made (we now use these words in the cosmico-theologic sense), it was first made (constructed) and then created. Instead of having been created out of nothing, it was created out of "a desolation." Our testimony may be sifted in all honesty and honorableness, and our logic too, if there be any. But it can hardly be charged, we think, either in honor or in honesty, that our opinion is hypothetical.

§ 2. THE CREATIVE "HEAVEN" TERRESTRIAL.

The Hebrew word rendered "heaven" in the first sentence of this narrative is found only in a plural form. Sometimes in the scriptures it has a plural signification, sometimes a singular. Whether, in any given case, it has the one or the other, must be determined by the connection in which it is used; just as we must determine, in any given case, the grammatical number of our word "sheep."¹

In conventional phrase, "the heaven and the earth," or

¹ It would be a severe task to examine all the texts in which רָקִיעַ occurs, hoping to find a rule by which, in all cases, its singular or plural signification might be determined. We have, however, made such examination pretty largely; and it has made us quite confident of two things; (1) That the English version very often gives a plural where it ought to give a singular form; and (2) That we should *always* receive the word in its singular sense when not coupled, *by itself*, with a plural verb, or when some other and equally cogent reason is not present. Throughout this narrative it has never, by itself, *any* verb; for in ii. 14 it only *shares* a verb. But (as we expect to show) it always stands here as a synonyme of "the firmament" or expanse, which was *one*; and this fact is "a cogent and present reason" for taking it, all along, in its singular sense.

“the heavens and the earth,” means the universe. Is that its meaning here ?

We will first turn our attention to the word “heaven.” When he wrote it here, in this first sentence, did the writer mean to designate the cosmos, — excepting this world, of course, — or did he not ? Unless he fails to explain himself on this point, we have nothing to do with outside usage. If he does explain himself, he is sufficient and decisive authority ; and all other is intrusive, and not properly admissible.

We look along a little way, and we find it written “and God called the firmament, heaven.” One would naturally suppose that we have here a decisive definition of the word ; and that we only need to inquire what is meant precisely by “the firmament.” But it is said by some that “the heaven” of the first verse is *other* than the “heaven” of the eighth verse. Therefore, before inquiring what “the firmament” was, we wish to test this saying.

1. If, indeed, the saying be true, the fact asserted is unaccountable. For instance, it is unaccountable that a writer of only common parts even, in the same account, and that account so brief, should use a word of so great relative importance in different senses, and yet give us no advisement of his change of meaning ! Here is a description of different creations. One of them is called “heaven,” or “heavens.” In a few lines we have the same word again, but meaning *another* creation, or class of creations. Well, then, the writer, writing to enlighten, is writing to bewilder ; in other words, is using his own pen to defeat his own purpose ! And we say that such a use of the pen by a man of common parts is something for which we cannot account.

Again, the writer furnishes a definition of the word. With the definition, it is the firmament. But just before the definition, it is no firmament at all ! To what purpose and of what use the definition ? If it does not belong to the word throughout the story, it is, in plain terms, a mockery ; in *such* a document, a mysterious one !

Once more, assuming that the pen of the writer was

under divine guidance, and supposing that "heaven" is slyly used in two senses, we run squarely upon what seems too much like divine *duplicity*! We shrink from this? Very well. But how otherwise can we account for the fact that a divine dictation should be so framed, definition and all, that under the counter-whirling of two important words the reader must grow dizzy? A matter-of-fact revelation which *confuses* is a revelation which falsifies its own name! We cannot account for the brand upon its forehead.

For these reasons we are shy of the *dictum* which evokes them. And until we can find reasons for it, evolved honestly and fairly from *the text itself*, these unaccountables must still have the aspect of imperative rigidity; and, under their pressure, we must take the divine definition to be of rightful force throughout.

2. So long as such a change of meaning is not made obvious and undeniable, so long we must suppose one of two things,—either that a word so important *has* the same meaning throughout, or that the writer is incoherent, and therefore unreliable. As yet the change has *not* been made obvious and undeniable; and the latter supposition is preposterous, inasmuch as the writer is coherent in all else, and proves his own competence by his very careful and precise definitions. Only the former supposition, therefore, remains,—that the word "heaven" has but *one* meaning throughout the narrative; the meaning expressed by its definition.

