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time to the time then present ; although the tabernacle, its sacred utensils, and the mercy-seat, and even the first temple, had perished, and the true Messiah had actually come ; and the declaration was peculiarly forcible to them, because this instruction was set before them by what their own eyes saw.

ARTICLE III.

THE MOSAIC SIX DAYS AND GEÓLOGY.

By Professor E. P. Barrows, Andover.

In pursuance of our plan, as indicated in a previous Article, we now proceed to consider the Mosaic narrative of the creation in its relations to the science of Geology. They who regard the narrative as a *religious myth* escape, at once, the whole difficulty ; but, in doing this, they destroy the historic basis of revealed religion, and involve themselves in infinitely graver difficulties. If the account of the six days' work of creation is a myth, then the ground upon which the decalogue places the rest of the Sabbath is mythical ; in other words, it is no ground at all ; whence the inference naturally follows, that the decalogue itself is of human origin, and the authority of the Pentateuch a nullity. But still further (since we cannot, upon any fair principle of interpretation, make part of the narrative contained in the first three chapters of Genesis mythical and part historic), if the record of the six days' work of creation is mythical, then the contents of the two following chapters are mythical also. Whence it follows, that our Saviour's argument for the perpetuity of the marriage relation,¹ rests upon the sandy foundation of a human myth, although he plainly appeals to the primitive

¹ Matt. 19: 3—6. Mark 10: 2—9.

record as of Divine authority. Then the apostle Paul's argument, also, for the headship of the man: "for Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression;"¹ and again: "for the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man,"² and his labored parallelism between the effects of Adam's fall and Christ's redemption, involving the very essence of the Christian system: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" "for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous;"³ "for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"⁴—all these direct appeals to the primitive record, made in the course of earnest argumentation, are found to be only a house built upon mythical quicksand, to be swept away by the floods of German neology, and in it the authority of the Apostle as an inspired teacher. Such has always been, and is now, the final issue of the mythical hypothesis. In truth, the narrative now under consideration is appealed to so often and in so many forms by the writers of the New Testament, as a part of that "all Scripture" which is "given by inspiration of God," that its historic verity and their authority as divinely inspired teachers, must stand or fall together.

Nor is any valuable result secured for the authority of Christ and his apostles by conceding the Divine origin of the Mosaic narrative as "a pictorial representation of creation," while all its details are denied as unhistoric, according to the theory of Knapp: that a "general impression is intended to be conveyed, which is true, but that the machinery is of no account;"⁵ and of Prof. Powell: "as to the particular form in which the descriptive narrative is conveyed, we merely af-

¹ 1 Tim. 2: 13, 14.

² 1 Cor. 11: 8, 9.

³ Rom. 5: 12—19.

⁴ 1 Cor. 15: 21, 22.

⁵ Knapp's *Theology*, translated by Pres. Woods, B. I. Pt. 2, Art. V. § 50.

firm that it *cannot be history* — it *may be poetry*.”¹ For their arguments are drawn from particular incidents; and, as a writer has well remarked: “The trouble is, when you take away the machinery there is no picture left. The narrative is absolutely made up of incidents.”² In all that we have to say, then, on the geological question, we shall assume that a basis of historic truth underlies both the narrative considered as a whole, and each particular division of it; especially that the *succession* of events which it records, is a true historic succession.

The discussion respecting the Mosaic days of creation involves two questions: What is the *time* included in these days? and What is their *comprehension*? in other words: What amount of the entire process of creation from the original fiat which brought matter into being to the formation of man, do they cover? Whatever view be taken of the length of the Mosaic days, this latter question, though closely connected with the former, is not identical with it, and is capable of a separate discussion, as will appear in the sequel.

I. *The Length of the Mosaic Days.*

The arguments that have a bearing on this point, must be drawn from the character of the narrative itself; from the references to it in the account of the institution of the Sabbath; and, lastly, from the facts of science. As introductory to the presentation of our own view of the subject, we propose to take a cursory survey of these three sources of evidence.

1. *The character of the narrative itself.* If the prevalent view of both Jews and Christians, in all past ages, may be taken as a fair criterion of the first and most natural impression which this account of the creation, taken by itself, makes upon the reader's mind, then the evidence drawn from this source preponderates, most decidedly, in favor of the literal

¹ In Kitto's Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, Art. "Creation," p. 486.

