

It is quite possible, however, that,—as on parts of the western shores of our own country, where recent marine deposits lie over marine deposits of the Pleistocene age, while a terrestrial deposit, representative of an intervening paroxysm of upheaval, lies between,—it is possible, I say, that in this great depressed area, the region covered of old by a Tertiary sea, which we know united the Sea of Aral with the Caspian, and rolled over many a wide steppe and vast plain, may have been again covered for a brief period (after ages of upheaval) by the breaking in of the great deep during that season of judgment when, with the exception of one family, the whole human race was destroyed. It seems confirmatory of this view, that during even the historic period, at least one of the neighbouring inland seas, though it belongs to a different system from that of the Caspian and the Aral, covered a vastly greater area than it does now,—a consequence, apparently, of a more considerable depression in the Caucasian region than at present exists. Herodotus, as quoted by Cuvier in his “Theory of the Earth,” represents the Sea of Azoff as equal in extent to the Euxine.

With the known facts, then, regarding this depressed Asiatic region before us, let us see whether we cannot originate a theory of the Deluge free from at least the palpable monstrosities of the older ones. Let us suppose that the human family, still amounting to several millions, though greatly reduced by exterminating wars and exhausting vices, were congregated in that tract of country which, extending eastwards from the modern Ararat to far beyond the Sea of Aral, includes the original Caucasian centre of the race : let us suppose that, the hour of judgment having at length arrived, the land began gradually to sink, as the tract in the run of Cutch sank in the year 1819, or as the tract in the southern part of North America known as the “sunk country,” sank in the year 1821 : farther, let us suppose that the depression