3. If we allow ourselves, in one instance, to interpret this writing in so loose a way, where shall we stop? and upon what can we rely? "Heaven" defined meaning other than its definition; the difference not indicated! In this account it occurs fourteen times. If used to denote two different things, how do we know that it does not denote fourteen different things, notwithstanding its definition? If "heaven" expresses one thing here and another there, how are we to determine that some other word is not as protean as this? For example, "God," or "earth," or "day," or "waters," or "man."

If, in a pure statement of facts, we admit such unadvised change of meaning, why may we not admit a like change—to suit our fancy or our philosophy, or even our depravity—in other parts of the scriptures which are less simple, and laden with higher and more subtle discourse? If here, where an important word is particularly defined, we affix to it another meaning, why may we not indulge in like license elsewhere in the Bible where terms are *not* contextually defined? If we may thus set aside a textual definition, what exegetical principle can guide us in any part of the sacred text? If we start by reading the oracles *so*, we can, consistently with ourselves, evolve from them *any* doctrine, whether of him who is the true or of him who is the liar. All this is plain. Therefore we ought to have an eye to the end, when taking our start “in the beginning.”

4. We notice another textual peculiarity bearing upon this point. From the close of the first sentence through the entire *consecutive* narrative of the six days, whenever any one thing (creation) is first mentioned, the word expressing it appears without the Hebrew article. On the other hand, in almost every instance, the article appears when the same word next occurs, and afterwards. We have searched the text with some care, and if our eye has not been in fault, the article is wanting as stated, except before the one word rendered “waters.” This word does not appear the second time, and has the article. For this exception we do not presume to give or to conjecture a reason. In the second verse, to be sure, the word “waters” appears for the first time, and *has* the article. But, holding it, as we do (for reasons to be given hereafter), to be but another word for “deep,” which has not the article, we regard this as no exception.

Now it is very evident that when any such word *recurs*, the force of its article is definitive; designating that very thing which had been so nominated before. That is to say, it points backward to its own particular word, to *the* “darkness,” “light,” “firmament,” “luminary,” or “man,” as the case may be.

We turn now to the first sentence. Two creations are here mentioned; the one expressed by the word "heaven," the other by the word "earth." These words have no antecedents;¹ that is, they appear in the narrative for the first time. But, contrary to the writer's usage in first cases, they appear *with* the article. Is it here redundant? Is it nugatory? Rarely, if ever, can a narrative composition be found so remarkable for its intense conciseness. Rarely, if ever, one of which we may say with so much certainty, that no iota can be taken from it without damage. But if these particular articles before these particular words are neither redundant nor nugatory, then they mean something. But if they mean something, then they have their own proper force as definitives. They point to some definite "heaven," and to some definite "earth." In this case, *the* heaven and *the* earth are not to be found by looking back. From the very pressure of the case, therefore, they must be sought for onward. And they must mean, '*the* heaven and *the* earth about to be written of.' The very fact that these cases are so peculiarly exceptional is intensive. It thrusts us the more imperiously upon the succeeding context, to find precisely what "heaven" and what "earth" the writer thus designates. There were three heavens in the Hebrew vocabulary. Therefore, the article before this word means nothing at all, unless (taking the word in the plural sense) it means *all three*, which no one supposes. But if not all three, which? The article cannot help us to an answer, unless we follow its index-force to the next written "heaven." Therefore we do so, obediently and cheerfully. We identify the "heaven" of the first sentence with that thing (creation) which, as afterwards stated, God had called heaven.²

¹ Chronologically, they had appeared before, as incorporated in the narrative, verses 8, 10; but *here* without the articles and as proper names.

² The considerations which we have now urged showing why, in all exegetical honesty, we should affix a uniform meaning to the writer's use of the word "heaven," apply with equal force to his use of the word "earth." To avoid repetition, we withhold these four several suggestions when remarking on the word "earth" p. 529, trusting to the reader to supply them there.

If, now, there be no flaw in our exegetical premises, we must wrench the writing boldly and terribly, to deny that the first "heaven" is the same as the second. And if we are right in this our reasoning, then does it follow, that throughout the narrative, consecutive and supplementary, the word "heaven" is used *in one sense only*; and that it is an unjustifiable liberty so to translate it as to suggest to the reader any other sense.

Corollary. — If the first "heaven" is the same as the second, then the first and the succeeding verses, by this very word, are *clamped*; and there cannot be a chronological chasm between them.

The question is now fairly before us; in what sense is this word "heaven" here used? But let us first look out from our present stand-point, and ascertain, if we can, what it does *not* mean.