² Rev. John O. Means, in Bib. Sacra, Vol. XII. p. 96. To his able review and refutation of this theory we refer our readers.

interpretation. It is not simply from the reference to the six days of creation, contained in the fourth commandment, but also from the emphatic ascription, to each particular day, of its own morning and evening, that men have naturally enough inferred that literal days, of twenty-four hours, were to be understood throughout. This general agreement of past generations must not, however, be allowed to preclude free investigation. New discoveries, resting upon the immovable foundation of science, may require a review and modification of past opinions pertaining not to the substance, but only to the outward form, of Divine revelation. In one notable case, at least, such a review and re-adjustment of interpretation had already taken place before geology, as a science, came into being. The words of inspiration, to which reference was made in our previous Article: "The world also is established that it cannot be moved," and other like declarations of Scripture, were for ages very naturally and properly understood in the strictly literal sense; till the revelations of astronomy showed that this could not be the true sense. Then came, with much heated discussion, the needed review. The result was a complete reconciliation between the teachings of Revelation and astronomy. Let it be granted that in past ages both Jews and Christians have, with some notable exceptions, adhered to the literal interpretation of the six days, and that, in their case, this was entirely natural and proper. It does not follow that we should pertinaciously cling to it, in the face of clear evidence to the contrary.

Although the *prima facie* view of the narrative favors, as we have seen, the theory of six literal days, yet it has some very marked features, which look strongly in the opposite direction; which, if not in themselves decisive, prepare us, when external evidence is furnished that these days must be understood of extended periods, the more readily to receive it. For a full development of the internal evidence against the theory of six literal days, we refer the reader to Prof. Lewis's work on the "Six Days of Creation." He will find them interwoven throughout with its discussions, and certainly

they have great weight. We restrict ourselves to the consideration of two or three prominent points.

In a previous Article we have shown that the so-called period of chaos was not a period of dead stagnation. "The Spirit of God was hovering upon the face of the waters." A *process* was going on, not of outward visible order and organic life, but of preparation for these. This excludes the idea of a brief state, extending at most only over a few hours. But in this period lies the evening of the first day. A *ἑσπερον πρότερον* — *evening* and *morning*, for *morning* and *evening* — is not to be for a moment thought of. We know that the Hebrews and many other nations, as our German ancestors, following either the primitive revelation itself or the traditional echo of it, began the day with the evening. The first evening lies in this primeval period of chaos and darkness, and the most natural supposition is that it covers the whole of it. Arbitrarily to separate from the close of it twelve literal hours, is most incongruous and unnatural; yet to this incongruity is the advocate of six literal days driven.¹ But if the first evening was indefinitely extended, it seems natural that the following evenings should have been of like extent, and, of course, the *mornings* that succeeded to them. On the probable ground of this division of the whole era of creation into alternate evenings and mornings, we shall have something to say hereafter. At present, we restrict ourselves to the element of time.

Once more: the manner in which some of the Divine operations are described favors, if it does not make necessary, the idea of extended processes. Take, as the strongest instance, the account of the third day's work. This consists of two distinct parts, the former of which is thus described: "And God said, Let the waters be gathered together from under the heavens unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good." Nothing in the form of this

¹ See on this point the conclusive arguments of Prof. Lewis in his *Six Days of Creation*, Chap. IX. pp. 94—97.

narrative looks like a miraculous and sudden transfer of large parts of the universal ocean, some thousands of miles, in a few hours. Before the third day, there were no such elevations of land as now exist, for the seas covered the whole earth. Upon that day we must suppose that the present inequalities, or rather inequalities like the present, began to exist. The natural result of this would be precisely what the inspired penman records. The waters, that before had been spread abroad under the whole heavens, would be gathered together into one place, and the dry land would appear. We do not mean that the sacred writer has in view, as an instrumental cause, this relative elevation and depression of different parts of the earth's surface. He simply describes the separation of the seas from the dry land as effected by the Divine command, just as he does the alternations of day and night, without any statement of second causes. But this does not forbid us, in the one case more than in the other, reverently to inquire concerning these second causes, which have God himself for their Author, and are the ministers of his will. The passage Ps. 104: 6—9 is a poetic description which cannot be much insisted on for scientific purposes. It may refer either to the separation of the primitive seas, or of the waters of the deluge, from the dry land; or, more probably, to both events, the writer conceiving of both as effected in the same way. The translation of the eighth verse proposed by many: "The mountains ascend, the valleys descend to the place which thou hast founded for them," is doubtful. If it be the true rendering, then the writer had distinctly in view the idea of relative elevation and depression which now prevails, yet simply as an effect of the Divine will, without any theory of second causes.

