

Penn,—certainly one of the most extensively informed of his class,—deals with this difficulty.* There are, he argues, certain great corruptions of Scripture. What had been at first written as marginal notes by uninspired men, and were in some cases very erroneous and absurd, came in the course of transcription to be transferred, wholly by mistake, from the side of the page into the body of the text; and thus, in at least a few places, the Scriptures were vitiated, and now declare, instead of Divine truth, what is neither sense nor fact. And on this very general, and certainly most perilous ground, he goes on to argue, unsupported by a single ancient manuscript, and solely on what he terms internal evidence, that the verses in Genesis which conflict with his hypothesis must be regarded as mere idle glosses, ignorantly or surreptitiously introduced into the text by the ancient copyists. “In the second chapter of Genesis,” we find him saying, “*there appears an internal critical evidence of an insertion of the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th verses, similar to that of the 4th verse of the 5th chapter of St John, and constituting, in a similar manner, a parenthesis intersecting the thread of the narrative, and introduced solely for a similar purpose of illustration. It does not wear the character of the simple narrative in which it appears, but of the surcharge of the gloss or note of a later age, founded upon the fanciful traditions then prevailing with respect to the situation of the ancient Paradise.*” This certainly is cutting the knot; and, if erected into a precedent by the geologist, would no doubt greatly facilitate the labour of reconciliation. It would, however, be perilous work for *him*. “A wolf,” says Plutarch, “peeping into a hut where a company of shepherds were assembled, saw them regaling themselves with a joint of mutton. ‘Ye gods!’ he exclaimed, ‘what a clamour these men would have raised if

* “Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaical Geologies.” By Granville Penn, Esq. London, 1825.