If "heaven" is used in one sense only, and if that one sense be the sidereal host, then does the writer, so very concise, most strangely repeat himself, and very soon; for at first he says, "in the beginning God created the sidereal host;" and then tells us *again* that "God did make them." This reads strangely. But if, on the other hand, by "heaven" first mentioned he did *not* mean the sidereal host, it seems no longer strange, but natural and fit, that he mentions them just as he does.

If "heaven" is used in one sense only, and if that one sense be the sidereal host, then the cosmic galaxy was called into being on the second of the six days, and was then astronomically arranged; and, moreover, the *sidereal host* did "divide between waters and waters." A most unintelligible statement.¹

Again, if "heaven" is used in only one sense, and if that sense be the sidereal host, then (verse 14), God said,

¹ But if the heaven did not *exist* until the second day, then from a new stand-point do we even find that it is *absurd* to suppose a historical hiatus between the creating stated in the first verse and the first creating of the six days. The first verse is only the indicator of the theme about to be unfolded.

“let luminaries be *in* the sidereal host,” and (verse 16) did set them in themselves.

We therefore conclude that whatever may be the true meaning of “heaven,” it does *not* mean the visible universe minus the earth; and to this conclusion we are forced by exegetical consistency and decency.

We return to our question: In what sense *is* the word used? This opens to us another: What does the word “firmament” mean, which God called heaven?

In the Hebrew word *rakia* (רָקִיעַ) we find no resemblance to the word *firm-ament*, by which it is rendered. So far from denoting something *firm*, compact, solid, it denotes something expanded, spread abroad, far-reaching. It means an *expanse*, or expansion; not, however, of space, but of some *thing*. The verb, of which this is a derivative, sometimes expresses the act of smiting or beating *out*. But the noun expresses only a state or condition, without indicating any *process* of expansion.

Carefully excluding the idea of mere space or vacuity, and retaining that of matter, we have, then, the true idea set forth by the definition; “And God called *the expanse* Heaven.” But definitely, *what* expanse? *what* expanded thing? The writer does not leave us in doubt; but, as if anticipating all questions which might be raised, even by the most captious, he considerately gives us *illustrative* definitions of his *verbal* definition.

“And God said, Let there be an expanse between¹ the waters; and let it be separating² waters from waters. Thus did God make the expanse, and did separate between the waters which are under the expanse and between the waters which are above the expanse.” Thus we are informed that “the heaven” is that expanse, that expanded, subtile, attenuated material which continually has waters under it and

¹ The same as רָקִיעַ. See Gesenius; word רָקִיעַ 1. b.

² That is, “let it *continue* to separate.” “When,” as here “the verb of existence is added to the participle, an imperfect sense descriptive of continued action, or condition, is designated.” — *Gesenius*.

waters above (Heb. "upon") it. The waters under it are those which God called seas. Immediately above the seas is what he called heaven. Above this heaven, or rather "upon" it (i.e. supported by it), are all the waters, pertaining to this world, which are not of the seas. Now what expanded, wide-reaching, subtile material has its place above the seas, and has upon itself — any portion of itself — all our other waters? Resting and floating upon it, watery clouds; beneath and supporting it, watery seas? Of nothing else can these facts be predicated but the *atmospheric* expanse.

But we have in the text yet another phenomenal and illustrative definition of what God called heaven. "And God said: Let the waters produce abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open expanse — the heaven." What is the wide-reaching, attenuated form of matter in which the fowl (the Hebrew word means *all* winged creatures)¹ find their range when on the wing? The *atmospheric* expanse, to be sure!

The two illustrative definitions correspond. That in which the fowl fly, is that which is between the waters and the waters — the aerial expanse. A. created form of matter *so* "expanded" that, although we live in it and by it, yet we can neither taste nor smell nor see it, nor when it is in repose can we feel or hear it. We can only breathe it. Above the seas; beneath the clouds; just where we are; in which the fowl fly. Consequently we have in our version, repeatedly, the honest but enforced rendering "fowl of the *air*"; the same word elsewhere rendered "heaven" and "heavens."

The use which the writer makes of the word "heaven" stands independently. No other and different use beclouds its meaning here; and no other and like illumines its meaning here. The writer was competent to give his own defi-

¹ It is of no small importance that we keep in mind the large scope of the Hebrew word rendered "fowl." In its collective sense, it embraces every winged tribe, from the largest to the *most minute*.

dition; and this definition, so varied and clear, is sufficient and final.