But to return to the idea of time. If this elevation were gradual, so as to allow the waters to flow off quietly, then, of course, the work would not be accomplished in a literal day. If instantaneous, or very sudden, still the waters, though they would rush with inconceivable violence towards their destined bed, could not, by any natural law, be gathered into one place in many times twenty-four hours; much less

could the continents and islands be prepared to receive a clothing of vegetation on the same day, as the narrative assures us they did. The advocate, then, of the literal theory must, of necessity, suppose a strictly miraculous transfer of a large part of the overspreading waters of the ocean to their present beds, and an equally miraculous drying of the soil for the numerous classes of upland plants, or else a miraculous preservation of them in a soil unsuited to the nature which God himself had just bestowed upon them. If it be said: All this is easy to God; we answer: The question is not: What is easy to God, who can do all things; but, What is in harmony with the general course of his proceedings, especially with the regular and orderly progress of events in the present narrative; and, What is the natural impression also, which this particular part of the narrative makes upon the reader's mind. That it affirms the exercise by God of a supernatural power upon nature is certain. But it contains no intimation of any multiplication of miracles for the purpose of forcing results to which the laws established by God himself are competent, provided only that sufficient time be allowed for their operation.

On this part of the Mosaic narrative, so important in its relation to the question of time, the commentators are remarkably compendious and jejune. Some of them propound theories to explain how the waters of the universal ocean were disposed of, but, of the many whom we have consulted, not one meets the question of the transfer of vast seas from one part of the world to another in the space of less than twelve hours.

Several of them, however, as Vatablus and (according to Grotius) expositors among the Hebrews, have a note on the word וַיֹּאמֶר *and God said*, which it may be well to notice. They render it into the pluperfect: "*and God had said,*" thus making it an ἐπ'αυδος, or return to the work of the second day.¹ On this forced and unnatural interpretation,

¹ Grotius's note on the ninth verse, as given in the Critici Sacri, is the following: "*Dixit vero Deus*] Hebraei exponunt, *cum dixisset Deus: ut sit ἐπ'αυδος. Putant enim hoc factum die secundo. Hebraeis idem praeteritum modò perfecti,*

we simply remark that it cannot be of any avail in respect to the theory of six literal days ; since the waters of the primitive ocean could no more flow off, under the operation of any natural causes, in a day and a half, than in one day, or half a day. To the almighty power of God such a sudden separation of seas and dry land is perfectly easy ; but it is not favored by either the face of the present narrative, or by the general analogy of his operations.

2. *The reference to the Mosaic narrative in the account of the institution of the Sabbath.* One of these occurs at the close of the narrative itself, another in the decalogue ; and they are justly held to be of the highest importance, involving no less a question than the Divine authority of the Pentateuch, and of the Sabbath whose institution it records. The words of the sacred record are very plain and decisive : “ And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ; because that in it he rested from all his work which God created to make.”¹ “ Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work : for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”² The necessity of a *Sabbath* has its ground in the wants of human nature. Had the world and all that it contains been brought into being in the twinkling of an eye, it would have been needed as much as now for the comfort and well-being of man. But it pleased God to make *the Sabbath* which he gave to the human family commemorative of his six days’ work of creation, thus uniting in it a double office. “ *Wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it ;” as much as to say : *because* that “ in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day,” *therefore* he has ordained that men should labor six days, and rest on the seventh. The six days of human

modò imperfecti, modò plusquamperfecti habet significationem. Sic mox 2 : 2, *complevit, i. e. compleverat.*”

¹ Gen. 2 : 3.

² Ex. 20 : 9—11.

labor, followed by one day of rest, must then represent six days of Divine creative energy followed by one of rest from creation. Whether these be literal days of twenty-four hours, or extended periods of time, they must be *actual*, not *mythical*; and there must be some true ground in the process of creation for representing these as a succession of six days; otherwise the whole reason assigned by God for the form of the Sabbath — one day of rest in seven — falls to the ground as a nullity; and either God himself, or Moses, professing to speak in God's name, has placed the institution of the Sabbath on a mythical foundation. And if the narrative of the creation is mythical, we see not why that of the fall of man should not be held to be mythical also, though both are constantly referred to in the New Testament as solemn historic verities. And this seems to be the drift of the article on creation in Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature. After an enumeration of various methods of interpretation, he adds: "Others have thought that the whole description must be taken literally as it stands; but yet, *if* found contradicted by facts, may, without violence to its obvious design and construction, be regarded as rather intended for a mythic poetic composition, or religious apologue, than for a matter-of-fact history."¹ "*If*," the writer says, "found contradicted by facts;" and the interpretation upon which he insists as the only possible one, that of six literal days, he holds to be "found contradicted by facts." Again, he finds in the form and details of this narrative, as of the Old Testament generally, "more or less of *adaptation* in the manne of expression, form of imagery, and the like, to the apprehensions, the prejudices, and previous belief of the Jewish people."² Further, he says: "The narrative, then, of six periods of creation, followed by a seventh similar period of rest and blessing, was clearly designed, by adaptation to their conceptions, to enforce upon the Israelites the institution of the Sabbath: and in whatever way its details may be interpreted, it clearly cannot be regarded as an *historical* state-

