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THE

CHALDEAN ACCOUNT OF GENESIS.

BY

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THE CHALDEAN ACCOUNT OF GENESIS.*

IN the thirteenth page of this most remarkable and interesting work, Mr Smith says, "The first series I may call the 'story of the Creation and Fall,' and the history is much fuller and longer than the corresponding account in the book of Genesis. With respect to these Genesis narratives a furious strife has existed for many years, every word has been scanned by eager scholars, and every possible meaning which the various passages could bear has been suggested; while the age and authenticity of the narratives have been discussed on all sides. In particular it may be said that the account of the fall of man, the heritage of all Christian countries, has been the centre of the controversy, for it is one of the pivots on which the Christian religion turns. The world-wide importance of these subjects will therefore give the newly discovered inscriptions, and especially the one relating to 'the Fall' an unparalleled value."

But is this "Fall of Man" the heritage of Christian countries only, as Mr Smith remarks? Is not the old story of temptation also the heritage of all heathen times and countries? Is there a cosmogony or theogony, however ancient, in which, under one form or another, the Adamic legend is not traceable?

"The symbol of the serpent associates itself with the rise of all societies, is at the root of all mythologies, its trace is lost in the far off depths of time, but amongst animal symbol worship this is the most singular and

* By George Smith. Sampson and Low, 1876.

the widest spread." Whether the serpent, prime agent in "the fall," be regarded as wisdom personified, as by the Gnostic sect of *Ophites*, who honoured it as the father of all science and knowledge, the key that unlocked for man the secret that should make him "as the gods knowing all things," or as *temptation* under the guise of a beautiful woman, (Bochart explains how Eve in the Chaldee means serpent), the story of Eden in the Mosaic narrative appears to be only another phase of this ancient myth, though it is in Genesis alone that the serpent is at once the prime agent and symbol of evil.

Certainly the greatest interest must attach to the unearthing of what we conceive to be the sources of the Bible history, inasmuch as they tend to prove that there is no more rational ground for accepting this particular explanation of the origin of evil, than there is for accepting any other hypothesis.

Mr Smith was certainly not sent out to Assyria by the *Daily Telegraph* for the purpose of upsetting the Mosaic cosmogony; but if in the course of his investigations he was led materially to modify his own previous convictions, we think that in the interest of science and of truth he is bound to tell us so. We do not hesitate therefore, "in limine," to put to him the crucial question, Does he or does he not ascribe to the Assyrian tablets an earlier origin than to the Mosaic record? For it is upon this "pivot" that the question of the inspiration of the Jewish record turns.

The art of reading Assyrian cuneiform is one of those astonishing results of modern scientific research, which appears destined to upset the time-honoured opinions and beliefs of the greater part of the civilized world. We know not whether to be sorry or glad; but few there will be amongst those who have entered the last decade of life, who will see without pain and sadness that they have been trusting to the support of broken reeds, and that they have to spend the remainder of

their lives in unlearning that which has taken them so much time and pains to acquire.

Who that has passed middle life can there be who has not thought long and seriously upon the origin and destiny of the human race? Who has not waded through innumerable works upon religion, history, and science, in the hope of attaining an unassailable conviction that the persuasions and convictions of his earlier years were founded upon incontrovertible facts? Yet with every desire to stand by the ancient and time-honoured beliefs, truth compels us to say, the evidence upon which we trusted, when weighed in the balance, has been found wanting.

We cannot close our eyes to the light which is now shining upon the dark pages of the primeval history of man. The light will pierce whether we will or no. Let us not waste the few remaining hours of life in unavailing regrets, but rather thank God for the true light which now shineth, and follow its beacon.

It is scarcely possible to speak of the "Chaldean Genesis" without hurting the feelings of the orthodox. My desire is to speak tenderly and reverently of writings which are still held sacred by the vast majority of Christians, and of convictions which I myself fully shared for the greater part of my life, which are interwoven with all our dearest sympathies and associations, but still to speak with perfect sincerity.

If we hope to induce others to lay aside any of their early prejudices, and to take heed to the results of modern scientific discovery, we must lay aside all hatred and uncharitableness, and in a calm and loving manner place before them the results of the patient labours of men, not a whit more irreligious than the most orthodox of churchmen, and leave the remedy to work its own cure.