The atmospheric *heave-en* is the original definition of the Hebrew word רָקִיעַ. Perhaps we should say, the atmospheric *expanse* is that to which the word was first applied, and by God himself. In this verse it is the root; all other applications of it are but its offshoots. The same is true, of course, of its synonyme רָקִיעַ, translated "firmament"; the same, also, of their representative English word "heave-en." From this primary meaning naturally arose a secondary — the seeming vault;¹ a second heaved-up, in which are "set" the sun and moon and stars. From the secondary meaning arose, as naturally, the idea of a third upheave-al — the supposed residence of God and of his high angels. But the true and primitive meaning of the word, although yet paramount, has become practically almost obsolete. This has happened partly because of the misnomer *firm-ament*, popularly understood to be the seemingly solid vault above us, and partly because of the word "heavens," popularly understood to be the brilliant cosmos which studs the vault. Consequently, to common readers and to uncommon, the narrative is seriously deficient. They read of the successive divine acts by which the world was fitted for life, but do not perceive how it was furnished with its atmosphere, without which no form of life could be sustained; than which, no part of the world's furniture is more beautiful (though invisible), more wonderful, more important, or more magnificent.

Then let the Hebrew text be legitimately and honestly rendered into our vernacular; that so *this* great and wondrous furnishing of the Creator shall appear in full relief, as God intended it should.

For the sake of perspicuity, and to forestall, if possible, any misapprehension, we will try to express our understanding of the Hebrew *rakia* (רָקִיעַ) "expanse" with more exactness, even if it be at the expense of some repetition.

¹ "Who stretchest out the heaven like a curtain," Ps. civ. 2. English version, "heavens;" a single case among many in which the plural form of translation is evidently wrong.

So far from denoting firmness, compactness, density, or solidity, it denotes simply and solely an expanded something which may, or may not, be attenuated; excluding any measurement of a body from one *surface* to its opposite surface. That is, excluding all idea of its thickness or its thinness. It is, indeed, applied to solid bodies, to thick and to thin, — alike to a gold-foil and to the thick and solid earth; or, rather, the verb, of which this word is a derivative, is thus diversely applied.

As a superficies has neither thickness nor thinness, but only *reach*; and as a line has neither thickness nor thinness, but only *reach*, so a *rakia* has neither thickness nor thinness, but only *reach*. In other words, it is only *wide extent*, either of space or of body. In the case before us, it is only wide extent of *body*; for only the creating of matter is the subject of discourse, not the privative creating of space.

As, therefore, *pure expansion* is the only proper signification of the word, it may be alike and with equal propriety applied to *all* bodies; that is, to all forms of matter — to solid, to fluid, to vaporous, to ethereal. And although it does not express the idea of rarefaction, nor strictly speaking, the idea of rarity or subtileness, still we cannot see why *rakia*, an expanse, may not as properly designate that which is rarefied or subtile, as that which is more dense, or even solid.

But waiving all nicety about words, and even supposing that the Hebrew word does primarily express the expansion of a *solid* to thinness, and not to rarity or to fluidity, yet, as in this case, it is *not* matter firm or solid which intervenes between the cloud-waters and the land-waters; and as it is *not* matter firm or solid in which winged creatures fly, the writer's own application of the word compels us to say that he uses it (exceptionally, if one choose) to express *expansion* of matter only; that is, its *out-reaching*, *wide-reaching* rarity. In short, it seems to us that the writer *could not* have had the conception of a thin firmness, or of a solid thinness; and more, that his divine dictator could not have signified such a

conception. We feel compelled, therefore, to reject the *στερέωμα* of the Septuagint and the *firmamentum* of the Vulgate.

Let us now trace in review and group together the several points of the route by which we have come to our present position.

1. We have found *four* cogent exegetical reasons for concluding that the word "heaven" is used, throughout the narrative, in *only one sense*.

2. We have found *three* cogent exegetical reasons for concluding that the word "heaven" cannot mean the sidereal host; the reasons being three textual absurdities which would otherwise be involved.

3. Having thus found what the word does *not* mean, and also that it always has the same meaning, a third conclusion has been *forced* upon us by our respect for the text itself; viz. that the only use which it makes of the word is to designate that expanse which God *called* "heaven," which the writer shows to have been the world's atmosphere, and which our version recognizes by the word "air" no less than five times in the course of the narrative (i. 26, 28, 30; ii. 19, 20).