¹ Vol. I. p. 479.² *Ibid.* p. 485.

ment of a *primeval* institution of a Sabbath."¹ In the next paragraph, he affirms that a "geological contradiction" "does and must exist against any conceivable interpretation which retains the assertion of the *historical* character of the details of the narrative as referring to the distinct transactions of each of the seven periods;"² and, after some further reasoning, he sums up all by saying: "As to the particular form in which the descriptive narrative is conveyed, we merely affirm that it *cannot be history* — it *may be poetry*."³

By "*history*," as contrasted with "*poetry*," he means of course a *record of facts*. Having thus dissolved the historical basis on which God himself has placed the rest of the Sabbath into the thin air of a myth, he would have us understand that God has given this myth the particular form which it bears with especial reference to the institution of the Sabbath, which he holds to be, in its origin, Mosaic, not primitive: "for the third and chief object," he tells us, "in this representation of the creation," was "the institution of the Sabbath."⁴ In other words, God solemnly enjoined upon the Jews the observance of the seventh day as a Sabbath, for a reason which had no existence! The momentous question of the time when the Sabbath was instituted, needs, and we are glad that it is receiving, a new and thorough discussion.⁵ At present we are only concerned to say, that God based the form of the Sabbath — one day of rest succeeding to six days of labor — on the form of the work of creation, as given in the primitive record; and since the house itself — the institution of the Sabbath — is a reality, it follows that the foundation is a reality also.

This being admitted, it has been extensively maintained that because the Sabbath of the Mosaic narrative is a literal day, therefore the six days of creation must also be understood literally. "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created to make." Since this seventh day, it is

¹ Vol. I. pp. 485, 486.

² Ibid. p. 486.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. p. 485.

⁵ See the Articles on the Authority and Obligation of the Sabbath, by Rev. W. M. O'Hanlon, Bib. Sacra, July and October, 1856.

argued, is, by the concession of all, a literal day, it follows that the six preceding days must also be literal. But this argument, it will be noticed, proceeds from the Sabbath of *human* rest to the six days of *Divine* labor; whereas the true argument contains a double parallelism: first, from the human Sabbath to the six days of human toil; secondly, from the Divine Sabbath to the six days of Divine activity. The human Sabbath is literal, preceded by six literal days of labor. But the Divine Sabbath is not a literal day. "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." It was, in a special sense, from the work of making heaven and earth, that God rested, not from Divine activity generally; for, says our Saviour, "My Father worketh hitherto (*έως άπρι, up to the present time*, on the Sabbath, as well as on other days), and I work."¹ God's Sabbath continues at the present hour. He did not rest on the seventh day, and then resume his work of creation. And since God's Sabbath is thus extended, it would seem to follow, from analogy, that his days of creative activity were, in like manner, extended.² The only hypothesis that removes all incongruity, is that of a human week of six literal working-days followed by one literal day of rest, and this human week symbolizing a Divine week, containing six great days of creation succeeded by one great day of rest. The objection to this view is the two-fold use of the word *day* in the same immediate connection. This, upon the symbolic theory, which we shall

¹ John 5: 17.

² See this argument well developed in Prof. Lewis's *Six Days of Creation*, Chap. XXI pp. 262, 263; and in Hugh Miller's *Footprints of the Creator*, note on pp. 332—334, Boston edition, 1850. We doubt, however, whether the remark contained in this note, that the common objection to that special view which regards the *days* of creation as immensely extended periods of time "first takes for granted that the Sabbath day during which God rested was a day of but twenty-four hours," is entirely just. This view is rather that God *began* on the seventh day his rest from the work of creation, and for this reason sanctified it as a day of rest from human toil. But it certainly contains the incongruity on which Hugh Miller insists—six *literal* days of human toil corresponding to six *literal* days of divine labor; but one *literal* day of human rest representing an *immensely extended period* of divine rest.

