

**THE FLOOD**  
**IN THE LIGHT OF**  
**THE BIBLE, GEOLOGY,**  
**AND ARCHAEOLOGY**



THE



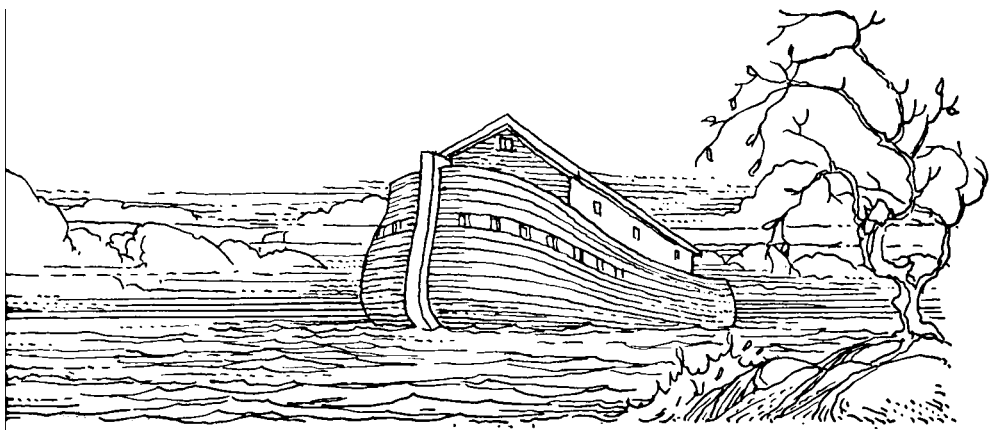
# FLOOD

IN THE LIGHT OF  
THE BIBLE, GEOLOGY,  
AND ARCHAEOLOGY

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St. Louis, Mo.

*Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 57-4751*

ISBN 0-570-03183-4

*To my children*  
*Dorothy, Helen and Eugene*



## *Preface*

**T**HE material here presented in book form was originally delivered in a series of lectures before District church conventions, pastors' institutes, laymen's seminars, teachers' meetings, and in Walther League camps in many parts of the United States and Canada. The audiences which heard these lectures differed greatly in character and education, and hence it was necessary to choose the popular lecture style to find a common ground where all minds could readily meet. The original lectures were revised considerably in preparation for publication, but the popular style has been retained.

Another point to be noted is that these lectures grew over a long period of time and were not originally prepared for publication. It was therefore not always possible, when the revision was made, to indicate at all times the sources that had been consulted, but the reader is referred to a lengthy bibliography at the end of this book. All books and articles listed there have been helpful, and grateful acknowledgment is hereby made, also for the illustrations in the book.

The author has received aid and suggestions from many friends and a variety of sources. He wishes to acknowledge particularly his debt to Dr. George McCready Price, a noted geologist and author of many books on geology and Biblical

subjects. Dr. Price is a brilliant champion of Biblical truths, and his searching analysis of the evolutionary theories of modern geology has been very helpful. The author also wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the interest shown by, and the encouragement received from, many friends who supplied him with valuable clippings and pictures of newly discovered fossils and other materials from all parts of the United States and Canada. He feels especially indebted to his wife, Bessie, nee Efner, M. D., whose interest, help, and encouragement have been constant.

The author's interest in the study of the Flood dates back to his college days, particularly to the time when he was a student of geology in the University of Alberta, under Dr. John Allan, a great teacher and one of Canada's foremost geologists. This interest was further stimulated when later he was called upon to teach a course in physical geography at Concordia College in Edmonton, Alberta. As a whole, this study has been a lifelong labor of love and a source of much genuine pleasure, because it opened up ever greater visions of God's most wonderful and omnipotent majesty manifested in the works of His creative and destructive powers. It is the author's desire to share this pleasure with many others who have not heard these lectures, by making them available in printed form. In offering this book to the reading public of the Church, he finds no better closing words for these introductory remarks than the beautiful prayer of the great Kepler, who prayed: "I thank Thee, my Creator and my Lord, that Thou hast given me this joy in Thy creation, this thrill in the works of Thy hand. I have made known Thy glory to men as far as my limited spirit can grasp Thine infinitude. If I have written something unworthy of Thee, forgive it in grace."