The "Times" of December 4, 1875, reviewed with its usual ability "The Chaldean Account of Genesis,"

but I venture in all humility to dissent in part from the verdict of the writer in the leading journal. The writer says "that exegetical theology will see in it a strong confirmation of the truth of an universal deluge." Possibly it may, but nobody else will. The existence of the story at that early period, and of a universal belief in it, would be no proof of the fact, but only of the belief. It is the *quod semper quod ubique quod ab omnibus*, which never can prove a physical impossibility. Geological science no doubt proves that every part of the stratified crust of the earth has not only once, but repeatedly, been below the level of the sea; but that fact will never prove "that the tops of the highest hills" were at one and the same time covered with water.

It is also proved, by Geological Science, that at sundry periods in past geological time the crust of the earth has been unusually convulsed, great changes of climate, great upheavals, great subsidings have occurred; it is possible that not one, but several of these convulsions may have happened since man first made his appearance upon the earth, that a tradition of such a catastrophe may have been retained by the early inhabitants, and clothed during the subsequent ages with all the miraculous adjuncts natural to ages of ignorance. The universal prevalence of such legends could only strengthen a rational belief in local catastrophes.

Diodorus Siculus says, "the ignorance prevailing regarding the sense of the myths, on which religion is founded, results from the thread of tradition having been violently snapt by that great catastrophe which we call the deluge, which caused the Pelasgians, the ancestors of the Greeks, to lose the remembrance of anterior events, and even the meaning of the graphic signs destined to transmit them to posterity." Hence we may ask, can the Noachian deluge have occurred anywhere near the Pelasgian era? Can we identify the deluge of Diodorus with that of Berosus, with the

Assyrian tablets, and with the deluge of Noah? We find in Smith's Classical Dictionary under Diodorus, that in compiling his history, Diodorus exercised neither judgment nor criticism. He simply collected what he found in his different authorities, and thus jumbled together history, myths, and fiction. He cannot therefore be a trustworthy authority. Like those impecunious Frenchmen who habitually ascribe their poverty to having lost all "dans la revolution," he ascribes his own ignorance, and that of his contemporaries of these "graphic writings," to the deluge. May not these "graphic writings" have been these very cuneiform inscriptions of which we are now writing? Of the Pelasgians we know very little, and their fabled progenitor Pelasgus may have arisen out of the sea like Joannes, or any other fabulous personage; but it is quite possible that Diodorus when on his travels may have come across the same tradition of a deluge which was related by Berossus.

Mr G. Smith has, we think, satisfactorily established the identity of Noah, Hasisadra, and the Xisithrus of the Assyrian tablets,—at least, the following accounts from the "clays" so exactly tallies with the Genesis version of the flood that Noah and Xisithrus can only be one and the same person. "In the time of Xisuthrus, tenth King of Chaldea, happened a great deluge," which is thus described: "The Deity Cronos appeared to Xisuthrus in a vision and warned him that on the 15th day of the month Dæsius there would be a flood by which mankind should be destroyed. Cronos, therefore, enjoined Xisuthrus to write a history of the beginning, procedure, and conclusion of all things, and to bury it in the city of the Sun at Sippara, and to build a vessel, and take with him into it his friends and relations, and to convey on board everything necessary to sustain life, together with the different animals, both birds and quadrupeds, and trust himself fearlessly to the deep. Having asked the Deity Cronos (another

name for Saturn)* whither he was to sail, he was answered, "to the Gods," upon which Xisuthrus offered up a prayer for the good of mankind. He forthwith obeys the "divine admonition," he builds a vessel of five stadia in length and two in width, (we do not know whether this is equivalent to Noah's three hundred cubits) and conveys into it all the quadrupeds, and his relations and friends. "After the flood had been upon the earth, and was in time abated, Xisuthrus sent out birds from the vessel, which not finding any food, nor any place whereupon they might rest their feet, returned to him again; he sent them forth a second time and they returned with their feet tinged with mud;" the parallel between the two accounts is further continued: "Noah when he left the ark built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." "Xisuthrus when he found his birds returned no more the third time judged the surface of the earth had appeared above the waters; he therefore made an opening in the vessel, and upon looking out found it was stranded upon the side of some mountain, upon which he immediately quitted it with his wife, his daughter, and the pilot." "On reaching terra firma," we read, "Xisuthrus then paid his adoration to the earth; and having constructed an altar offered sacrifices to the gods, and with those who had come out of the vessel with him disappeared." In Genesis we read, that on descending from the ark, Noah also offered sacrifice; but he did not disappear, and, henceforward, the two accounts differ. The parallelism between the Chaldean and the Genesis accounts of the