hereafter explain and advocate, resolves itself into the use of a word in the same connection to represent the symbol and the thing symbolized. It will, therefore, be most convenient to consider it in connection with the development of the theory itself. We will only add at present, before leaving this part of our subject, that we cannot consider the omission, at the close of the narrative, of the formula: "And there was evening and there was morning, the seventh day," as either accidental or insignificant. It has been employed, with perfect uniformity, to mark the close of each successive day of Divine activity. If these were all literal days, and the seventh day *as referred to both God and man*, means nothing more than another like period of twenty-four hours, no reason can be given for the omission under consideration. But if the reference is to the human Sabbath, and, under this symbol, to the Divine Sabbath also, extending through the whole of the present order of things, then the omission is not only natural, but necessary, since the seventh day, as referred to God, is not yet ended.¹

3. *The facts of science.* In respect to the great antiquity of our planet, the trump of science gives no uncertain sound. On the argument from astronomy, we will not dwell, though in our view it is absolutely conclusive in respect to the whole material system to which our earth belongs—"the heavens and the earth," of the narrative now under consideration. That we should present the vast mass of geological facts whose united testimony goes to prove the extreme antiquity of our globe, cannot be expected in a discussion like the present. This would be to write a book on geology. Those who have not read this evidence, as it is presented in geological treatises, would not read what we should say on the subject. And to those who have studied and weighed it, any additional remarks on our part would be superfluous. This mighty mass of evidence cannot be set aside by general declamation on the uncertainty of the science, and the disputes among geologists. It is true that many things

¹ See *Six Days of Creation*, Chap. XXI. pp. 265—270, and the quotations there adduced.

pertaining to geology are yet uncertain, and that its students and expounders have warm discussions among themselves. But the facts which establish beyond gainsaying the extreme age of our planet, are not uncertain, nor are they matters of doubtful disputation. As well might it be said that, because astronomers of the present day are not agreed in respect to the true character of the *nebulae*, therefore the Copernican system is doubtful. It is certain that the surface of our globe consists of a series of stratifications upon a grand scale; and that, reckoning from the surface downward, the successive layers are, through an aggregate thickness of many miles, strown with innumerable organic remains of plants and animals. It is certain that all the great strata of this mighty series, as revealed to us by the rents and convulsions to which the outer crust of our globe has been subject, exhibit each its own peculiar relics, differing alike from those of the lower preceding, and the higher succeeding, strata; that the plants and animals belonging to the lowest strata—the *palæozoic*—differ from any forms now existing; that as we ascend, by successive stages, towards the earth's surface, there is a gradual progress in the forms of the animal and vegetable world towards the present order of things; till, at last, existing genera and species begin to appear, mingled, in constantly-increasing proportions, with those that are now extinct. Thus is revealed to us a mighty Divine plan, extending through unknown ages, involving many successive creations and extinctions in both the animal and the vegetable species, and approximating with majestic slowness and steadiness towards the present final order, with man, the last product of creative power, at its head. We say man, the last product of creative power; for herein Scripture and geology are both agreed. This vast series of creations, with the alternating (perhaps we might better say *intermingled*) extinctions, was all anterior to the formation of man. Now we care not for any exact computation of this abyss of past ages. A few thousands, or tens of thousands, of years, more or less, are of no account here. It is sufficient to say that all this did not happen in *six literal days*; and

if it was not six literal days, then, so far as the present argument is concerned, it matters not whether it was six years or six millions of years.

We have heard it affirmed : All these strata, with their so-called organic remains, might have been created thus with the earth. Undoubtedly the Divine power is competent to such a creation, but who that is acquainted with the character of these remains, believes that the outright creation of such relics, in such situations, and giving such clear indications of their being the broken fragments of former organizations, falls within the plan of Divine wisdom ? We have heard it asked : Were God to create a tree in its maturity (as the querist presumes he did create the first trees), would it not have all the concentric rings which now mark its annual growth, and thus determine its age ? Perhaps it might have all the *normal* characters of a full-grown tree. But we would ask, in turn : Would God create a tree, *blown over* ("humanly speaking") upon another tree, the limbs and trunks of both bruised and crushed and splintered by the seeming fall, its huge roots upturned with all their load of turf and stones, and, to human appearance, violently broken off in the middle, with the corresponding extremities, answering root to root, yet lying in the adjacent soil ; and all this as a *grand lusus naturæ* ? God could create a horse outright, and, for anything that we can tell, his teeth might seem to indicate, as in the case of our horses which have grown up from colts, a particular age ; but he would not, we must be allowed to presume, create the jaw of a horse, and place it in the earth as another *lusus naturæ*. These supposed cases well illustrate the nature of the organic remains of geology. They are, so to speak, the *debris* of ancient creations, mingled with the *debris* of ancient earthy and rocky strata. They are plainly the fragments of once living plants and animals ; and they are found in all states of preservation, from the exhumed mastodons of Siberia, with hair and flesh yet remaining, to the stony casts from which all traces of organic matter have long since disappeared.