The only possible ground on which this ultimate conclusion can be challenged, is the gratuitous position that in the first instance this important word designates the starry cosmos, but *afterwards*, the aerial expanse. And yet, so far as we know, *not a single textual reason has ever been given* for the position. We venture to add, such a reason *never can* be given.

For our own contrary conclusion we *have* given textual reasons; reasons which, we think, are simple, clear, and invulnerable. Whether an interpretation without such reasons, or an interpretation with such, is most worthy to be received, is a question open to all.

§ 3. THE CREATIVE HEAVEN AND EARTH.

A process of interpretation which is clear and satisfactory to one mind may be obscure and unsatisfactory to another,

even when the two are truly and equally gifted and equally honest. Consequently, an exegetical result which may be final to one may be nugatory to the other. And yet to the latter the same result may possibly commend itself if wrought out by a different process, while its only effect upon the former will be an assurance of his assurance.

For the present, therefore, we will utterly ignore our previous examination of the creative heaven and the conclusion at which we have arrived. We will take up *anew* the question: What were the two creations which Moses calls "the heaven and the earth"? We will so far simplify the question as to withdraw the phrase from its textual relations as scrupulously and as completely as, in our last section, we withdrew it from all its philosophic, theologic, and traditional relations. We will take it up by itself, and purely as a *Hebraic* phrase; confining our inquiry wholly to the signification of each Hebrew word.

1. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word which we express by our word "heaven"? With this very precise question in hand, we are of course bound not to be influenced at all by any usage, either popular or technical, of our corresponding English word. If in our vernacular we ever use it to designate the galaxy which constitutes the cosmos, we have no right to assume that the Hebrew word for which it stands has the same sense. Not only would this be untrue, but it would be so far from true that we should use it in plain violation of Hebrew usage, which makes, in this very chapter, a clear and pointed *distinction* between the heaven and the luminaries of the heaven. Even in English we speak improperly, though it be popularly, when we speak of the stars of heaven, and yet speak of the heaven as the stars. The stars of heaven can with no more propriety be called heaven than the fowls of heaven can be, or the dew of heaven, or the rain of heaven. Our English use of the word, and especially our inaccurate use of it, must be left wholly out of view, while we now inquire into the meaning of the Hebrew word.

It is a derivative from an obsolete root (רָאָה) which sig-

nifies *to be high*. The derivative always retains the root-sense. As we have before stated, it appears only in a plural form, though almost always (notwithstanding its renderings in our version) it has, as in this instance, a singular signification. Its literal meaning is, an *elevated region*, or *elevated regions*, as the case may be. Hence, the literal aptness of our own word "heaven," "that which is heaved, thrown up, or elevated."

In the Hebrew scriptures it is applied to three different elevated regions or localities; that is, to three different regions elevated above our own plane — the surface of our own world. More exactly, it is applied to three different regions which are *beyond* the surface of our own world; to these three, and to *nothing else*.

The first is, that supremely elevated region represented as the peculiar abode of the Most High God: "the high and holy place"; "the heaven of heavens"; or the region above the others — the height of heights. The second is that elevated region in which the cosmos is, "the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the hosts of *the heaven*" (Deut. iv. 19). "The stars of the heaven and the constellations thereof" (Isa. xiii. 10). The third is, that elevated region which pertains immediately to our own world, and which is the home of all winged creatures, of "dews," of "winds," of "frosts," of "clouds," of "showers," of "a multitude of waters."

From the mere grammatical form of the word in the case before us, it is impossible to tell whether one particular heaven is meant in any given case, or all the heavens. Still, our problem must be wrought out: Whether in this case the word is intended to designate the *three* heavens, which would be all regions of the universe above the earth, or whether it is used to designate some one of them, and if so, which. We may not appeal to the context, for we have precluded it from our present inquiry. We must take the Hebrew word in its plural form, and *just and only as it stands in this sentence*. Now observe, whether the word here means a heaven, or the

heavens, it or they had a beginning and a creating. This is clear. Very well, we have now a stand-point which is a starting-point, and which may prove a clew.

God's heaven, or dwelling-place, must have been coeval with himself. If so, it has had no "beginning," and, consequently, no "creating." Therefore, the word here cannot designate "the heaven of heavens."

But again, the elevated region or heaven which is the dwelling-place of sun and moon and stars and constellations (Isa. xiii. 10) is that high space, or "nothing," upon which they are "hung," and which they occupy in common with our world (Job xxvi. 7). But space, or nothing, has had no "beginning," and consequently no "creating." Therefore, the word here cannot designate the heaven of the cosmos.