* In the Greek and Latin inscriptions of Syria, lately published by Mr Waddington, we find mention of monuments of the worship of *Cronos* or *Kronos*, as the Greeks called *El*. This word *El* means chief or greatest, "The Supreme." According to the great Phœnician authority, Sanchoniathon, Kronos or Saturn was called *El* by the Phœnicians. The God of Israel was also El-Elion, El-Shaddäi, El-Kanna. El in the Semitic pantheon is equivalent to Djaus in the Indo-European, the prefix of all gods.

flood up to this point are, however, so striking, that we cannot resist the conclusion that the one springs from the other.

If we turn for a moment to compare the account of creation in the first chapter of Genesis with the Greek cosmogony, we shall also find a parallelism.

In the cosmogony of the Greeks we read, according to a learned authority, that "Zeus," the Supreme God of the Greeks, engendered "Ether and Chaos," from which he formed the egg of the world. Here we may indeed be said to have arrived at the beginnings of everything! In all cosmogonies the "Supreme God" had somehow to engender this egg; the author of "*Les Temps Mythologiques*" writes, "Plutarch relates that Osiris having produced the egg of the world there shut up twelve white figures, but Typhon the Ethiopian God, the genius of evil, introduced into it twelve black figures, whence arose the mixture of good and evil. The simple explanation of this is the fusion of the black and white races."

The Egyptian hieroglyphics very often place the "egg of the world" in the mouth of the viper Hof, emblem of the sovereignty of Egypt.

In most of the cosmogonies the primordial egg is floating on the waters; Genesis repudiates the cosmogonic egg, but we find there the primitive waters anterior to all creation; "And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters."* "We have seen that all mythologies express this singular idea of the waters being coexistent with God before the formation of the world, and in the Egyptian Ritual of the Dead there is a passage which has perhaps served as text for the first line of all cosmogonies. It is I," said Osiris, "who have navigated the waters with the Celestial Gnomon,

* We may here remark how Professor Huxley's scientific dicta regarding all generative beginnings receives testimony from the texts of these ancient cosmogonies, for he proves from long research into the secrets of the womb of nature, that without a state of fluid there is no possibility of life being engendered.

and have manifested myself." The very term "Spirit of God" is of Egyptian origin, and the Serpent holding in his mouth the egg of the world is often called "the Spirit of God."*

To quote again "Les Temps Mythologiques:"—"The most important truth that results from the study of comparative mythologies is the identity of the principle on which all are based ; and we can only conclude that there was but one theme on which all those documents were based, and on which each successive race impressed the genius of its special character.

"Under what inspiration did this thesis spring to life? Was it due to the rhapsodical and imaginative East? to the pantheistic naturalism of India, which reached the far off West? Is it the heritage of the profound wisdom of Egypt carried into Asia by her colonists, and must we here seek for vestiges of the most ancient of peoples? There is no doubt that as time went on the learned priests of different ages assembled together to elaborate the grave questions as to the formation of the world and the birth of man, in which, assisted by the rare documents that had escaped the deluge, they constructed the cosmogonies of their different countries.

"Thus are explained the variations in the Phœnician document, without doubt the nearest to our own times, and which variation has greatly puzzled both French and German *savans* as to them, there appeared many cosmogonies, the same *au fond* but different in form. This which first suggested doubts as to the authenticity of the document became instead the strongest proof in its support."

In the Assyrian version of the deluge we read that "Xisuthrus deposited his account of all that had been the procedure and the end of all things, in the City of the Sun, Sippara."

By a very singular coincidence, the writings of Thoth are also said to have been discovered at this

* "Monsieur de Rougé."

same city of Sippara in Chaldea. Philon of Byblos, who lived about A.D. 24, published in Greek a translation of Sanchoniathon's "History of the Phœnicians;" the work is lost, a few fragments only of it being preserved by Eusebius. Sanchoniathon is by some thought to have been a contemporary of Semiramis, B.C. 2000, by others of Moses, B.C. 1700; others again as low as B.C. 1200. In the fragments preserved of Philo, Byblos' Greek translation, he states, that his document regarding the creation of the world was written before the flood.