The great age of our planet, anterior to the creation of

man, must then be admitted as a fact established, by geology, upon an immovable basis. And, since the truth of revelation rests also upon a foundation that cannot be shaken, the question before us is : How shall we bring the facts of science into harmony with the teachings of Scripture ?

The first scheme of reconciliation is that originally proposed, according to the testimony of Hugh Miller, in 1804, by the renowned Dr. Chalmers, " at the time an obscure young man, characterized, in the small circle in which he moved, by the ardor of his temperament and the breadth and originality of his views ; but not yet distinguished in the science or literature of his country, and of comparatively little weight in the theological field ;" and afterwards more elaborately exhibited in 1814, in a " Review of Cuvier's Theory of the Earth."¹ The essential features of this scheme, which has been variously modified, are the following : The first verse of Genesis announces the great fact that the heavens and the earth were originally called into being out of nothing, by God's creative power. The second verse describes the state of our planet at the time when God began the work of reducing it to its present orderly condition — dark, chaotic, covered with water, and empty of life, vegetable as well as animal. The six days of creation are six literal days, during which all the present orders of plants and animals, with man at their head, were brought into being. The chaos that preceded them was of indefinite extent, and may have been, moreover, the wreck of a previous creation, which, in its turn, may have succeeded to a vast series of creations still more remote in the past, such as geology now reveals. So far as the grammatical exegesis of the Mosaic narrative is concerned, the advocates of this theory can maintain, on solid grounds, that the primitive record occupies itself with the *present* heavens and earth, of which man is the central object, teaching that they are, in respect to both matter and arrangement, the product of God's creative power, and fitted by him to minister to the welfare of man, the last created being and divinely constituted lord of earth ;

¹ Hugh Miller's *Two Records*, pp. 1—7, Boston edition, 1854.

that consequently its scope and aim do not require an account of all or of any previous creations which are not parts of the present order of things, since the existence and history of man do not extend to these: and that the geologist may, therefore, assume any series of creations antecedent to the Mosaic six days, which the facts of the science may demand.

Offering, as this theory does, a ready way of reconciling geological science with the six Mosaic days of creation literally understood, we need not wonder that it was early received by multitudes, and has continued to enjoy great favor down to the present day. But the great difficulty is to reconcile it with the phenomena of geology. This scheme, "perfectly adequate to bring the Mosaic narrative into harmony with what was known at the time of geologic history," is found, in the opinion of many eminent geologists, to be no longer adequate. In order that it may stand, there must be proof of *a universal catastrophe* — a general extinction of animal and vegetable life — immediately preceding the present order of things; at least, there must be no proof to the contrary: for the narrative expressly informs us, that when God began his six days' work: "the earth was empty and void." But the facts of geology go to show that man came quietly in as the crowning work of a long series of creations, extending back immensely beyond six literal days. Between the cretaceous formations, which are the uppermost of the secondary, and the lowermost beds of the tertiary, a wide gap exists, which no researches have thus far been able to fill: but between the system of organized beings, to which man belongs, and the ages immediately preceding, no such break exists. On the contrary, we find remains of some plants and animals, now inhabiting the earth, in strata which are acknowledged to be pre-Adamic. As we go further and further back, the proportion of these constantly diminishes, until the organic remains are all of species now extinct. Thus, as we travel backward, the present order of creation gradually loses itself in one of a different character. If, on the contrary,

we travel forward from the beginning of the tertiary series, the system of organized beings approaches, not abruptly, but by slow degrees, towards that which now exists. All along the line of this magnificent succession of creations, if we pause in the descending order, at any one period, we find the species of that period partly peculiar, and partly overlapping the preceding and subsequent periods, until we reach the lowermost strata of the chalk formation, where, as already remarked, a great break occurs. It is evident, says Hugh Miller, that

“From the present time up to the times represented by the earliest Eocene formations of the Tertiary division, day has succeeded day, and season has followed season, and that no chasm or hiatus—no age of general chaos, darkness, and death, has occurred to break the line of succession, or check the course of life. All the evidence runs counter to the supposition that immediately before the appearance of man upon earth there existed a chaotic period, which separated the previous from the present creation. Up till the commencement of the Eocene ages, if even then, there was no such chaotic period in at least what is now Britain and the European continent;—the persistency from a high antiquity of some of the existing races, of not only plants and shells, but of even some of the mammiferous animals, such as the badger, the goat, and the wildcat, prove there was not; and any scheme of reconciliation which takes such a period for granted, must be deemed unsuited to the present state of geological knowledge, as any scheme would have been forty years ago which took it for granted that the writings of Moses do “fix the antiquity of the globe.”¹

