

fire may rage, annihilates the least particle of matter; and that fire only changes the form of substances. Nay, there is no reason whatever to suppose that one particle of matter has been annihilated since the world began. The chemist moreover asserts that all the solid parts of the globe have already undergone combustion, and that although heat may melt them, it cannot burn them. Nor is there any thing upon or within the earth capable of combustion, but vegetables, and animals, and a few gases. Has Peter, then, made a mistake because he did not understand modern chemistry? We have only to examine his language carefully, as it seems to me, in order to be satisfied that he means only, that whatsoever upon, or within, the earth, is combustible, will be burned up at the final conflagration; and that the whole globe, the "elements, will melt with fervent heat." He no where asserts, or implies, that one particle of matter will be annihilated by that catastrophe. Thus science, instead of proving his statements to be erroneous, only enables us more correctly to understand them.

Scarcely any truth seems more clearly taught in the Bible than the future resurrection of the body. Yet this doctrine has always been met by a most formidable objection. It is said that the body laid in the grave is ere long decomposed into its elements, which are scattered over the face of the earth, and enter into new combinations, even forming a part of other human bodies. Hence not even Omnipotence can raise from the grave the identical body laid there, because the particles may enter successively into a multitude of other human bodies. I am not aware that any successful reply has ever been given to this objection, until chemistry and natural history taught us the true nature of bodily identity; and until recently the objector has felt sure that he had triumphed. But these sciences teach us that the identity of the body consists, not in a sameness of particles, but in the same kinds of elementary matter, combined in the same proportion, and having the same form and structure. Hence it is not necessary that the resurrection body should contain a single particle of the matter laid in the grave, in order to be the same body; which it will be if it consist of the same kinds of matter combined in the same proportions, and has the same form and structure. For the particles of our bodies are often totally changed during our lives; yet no one imagines that the old man has not