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## *Introduction*

**W**HY a book on the Flood in the days of Noah? Why devote time and effort to an event which lies on the very threshold of an indistinct twilight of legend and myth and which is farther removed from the present than all the most ancient peoples and empires known to us from secular history? What benefit could there be in a study so hoary in age and so far removed from the thinking of people in the world today? There are four reasons why this study was made and why the results are here presented in book form.

Next to Creation, the Flood of Noah's time is the greatest event in the history of our earth. Nothing comparable with it has happened since nor will happen until the final destruction of this universe in the fire of Judgment Day. The Flood marks the end of a world of transcendent beauty, created by God as a perfect abode for man, and the beginning of a new world, a mere shadowy replica of its original glory. In all recorded history there is no other event except the Fall which has had such a revolutionary effect upon the topography and condition of this earth and which has so profoundly affected human history and every phase of life as it now exists in its manifold forms in the world. No geologist, biologist, or student of history can afford to ignore this great catastrophe.

The second reason for this study is the fact that the Flood occupies a most prominent place in our Bible. The sacred writer devotes more space to the history of the Flood than to the story of creation. About one third of the first eleven chapters of Genesis, which deal with the first two thousand years of the world's history, are devoted to the Flood. There are repeated references to the Flood in other books of the Old Testament. Jesus and the Apostles refer to it in the New Testament and hold it up as a warning example of God's wrath against sin as well as an example of His saving mercy. What Paul wrote concerning the Old Testament Scripture most certainly applies to this section, namely: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). We shall have ample opportunity to learn later that there is indeed much reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness in the Biblical account of the Flood.

Every student of the Bible and of geology knows there exists today a seemingly irreconcilable conflict between Genesis and geology. This conflict dates back about 125 years and had its origin in the rise of evolutionary geology. Up to that time, theologians and scientists were generally in agreement with the Biblical teachings concerning Creation and the Flood. But that is no longer the case. Today textbooks prescribed for courses in physical geography and geology in American high schools and colleges no longer teach a Biblical creation of the universe in six days of twenty-four hours each by a divine fiat. Some teachers, in fact, take delight in ridiculing the Biblical creation story and rule it out of modern thinking as naive, absurd, or as mere folklore of primitive people. Now and then there are still those who try to harmonize Genesis and the theories of geology by juggling language and extending the six days of creation into six periods of unlimited time, each measured by millions, or possibly billions, of years. Still others pre-

serve an outward reverence for the Bible and speak of Genesis patronizingly as a beautiful but poetical conception of the origin of things.

The shock received by the inexperienced young student is therefore overwhelming when he enters the classroom of such teachers and suddenly discovers to his great bewilderment that these men and women of acclaimed learning do not believe the views taught him in his early childhood days; and since the student sits at their feet day after day, it usually does not require a great deal of time until the foundation of his faith begins to crumble as stone upon stone is being removed from it by these unbelieving teachers. Only too often the results are disastrous. The young Christian becomes disturbed, confused, and bewildered. Social pressure and the weight of authority add to his difficulties. First he begins to doubt the infallibility of the Bible in matters of geology, but he will not stop there. Other difficulties arise, and before long skepticism and unbelief have taken the place of his childhood faith, and the saddest of all tragedies has happened. Once more a pious Christian youth has gained a glittering world of pseudo learning but has lost his own immortal soul.

To help these students and others like them over this difficult and dangerous period is the chief reason for this study and its publication. A careful study of the Biblical account of the Flood will prove that this fearful world catastrophe offers the most reasonable solution for most or all of the difficulties which confront the student of historical geology and which tend to disturb his faith in the truth and reliability of the Bible.

For the encouragement of young Christians who are overawed by the show of great learning of unbelieving professors it ought to be said that there always have been and still are very eminent scientists and men of great learning who retain their faith in the Bible as God's own infallible revelation to man. Everyone knows that men like Kepler,

Newton, Faraday, and others of like stature were humble Christians and believers in the Bible. Great geologists of the last century, like Hugh Miller, Pye Smith, Murcheson, Sir William Dawson, and others, remained faithful believers and defenders of the Bible. Dr. Samuel Johnson, who was well known for his profound classical scholarship, was a humble and pious man and took the Bible for his guide throughout life and leaned entirely upon its promises for comfort in the hour of death.