If it be said that, after the reduction of the earth's surface to a chaotic state with the universal extinction of organic life, God could easily have recreated the species of preceding ages, we answer: *First*, there is no proof of such a universal catastrophe just prior to man's creation, but evidence to the contrary; *secondly*, the re-creation of species that have become extinct, is opposed to the whole analogy of God's plan of creation, as revealed by the science of geology.

“It appears, that from the remotest periods, there has been ever a coming in of new organic forms, and an extinction of those which pre-existed on the earth; some species having endured for a longer, others, for a

¹ Two Records, pp. 20, 21.

shorter time; while none have ever reappeared after once dying out. The law which has governed the creation and extinction of species, seems to be expressed in the verse of the poet, —

Natura il fece, e poi ruppe la stampa.—ARISTO.
Nature made him and then broke the die.

And this circumstance it is which confers on fossils their highest value as chronological tests, giving to each of them, in the eyes of the geologist, that authority which belongs to contemporary medals in history."¹

It was the pressure of these difficulties which led Dr. John Pye Smith to propound his peculiar theory, that the Mosaic narrative of the creation relates not to the earth generally, but to a limited portion of its surface, which he conceives to have been "a part of Asia, lying between the Caucasian ridge, the Caspian sea, and Tartary, on the north, the Persian and Indian seas on the south, and the high mountain ridges which run at considerable distances, on the eastern and western flank."

"I venture to think, that man, as first created, and for many ages afterwards, did not extend his race beyond these limits: and therefore had no connection with the extreme east, the Indian and Pacific clusters of islands, Africa, Europe, and America; in which regions we have ocular demonstration that animal and vegetable creatures had existed, to a vast amount, uninterruptedly, through periods past, of indescribable duration."²

This view is ably advocated by the learned and pious author, and in a spirit of candor that deserves all praise. Yet it has failed to meet with general favor. In the first place, it is hard to bring it into harmony with the spirit of the narrative, which almost irresistibly inclines one, in the words of Hugh Miller, "to look for a broader and more general meaning in that grand description of the creation of all things, with which the Divine record so appropriately opens, than I could recognize it as forming, were I assured it referred to but one of many existing creations — a creation restricted to, mayhap, a few hundred square miles of country, and to, mayhap, a few scores of animals and plants."³ Then, again, it is harder still to reconcile it with

¹ Lyell's *Manual of Elementary Geology*, Chap. IX. p. 98. New York edition, 1855.

² *Scripture and Geology*, Lecture VII. Part II. p. 198, London edition, 1848.

³ *Two Records*, pp. 23, 24.

the words of the fourth commandment: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is." With a strong pre-disposition to adopt this theory which, in the words of the author just quoted, "virtually removes scripture altogether out of the field of geology," we yet find it impossible to understand the words: "heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is," of an inconsiderable portion of the earth's surface, and of an inconsiderable portion of "all that in them is," among plants and animals. We venture, then, to dismiss this scheme of reconciliation, and fall back upon the only remaining theory, that which regards the Mosaic days as extended periods of time.

But here (and this distinction is one of great importance), two different principles of interpretation offer themselves at the very threshold, which may be called the *figurative*, and the *symbolic*. According to the former principle, the word *day* is used *directly*, in a figurative sense, to denote an indefinite period of time; and its evening and morning have, in like manner, a figurative meaning. According to the latter, the term *day*, with its evening and morning, has, in every grammatical respect, its literal signification; but it stands, like the "seventy weeks" of Daniel's prophecy, as a *symbol* for a higher period of time. Let us take a comparative view of these two methods of interpretation.