Hence, it follows that this word in this text cannot have been used to designate the *three* heavens; that is, the three regions elevated above the earth; that it could only have been used to designate one of them; and that *the* one designated must be the only other heaven which the Hebrew language recognizes — the world-heaven, the heaven of clouds, and dews, and winged creatures; the heaven which *had* a "beginning," and *was* "created"; the only one of the three which conforms to the text-setting of the word.¹

If we insist upon its plural signification, we make it incongruous with its immediate predicates. But this will not do, for we are compelled *by* these predicates to make our election of one from the three, and to elect the *aerial* heaven.

Thus, by another route than our former one we are brought to the same result; by a route simple and rigid as the first brief sentence of the narrative; by a route irrespective of any relations, real or hypothetical, of the word itself.

¹ It is self-evident that space (the middle "heaven") was not created or made. Therefore when we find it written (Ps. xxxiii. 6), "By the word of the Lord were (plural verb) the heavens *made*," we are *obliged* to recognize the figure of speech by which the container is put for the thing or things contained. (Compare Isa. i. 2). Thus: "All things contained in all the heavens were made," etc. Indeed, the next member of the sentence, being epexegetical, verifies this construction: "The heavens were made; *that is*, all the host of them." For this explanatory sense of the particle, see Gesen. Lex. † 1. c. Noldius, Concordance of Hebrew Particles † No. 27, p. 290. Nordheimer, † 1093. 1. a.

We think that we may now urge with respectable emphasis, and yet with all modesty, that our previous conclusions are confirmed; our conclusion that the heaven which the writer says was created was that elevated region which we call our atmosphere; and also our conclusion that this is the only heaven of which he writes throughout his creative discourse.

Having thus developed by an independent examination of the writing itself, the domestic sense in which our historian uniformly uses the word heaven, we turn to our next inquiry.

2. What *was* the original and divine sense of this word הָאָרֶץ "the earth," which the Hebrew writer reverently adopted? ¹ The writer himself tells us, by quoting its divine use as an original nominative: "God called [named] *the dry*, earth." We, therefore, need only to ascertain accurately what "the dry" was.

The word הָאָרֶץ "the dry," occurs but fourteen times in the Bible. In every instance it stands in immediate contradistinction to "water" or to "sea" as a *fluid*.² The form in which it here appears is intensive or emphatic.³ Thus it specially calls our attention to itself. Its precise force, therefore, is to present prominently the *matter*-difference between itself and that other matter to which it uniformly stands in contrast. This matter-difference is simple and obvious. The waters were matter-fluid. The הָאָרֶץ "dry," or the הָאָרֶץ "earth," was matter-not-fluid, or matter-solid.⁴ So that the writer, taking the word "earth" from the lip of God, and using it in the God-sense, presents to us a *solid* in this first

¹ For evidence that the writer uses it in *only one* sense, in that which was its original and divine sense, we refer to grave considerations which we have before briefly stated, pp. 516, 517, 518.

² How, then, could it have been *possible* for Moses so to have perverted the *synonyme* "earth" as to use it to signify a gaseous *fluid*?

³ Gesenius, word אָרֶץ .

⁴ So potent and imperative is this in some cases, that our version *translates* "the dry" by "the land"; that is, translates the Hebrew הָאָרֶץ just as if it were הָאָרֶץ . Ex. iv. 9 *bis*; xiv. 16, 29; xv. 19; Neh. ix. 11; Ps. lxvi. 6; xcv. 5; Isa. xlv. 8; Dan. ii. 10; Jonah i. 9, 13; ii. 11. Compare Webster, words "Earth," No. 2, and "Land," No. 1.

verse, and the *same individual* solid to which God in the beginning had applied the word "earth" when the dry "showed itself" above the waters. Such is the pure Hebraic sense of the word. Completely *antagonistic* to the cosmogonic interpretation — "primordial cosmic material," and by no means agreeing with the astronomic earth — our *terrestrial globe*. As used in the Hebrew scriptures it does not mean the world, which is part fluid and part solid, but only our *terrene* world, — the solid part, *the land* of our astronomic earth.