At a meeting of the British Association of Scientists held in 1865 a manifesto was drawn up and signed by 617 men of science, many of whom were of the highest eminence, in which they declared their belief not only in the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, but also in the harmony of Scripture with natural science. A copy of this manifesto was deposited in the Bodleian Library of Oxford. The text of this manifesto is very interesting. It reads as follows:

We, the undersigned students of the Natural Sciences, desire to express our sincere regret that researches into scientific truth are perverted by some in our own times into occasions for casting doubt upon the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

We conceive that it is impossible for the Word of God as written in the book of Nature, and God's Word written in Holy Scripture to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ.

We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete, but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us only to see as through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular.

We cannot but deplore that Natural Science should be looked upon with suspicion by many who do not make a study of it, merely on account of the unadvised manner in which some are placing it in opposition to Holy Writ.

We believe that it is the duty of every scientific student to investigate Nature simply for the purpose of elucidating truth, and that if he finds that some of his results appear to be in contradiction to the written Word, or rather to his own interpretation of it, which may be erroneous, he should not presumptuously affirm that his own conclusions must be right, and the statements of Scriptures wrong.

Rather leave the two side by side until it shall please God to allow us to see the manner in which they may be reconciled; and instead of insisting upon the seeming differences between Science and the Scriptures, it would be as well to rest in faith upon the points in which they agree.\*

Great men of science are humble men because they best know the frailties and limitations of finite men. It is the small man, the second-rate scholar and scientist, who struts in arrogant conceit, who parades his learning to impress the uninitiated, who is intolerant and dogmatic in his pronouncements. These are well characterized by Quintilian, a Roman teacher of oratory at the time of Paul, who says: "The less ability man has, the more he tries to swell himself out as those of short stature exalt themselves on tiptoes, and the weak use most threats." †

The final reason for a study of the Flood is to remind the Christian reader that the Flood was a prototype of the Final Judgment, which will make a sudden and fearful end of the second world. The Lord says: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the Flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (Matt. 24:37-39.) As the first world perished by water, so this present world shall be destroyed by fire. (2 Pet. 3:3 ff.) And as this second world emerged from the Flood stripped of its original glory, so shall emerge from the fire of Judgment a new heaven and a new earth cleansed of sin and all evil, of misery, war, and death, and restored to a perfection which shall transcend even its original glory. (2 Pet. 3:13 ff.)

A study of the Flood will prove to be extremely fascinating and rich in instruction, both spiritual and secular,

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\* Samuel Kinns, *Moses and Geology*, p. 5 f.