We read under the head of Thoth in Bouillet's "Dictionary of Universal History," that Thoth was an Egyptian God, that it was he who sent Osiris to the earth. That the forty-two volumes of Egyptian sacred books were written by him. He was represented sometimes with an Ibis' head. By some he is considered the same as the Greek Hermes or Mercury; and the Hermes Trismegistus of the Alchemists' Trismegistus, meaning thrice great. This entirely fabulous personage is placed also at B.C. 2000, at which distance of time the invention of language, of the alphabet, of writing, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and medicine, together with all the arts and sciences, may be safely attributed to him, for no one will be at the pains to disprove it. Bouillet further states, that a quantity of religious books were attributed to him, called "Livres hermetiques," and that Hermes Trismegistus appears to have been for the Ancients at once "the symbol of the divine intelligence, the Logos of Plato, and the personification of the Egyptian priesthood." Of these works one remains entitled "On the Nature of Things and the Creation of the World," probably as apocryphal as Hermes himself. The singularity, however, remains, of the existence of the tradition that the works of an Egyptian should have been buried in Sippara, a city of Chaldea. We have probably here also an identity of different phases of the same mythus,

with a confusion of names and places. This would also explain why "the various cosmogonies that have come down to us all bear such a family likeness, the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Phœnician have all drawn from the same source."

The writer in the "Times," to whom we must now revert, says: "It is evident that the Chaldean account differs essentially from the deluge of Noah." That the Hebrews had retained a simpler and consequently older version of the deluge is clear, for the scriptural narrative at all events is prior to the building of ships and construction of rudders." In my opinion the "simpler" version of the Jews proves the comparatively modern and improved edition of an old story more suitable to the advanced conceptions of the Jews at the time of the Babylonian captivity, during which they had ample opportunities of studying the Babylonian records, when we know that the Old Testament was in great part re-written.

Is it likely that at a time when the Jews as a nation were non-existent, when they were a set of "wandering Nomads in search of a home,"* they should have been in possession of more authentic records than a nation in so high a state of civilization as the Babylonians?

The "Times" continues, "every effort will be made to rescue and preserve the pieces which lie hidden in the recesses of the valley of the Tigris. Till all these pieces are visible to the eye of the discoverer, the problems of chronology, mythology, and history, are ambiguous oracles or inexplicable riddles. They will neither disturb faith nor dissipate doubt, but will be the raw material for the intellect to spin and weave into a connected woof."

I venture to think that if every baked brick in Assyria were discovered tomorrow, we should be no nearer the solution of the "inexplicable" than we are

* *Vide* Introduction to Pentateuch and book of Joshua, by a Physician. Scott's Series.

now. History and chronology can never be founded on myths or legends. Facts are what the historian wants.

Now the facts which have been proved by the Assyrian discoveries are the following :—

The Assyrian baked bricks date from the fifteenth century B.C. "There is reason to think (says the 'Times') that some of the transcripts are as old as twenty, and certainly not later than fifteen centuries B.C. At such an early period the pentateuch could not have been written (*vide* Introduction to Pentateuch, before quoted), for it has long since been definitely shown that writing in the proper sense of the word appears not to have been practised by the Jews so relatively recent as the days of David.

"The Hebrew word for ink is of Persian derivation, and the art of writing on prepared sheep and goat skins among them, dates from no more remote an age than the Babylonian captivity."

We find, then, amid a vast series of records of myths, legends, or whatever we may please to call them—stories of the creation, of the fall, the tree of life, the serpent, the war in heaven, and the casting out of the dragon, the flood with the ark or ship, and the sending forth of the raven and the dove, the grounding of the ark upon a mountain; of the institution of the Sabbath, and of the building of the tower of Babel, besides Bel and the dragon, and many other fabulous tales. What are we to infer from these things? Is it not infinitely more probable that the Jews copied from the Babylonians during the captivity, adapting many things to their then more advanced conceptions, than that the Babylonians copied from the Jews? We find that the Assyrians did so, for these are all transcripts or copies, and the Assyrians tell us so. Why not the Jews also? We know they took subsequently many religious ideas from the Persians. But what follows if they did? The reverse of what the "Times" states, for faith will be shaken and doubts will be disseminated. The faith of

those who, in spite of all the biblical critics, Colenso, Kalisch, Kuenen, and the rest, still believed in the historical accuracy of Genesis ; for if the Mosaic narrative instead of being inspired from on high turns out to be a copy, or rather an adaptation of an ancient tradition, how can it do otherwise than shake their belief ? "The pious people who, in person or by delegate, have been so busy excavating in Palestine and Babylonia with a view to demonstrate the divine origin and historical truth of the Hebrew scriptures, seem verily to be pursuing their work to their own discomfiture." *

