

tianity, they had recourse to the Brahmins and the Chinese. And though we hear less of the ethics of these people since we have come to know them better, we are still occasionally reminded of the superiority of their science. Hinduism has been regarded as furnishing examples of the geologic doctrine of a succession of creations extended over immensely protracted geologic periods; and Buddhism represented as charged with both the geologic doctrine and the perhaps less certain astronomic deduction of a plurality of worlds. And before entering on our general argument, it may be well to show by specimen what mere chance hits these are, and how enormous the amount of the nonsense and absurdity really is in which they are set.

When Brahma, wearied with the work of producing and maintaining the universe, goes to sleep, say the Hindus,—an occurrence which happens at the end of every four millions of years,—a deluge of water rises high above the sun and moon, and the worlds and their inhabitants are destroyed. When he awakes, however, he immediately sets himself to produce anew; and another universe springs up, consisting, like the former one, of ten worlds placed over each other, like the storeys of a tall building, and replenished with plants and animals. Of these, our own world is the eighth in number, reckoning from the ground-floor upwards: there are seven worlds worse than itself beneath it, and two better ones above; with a few worlds more higher up still, to which the destroying flood does not reach, save once or twice in an eternity or so; and which, in consequence, have not to be re-created each time with the others. The special forms which the upper and nether worlds exhibit do not seem to be very well known; but that which man inhabits is “flat, like the flower of the water-lily, in which the petals project beyond each other;” and it has in all, including sea and land, a diameter of several hundred thousand *millions* of miles. It has its