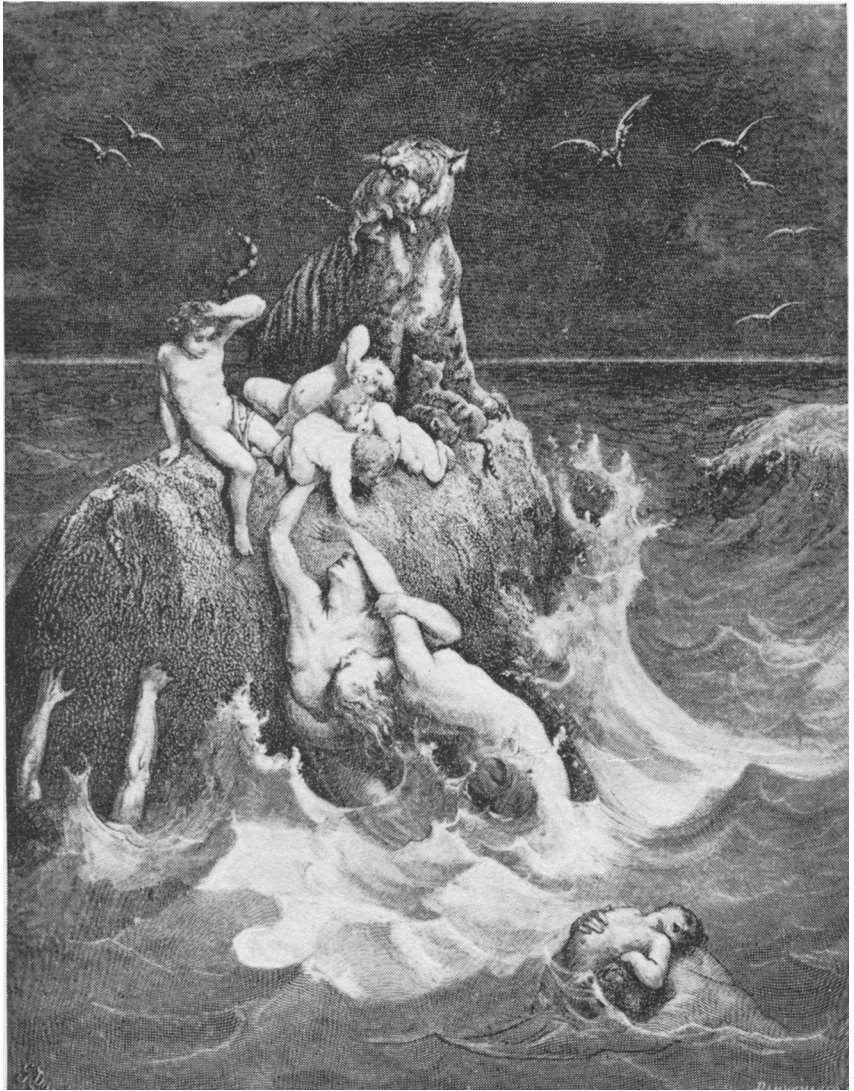
† *Institute of Oratory*, Book 2, Chap. 3.

for in this awful catastrophe we behold our God in His wonderful and fearful majesty as He deals in His anger and mercy with the children of men. And as we now undertake this study, we must always remain mindful of the fact that we are dealing here with a great miracle of God, though the natural forces already in the universe were employed to bring it about, and miracles, in their very nature, are supernatural acts of God and therefore contrary to the established laws of nature and incapable of explanation and complete understanding by finite man. Hence we must expect that many problems connected with the Flood will remain unsolved mysteries. The general plan of the study aims to develop the following broad outline:

- I. The World Before the Flood
- II. The Biblical Account of the Flood
- III. Extra-Biblical Evidence for the Flood
- IV. The World After the Flood

PART I

*The World Before the Flood*



*The End of All Flesh, by Doré*

## CHAPTER I

### *The Physical World Before the Flood*

**T**HE recorded information we have concerning the physical condition of the world before the Flood is very meager. The only direct Biblical reference is found in Gen. 1:31, where we read: "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." When God had finished creating, He inspected, as it were, the works of His hand, and He was delighted with the things that He had made and pronounced them very good. What God pronounces good, that is good in the absolute. God had created a perfect abode for man, the crown of His creation. It was perfect and complete in every detail. There were no thorns and thistles in that world. The earth brought forth abundantly of everything that was needful to provide for the wants, comforts, and pleasures of man. There was no need of a struggle for an existence either between man and man or between the beasts and their companions. There were no Saharas, no barren wastes, no bleak and sterile hills, no rigors of the arctic and no disease-breeding heat of the tropics. The most enchanting islands in the subtropical area of the South Seas today are but an imperfect replica of what that world was which received the verdict "very good" from its Creator.