Those who doubted before will have their doubts confirmed, for such an amount of cumulative evidence it is impossible to withstand.

It is quite possible that Abraham, supposing him to have been an historical personage, and to have come from Ur of the Chaldees, may have brought away with him many of the Babylonian traditions.

The author of the Chaldean Genesis modestly and wisely refrains from dogmatising or pronouncing any opinion which might excite the "odium theologicum."

He says, page 284, "Biblical criticism is, however, a subject on which I am not competent to pronounce an independent opinion," and that he "could not take up any of the prevailing views without being a party to the controversy." He thinks, however, "that all will admit a connection of some sort between the biblical narrative and the cuneiform texts." I cannot, however, admit that there was "such a total difference between the religious ideas of the two peoples (as he states), the Jews believing in one God, the Creator and Lord of the Universe, while the Babylonians worshipped gods and lords many, every city having its local deity, and these being joined by complicated relations in a poetical mythology, which was in marked contrast to the severe simplicity of the Jewish system," p. 285. The pure monotheistic worship to which the Jews ultimately at-

* Introduction to Book of Joshua, by a Physician.

tained was the work of ages.* Their entire history proves how prone they were to worship the gods of the surrounding nations. The great value of the inscriptions describing the Flood, p. 286, consists not in the fact that they form an independent testimony in favour of the biblical narrative at a much earlier date than any other evidence, for the earlier narrative cannot testify in favour of the later.

The two accounts are no doubt records of the same event, of which other versions, over and above that of Berossus, may one day be discovered, but the endeavour to reconcile their many conflicting statements is about as hopeless an affair as the endeavour to reconcile the Mosaic cosmogony with modern geological science.

With regard to the vexed question of our chronology and its correctness, I have no pretensions as a chronologist, but in so far as I have studied the subject I must confess that I have no faith in the correctness of any date prior to the first Olimpiad, or B.C. 776. The verification of any dates subsequent to that, the identification of the names of different kings in divers ancient historical tablets downwards from a firm historical standpoint is no doubt an interesting subject of study for the archeologist, but from the moment we ascend into the mythical period all chronology must be at fault; and whether we take the lists of Manetho, Berossus, or his 380,000 years, the ante-diluvian patriarchs or any other, we are compelled to class them all together as rude attempts to explain the inexplicable, to construct fact out of fiction.

Far easier would it be to write the history of our paleolithic and neolithic ancestors, for they at any rate have left no lying legends behind them to confuse us. They have not left records of any ancestors with heads

* Sabaoth, the Jehovah of the Gnostics, recalls very closely the Jupiter Sabazius of antiquity that the Jewish colony adored in Rome, 139 B.C., and for which cause they were expelled from the city, and even from Italy. Jao is also a name for Bacchus, Sabazius, or Saturn.

of birds or of beasts. They had no need to invent tales of the slaughter of giants and other fabulous monsters of sea and land to bolster up their courage with posterity, for the testimony of the rocks is there to tell of their heroic deeds, of the ages they lived and reigned upon this our earth. They needed no baked bricks, for deep down in the bowels of the earth their fossil bones lie buried side by side with those of the elephas primigenius and other gigantic but real animals with whom, in their hard struggle for existence, they had to contend, and the simple instruments they wielded in the contest. On the horns of the reindeer are admirably etched the portrait of the Mammoth, proving the love of art even in that remote age.

When I look at these simple relics of an heroic people, when I think of the "antres vast and deserts idle" in which they were compelled to live, of the struggle for existence they were compelled to endure with the huge extinct mammals, I am lost in admiration at their hardihood and in pity at their fate; but when I turn to look at a picture of Izdubar struggling with a rampant bull, one hand holding the tail and the other a horn, I am simply disgusted at such ludicrous absurdity.