Throughout this account, therefore, "the earth" does not mean our entire globe, but only a particular part of it. The Genesis "earth" was not part water, or part air (fluids), or part semi-fluid fire, or part any other fluid or semi-fluid. It was only such part of this present world as was then "solid"; whether before or since a gaseous fluid, or an igneous fluid, or a watery fluid, or never a fluid; whether then a solid sphere, or a hollow sphere, or a plane. To this definition we are tied. We have no right to expand it, no right to contract it. However, and how often soever, the word may be otherwise used, in common parlance or uncommon, it would be impertinent to cite such usage as applicable or as explanatory here.¹

So far as we know, theological writers and theologico-Hebrew lexicons, without exception, give "the universe" as the proper meaning of the creative phrase "the heaven and the earth"; slyly altered to "the *heavens* and the earth." If admitted, this definition imposes upon us the *necessity* of a cosmogonic interpretation of the creative story as starting from the initial point of matter unformed and motionless. In view of this exegetical tradition, let us make a brief excursion beyond the limit to which we restricted ourselves at the opening of this section.

¹ In a vast number of cases in our version, this Hebrew word is rendered "land." We think it should have been so rendered uniformly, excepting some few cases, in the poetical books, of evident synecdoche. In a great many cases, the rendering "earth" conveys wrong ideas, and has given occasion to a vast amount of wrong interpretation.

If we call upon the sacred writers for some recognition of *the cosmos*, in no one case do they answer by the word "heaven," but always by "the stars of heaven," or by "the hosts of heaven," or, more explicitly, by "the sun and moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven" (Deut. iv. 19; xvii. 3). And when we call upon them for some recognition of *the universe*, they do not answer by the debatable phrase "the heaven and the earth," but in terms very explicit and unmistakable. For example: "I have made *the earth*. . . . have stretched out *the heavens*, and all *their host* have I commanded" (Isa. xlv. 12). Again: "The day cometh to lay *the land* desolate; for the *stars of heaven* and the *constellations* thereof, and the *sun* and the *moon* shall not give their light" (Isa. xiii. 9, 10). And again: "Give thanks to him who made *the heavens* who stretched out *the earth* above the *waters* who made *great lights* the *sun* the *moon* and *stars*" (Ps. cxxxvi. 5-9). Once more, "Thou hast made *the heaven* [the earth-heaven]; the heaven of *heavens* [thine own], with all *their host* [the cosmos and the angels]; the *earth*, and *all things* which are upon it; the *seas*, and all which is in them" (Neh. ix. 6). Other like texts might be cited.

And thus, in all this large variety of language, the Hebrew scriptures do tell us, very distinctly, that the cosmos is *not* one of *their* "heavens," and that *their* "heaven-and-earth" does not mean *the universe*.

If, now, what we have written be not read uncarefully or scornfully, it may, perhaps, be conceded by courtesy at least, that we have respectable reason for saying that we do—grammatically, exegetically, legitimately, Mosaically, and finally—identify "the heaven" of this first sentence with the very atmospheric expanse which God did create on the second genesisitic day, and which he did then name "heaven." The same sort of evidence we have produced to show that "the earth" in the same clause was the very solid which God named "earth," and no other thing, nor gas, nor terraqueous sphere. In short, the heaven created in the beginning was

for the earth, and on the earth, and over the earth, and embracing the earth,— they twain one ; by God's ordinance joined together and never put asunder.

Therefore, when we ask in the name of honest exegesis, what means the phrase "the heaven and the earth," we should be recreant to our interpretative trust, and recreant to our convictions and to our manhood, did we not answer at once, and decisively, *our aerial heaven and our solid land*. By this our answer, we do frankly, biblically, and religiously decline the rash assumption and hoary tradition that "the heaven and the earth" is a Bible way of saying "the material universe."

"In their beginning God did create the aerial heaven and the solid land." Such, we conceive, is the clear and simple announcement of what is about to be unfolded.

In view of all which we have stated, we think ourselves under an exegetical necessity — a necessity inflexible and *very* potent — of considering this narrative as embracing only the narrow limits of our own land-world, with its sea and its atmosphere. Before the narrative opens its outline or dramatic bourne is carefully and sharply defined.

It may be hard for us to give up the popular, traditional, venerable opinion upon this point. It may seem irreverent to the names of the great and the good and the learned. But what says and what means our record? This is the only proper question. As we answer it, so, rightly or wrongly, shall we read the words which follow. They will be simple or mystic, clear or cloudy, cheering or perplexing, as we expect the tale of a cosmos or the episode of a planet.

[To be continued.]