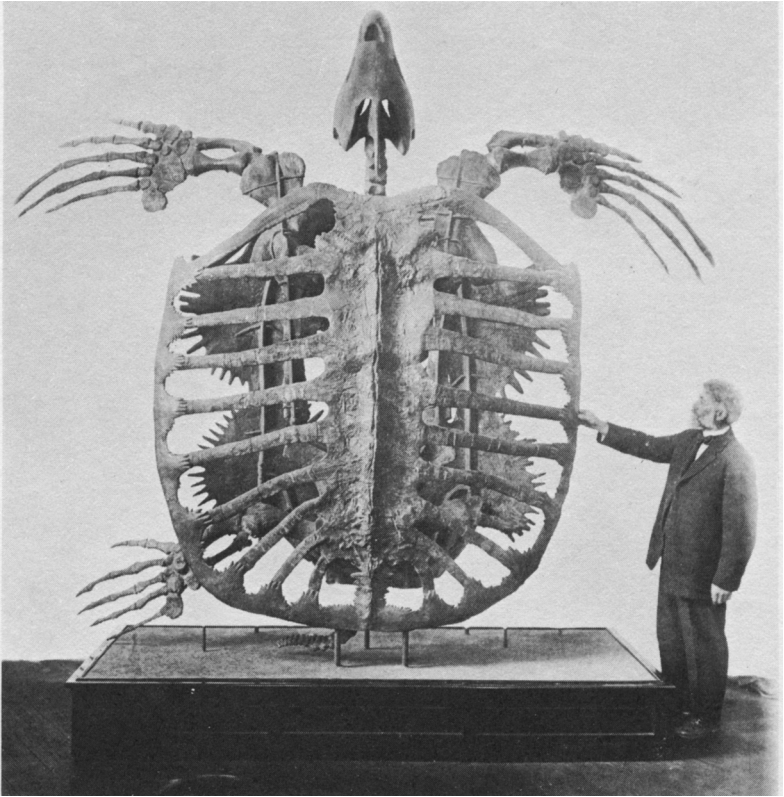
It is true, after God had spoken these words, sin came into the world and with sin the blight and the curse of sin. And the curse which God had pronounced became effective at once, but its consequences were not immediately apparent to their fullest extent.

It was here as it was with men. God had said: "The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and when man ate, death was upon him and in him, but man did not die immediately. That body created unto immortality defied death for nearly a thousand years. He lived as though he would never die. And as with men, so it was with the rest of creation. Though the blight of sin was upon it, its original glory did not depart at once, and the "groaning and travailing in pain" of which St. Paul speaks (Rom. 8:22) was not yet as audible as it is now.

Even after sin and death had come into this world, it was still a world vastly superior to the world which now is. It was, as Luther says, "a veritable paradise compared with the world that followed."

In the first place, it was a world with more "living space" for the human race than the present world offers. The world of Adam and his immediate descendants contained proportionately more habitable land than the world of today. There were no enormous waste areas, such as the great deserts of Africa, Asia, America, and Australia. Nor were the land masses separated by such vast expanses of ocean water, which today constitute about seven tenths of the earth's surface.

The earth's surface is approximately 197,000,000 square miles. Of this, 139,000,000 square miles of the world today is sea, leaving 58,000,000 square miles of land, or only a little more than one fourth of the globe which is not covered with water. But not even all of this one fourth of the earth's surface is suitable for human habitation. The regions of the earth which are capable of supporting an average population by virtue of fertility of land, the abundance of natural



*The Giant Sea Turtle Archelon. A contemporary of the Morosaurs. From the specimen in the Yale University Museum*

## CHAPTER II

### *The Duration of the First World and Its Population*

**T**HE story of the Flood is told in Chapters Six to Nine in the first book of the Bible. The story of the fall of man is found in Chapter Three. Between these two events are only two chapters, and both of these are largely devoted to genealogical tables. In our school Bible histories and Sunday school literature the account of the fall of man is usually followed by the story of Cain and Abel, and that again by the story of the Flood. As a result, children as well as adults are often found to have formed an erroneous conception concerning the duration of the first world. We usually think of that period as having been much shorter than it really was. It must be remembered, however, that the duration of the first world covered a long period of time, a period much longer than any kingdom or empire in ancient or modern times had ever flourished. We have an exact chronology of this age in Genesis 5, and that chronology is confirmed by the genealogical table found in Chronicles 1 and Luke 3. According to this chronology the Flood occurred in the year 1656 after Creation.

PART II

*The Biblical Account of the Flood*



## CHAPTER IV

### *Warning of the Coming Flood*

**T**HE Biblical account of the Flood is found in the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters of Genesis. The language of this extraordinary narrative is simple and direct. There is no appearance of legend or poetry, nothing fanciful or extravagant as in the case of the Flood traditions of other nations. It is a masterpiece in descriptive narrative, gripping and dramatic in style.