Izdubar may have been for all that a real king and a hero, but when we come to fix his reign as the starting point of history, that is quite another matter.

Mr G. Smith puts the age of Izdubar, <i>i.e.</i> Nimrod, at B.C.	2500.
The deluge of Noah, according to our chronology, was	,, 2348.
Menes founds the Egyptian monarchy	" 2233.
Nimrod, according to our chronology, founds Assyrian monarchy 2233.

If our chronology is to be trusted, the two great monarchies, the Egyptian and the Assyrian, were founded 115 years after the flood. Where did the people come from? every soul having perished except Noah and his family 115 years before.

If Smith's date for Izdubar is right he must have

lived 152 years before the flood, and could not therefore have founded an empire which that catastrophe must have destroyed. The earliest monuments known, date, according to Mr Smith, 250 years later than the time of Izdubar, and the traditions on which those legends are founded arose shortly after his death. "Chaldean Genesis," p. 106.

Surely the flood, if it, happened at all, must have swept away the traditions as it did the people.

Amid such a mass of fable the search for historical truth is very like searching for the needle in the haystack.

Compare Izdubar, B.C. 2500	} also Deluge of Noah, B.C. 2348		
Joshua, ,, 1451		} Deluge of Ogyges, ,, 1796	
Hercules, ,, 1330			} Deluge of Deucalion ,, 1503
Gideon, ,, 1245			
Samson, ,, 1136			

If from mythical events, we turn to mythical individuals, we cannot fail being struck with the extraordinary family likeness in the characters and deeds of the different heroes. Mr Smith in speaking of Izdubar, p. 294, says :—"Every nation has its hero, and it was only natural on the revival of his empire, that the Babylonians should consecrate his memory," and in another place he says that, "the natural tendency of those superstitious times was to invest their great men with all sorts of miraculous powers, to attribute to them heroic deeds, that we are not on that account justified in doubting the real existence of the King or Hero in question. He is of opinion that Izdubar was the Nimrod of Genesis, that *Hasisadra* was the Noah of Genesis, and that the Xisuthrus of Berosus, and his account of the flood was only another version of the Babylonian legend.

The labours of Hercules, and the deeds of Samson are strangely alike, as are also the births of Moses and Sargon the first, the latter having been placed by his mother in an ark of rushes, launched upon the Euphrates,

and rescued by a water-carrier, who brought him up as his son." (Smith's "Assyrian Discoveries," p. 228.)

Without entering upon the vexed question of the dates of these legends, it must be allowed at all events, that priority belongs to the profane rather than to the sacred legends. The Assyrian Tablets constitute therefore our earliest "Book of Origins," origins, it must be allowed, not of history, for no one in his senses would attempt to found history, or base his religion upon what are after all nothing but the rude attempts of the most ancient civilized nation we know of, to dive into the secrets of the early ages of mankind. They are deeply interesting and poetical myths, nothing more. What then should be our conclusion ?

If the so-called Mosaic account "turns out after all to be neither history, nor original revelation from Jehovah to the Jews, but stories found among neighbours." If we have found out at last that we have been building our house upon the sand, what then ? Let us not be downhearted, neither let us be dismayed, rather let us say, "let God be true and every man a liar." Let us be thankful to God for the light given to us in this our day, through the unwearied labours of men like Rawlinson, Smith, Layard, Loftus, Rassam, earnest seekers after truth and lovers of science. Dogmatic theology may suffer ; but true religion will never suffer from any scientific discovery. The tendency not of one, but of all the sciences, is to exalt all our religious conceptions. Theology has debased them !

In concluding these remarks, I cannot do better than by again quoting from the work of the able physician (Pentateuch and Book of Joshua, p. 14).

" Shall we who measure our distance from the sun and fixed stars, calculate their masses, weigh them as in a balance, analyse their light, and thereby learn that they are all units in one stupendous whole, continue to look with respect on tales that tell of the arrest of the sun and moon in their apparent path through heaven,

to the end that a barbarous horde may have light effectually to exterminate the unoffending people, they have come—by God's command, too, it is said—to plunder and to murder? It were surely time to quit us of such worse than childish folly."

May the spirit of truth guide us into all truth, to the truth which will break our fetters and make us free indeed, to the truth which will widen our vision, strengthen and exalt our hopes, and enlarge our charity.