We are told that man had become altogether wicked and “that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Up to a certain period in that early history of the human race the children of God had kept themselves separate from the children of men; but, as men began to multiply, the line of demarcation gradually vanished. Cordial relations came to exist. The godly intermarried with the ungodly. The result was that the godly were absorbed by the ungodly. Only one class remained. God warned them. He gave them 120 years time for repentance, but to no avail. The downward course once entered upon was continued, and it “repented the Lord that He had made man.” The language used here is an expression of the figure of speech called anthropomorphism, by which the thoughts and acts of God are described in language that would be appropriate to men in like circumstances. “And God said unto Noah,

The end of all flesh is come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Less severe measures would not meet the case. It was necessary to wipe out this wicked generation to save the human race from total annihilation and to make possible the fulfillment of the promise concerning the Seed of the woman. To perpetuate the race, Noah and his family were chosen. We are told that "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." He is called a just man and perfect in his generation, and, like Enoch, he walked with God. Noah testified against the wickedness and corruption of his age, for Peter, in his Second Epistle, calls him a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). But neither God's warning nor Noah's preaching was of any avail, and so God commanded Noah to build an ark for himself and his family and for a place of refuge for every species of animals. God had resolved to bring a flood upon the earth to destroy it. The Hebrew word "*mabbul*," translated "flood," is used only for the waters of Noah; and it is used only here and in Ps. 29:10. Noah was to build him an ark, or a vessel, to escape the Flood. The word "ark" seems to be derived from the Egyptian language and signifies "chest" or something to float. The word occurs only twice in the Bible, here for the ark of Noah and again in Ex. 2:3-5 for the ark of bulrushes in which the infant Moses was saved from the cruel decree of Pharaoh.

The ark was built of gopher wood and caulked with pitch within and without. The word "gopher" as used here is merely a transliteration of the Hebrew word. Its exact meaning is not known. Luther translates it with "*Tannenhholz*." Other scholars are of the opinion that the cypress is meant, because cypress wood was used very extensively for shipbuilding in ancient times and also because this species of wood is found in great abundance in the Two-River Valley, where the ark may have been built.

Other specifications for the ark were: "Rooms [cabins or cells] shalt thou make in the ark. The length of the ark shall

## CHAPTER VI

### *Was the Ark Discovered?*

**D**URING the year 1942, readers of church papers, magazines, and the public press were aroused by a detailed report of an alleged discovery of the remains of Noah's ark on Mount Ararat. This most remarkable discovery was said to have been made by Mr. Vladimar Roskivitsky, a converted Russian aviator, who since then severed his connection with the godless Bolsheviks, came to America, and was selling Bibles when these articles first appeared. Because of the great interest these articles aroused and the wide discussion they caused, it is thought well to include here in this discussion of Noah's ark an account of this supposed discovery. The following is a verbatim account of this event as told by Mr. Roskivitsky and as reprinted in the *Banner* of the Reformed Church, dated November 27, 1942:

"It was in the days just before the Russian revolution that this story really begins. A group of us Russian aviators were stationed at a lonely temporary outpost about twenty-five miles northwest of Mount Ararat. The day was dry and terribly hot, as August days so often are in this semi-desert land.

"Even the lizards were flattened out under the shady sides of rocks or twigs, their mouths open and tongues lashing out as if each panting breath would be their last. Only

## CHAPTER XV

### *The Mammoth and the Flood*

THE most remarkable remains of prehistoric animal life yet recovered are those of the mammoth, found in the frozen tundras of northern Siberia. The mammoth is a member of the elephant family, but was covered with long, coarse hair and was much larger in size. The term *mammoth* is believed to have been derived from the Biblical *behemoth* and was first used by Arabian traders who penetrated far into Russia as early as the tenth and eleventh centuries and traded with the natives in ivory, which was found in the northern part of the country in great quantities. One account says that there had been found a tooth two palms in width and four in length and a skull resembling an Arab hut. Ancient Greek legends and poetry speaks of griffins, strange mythological creatures, with birdlike claws, guarding the gold found north of the Black Sea and in the Ural regions. The bones which those early prospectors found and interpreted to be the claws of a huge birdlike monster no doubt were the tusks of the mammoth, since then found in that region and farther north in such enormous quantities. To ascribe these bones and tusks to monster dragons may have been prompted by more than mere superstition. Tales of ferocious creatures guarding the precious metal against every intruder would keep away the greedy gold stealer