1. *The figurative principle.* A difference of prime importance, between this and the symbolic, is that which respects the author's *consciousness*. If, in penning the words: "And there was evening, and there was morning, one day," Moses used the word *day* in a simply figurative sense, as he did, by the concession of all, in ch. 2: 4 — "in the *day* that the Lord God made earth and heaven" — then undoubtedly he had distinctly in mind the idea of an extended period in the first case, as well as in the second. When a sacred writer says: "For Jehovah of hosts has a day upon all that is proud and lofty, and upon all that is lifted up, and it shall be brought low;"¹ "behold the day cometh that shall burn

¹ Isa. 2: 12.

as an oven ;”¹ he has consciously before his mind the figurative nature of the word *day* : he *means* to indicate, not a literal day, but a period of time more or less extended. Even though we should adopt, in all its strictness, the theory of verbal inspiration, which makes the sacred penman only the amanuensis of the Divine Spirit ; or though we should suppose that the Mosaic account of the creation was *verbally* communicated by God himself, in the exact words in which it is recorded ; still if, in the formula : “and there was evening and there was morning, one day,” etc., God used the word *day* in a simply figurative sense, just as in the words : “in the day when the Lord God made earth and heaven,” then he intended that Moses (or whoever else first received the revelation) and his readers should so understand it in the one case, as well as in the other. And this is the ground taken by the advocates of this principle of interpretation. In proof that the six days of the Mosaic record may be legitimately understood, in a figurative sense, of extended periods of time, they always refer to the passage Gen. 2: 4, as a parallel case. Yet, with a strong disposition to receive this view, we are constrained to acknowledge that we have never found entire satisfaction in it. Undoubtedly the word *day* is often used in the Hebrew, as in other languages, in a general sense ; but it does not follow from this that it can be so understood at will. In the case of all terms that admit of a figurative use, the connection and the adjuncts must be our guide. In such phrases as : “in the *day* when the Lord God made earth and heaven ;” “in the *day* of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider ;” we understand at once that the word must be taken in a general sense : but when we read, in the account of the giving of the law at Sinai, “be ready against the third *day* ;” “and it came to pass on the third *day* in the morning ;” we are sure that a literal day is intended. When, now, the Mosaic record mentions successively six days, and assigns to each of them an evening and morning, it seems very difficult, so far as simple grammati-

¹ Mal. 4: 1.

cal interpretation is concerned, to understand them of any other than literal days.¹ Yet, as already remarked, this record has features which strongly indicate higher periods of time, and which, long before the discoveries of geology, led some minds of a high order to understand the six days of the primitive record in a mystical sense.²

2. *The symbolic principle.* In contrast with the figurative principle which we have been considering stands the symbolic, which first takes the word, in every grammatical respect, in its literal signification, and then makes it the typical representative of a higher period. Now it is the common property of symbols that they spread a veil more or less complete over the thing symbolized. In respect to symbols of time, especially, it is sometimes the case that the symbolic veil so covers the higher period, over which it is spread, that, until it shall be in some way lifted by the Divine hand, neither the inspired penman nor his reader can discern what lies beneath it; and both must therefore rest, for the time being, with the symbol itself. We have certainly no sure ground for affirming that Daniel understood the symbolic nature of all the periods revealed to him — “the seventy weeks;” the “time, times, and an half;” the “thousand two hundred and ninety days;” and the “thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” On the contrary, the words: “and I heard, but I understood not,” seem to imply that the import of these periods was among the things which God intended to leave “sealed up” for the present. In respect to one very remarkable prophetic period of the New Testament — the “thousand years” during which Satan is bound — the ablest commentators are to the present day arrayed on opposite sides of the question: Is this mighty era to be understood literally or symbolically? Nor does anything essential to Christianity depend upon its determination. God will settle it in his own time. Till then, his

¹ See on this point Pye Smith's *Scripture and Geology*, Lect. VI. Part II. III. pp. 145—148.

² As Augustine, in *De Genesi ad litteram*; to the unfolding of whose views Prof. Lewis has devoted a part of his 14th chapter.

people may be allowed to differ in their judgment concerning it. No feature of the redemptive scheme is more striking than the profound mystery in which it leaves the element of time. The original promise to our first parents, contained in the curse denounced upon the serpent: "it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," is for substance a complete epitome of this world's history from that day to the archangel's trump. But it contains no intimation of the many thousands of years through which the mighty conflict should be prolonged, and we may be certain that Eve could have had no apprehension of its length. No reader of the New Testament, whose mind is not preoccupied with the error of placing the primitive Christians in the position of the modern church with respect to the second coming of our Lord, can rise from its perusal without the conviction that they regarded this event as comparatively near. Even the Apostle's caution to the Thessalonians, that they be not troubled, "as that the day of Christ is at hand;" and that that day shall not come, "except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;"¹ could not have conveyed to their minds the idea of a long succession of centuries upon centuries. Yet so it has been; and so, we venture to suggest, it will continue to be, till the mystery of God shall be finished. In the great mass of prophecies, even where the *succession* of events is given, the question of time is left wholly undetermined.² Where designations of time are employed, they are mostly symbolic. It is only in a few instances, and those relating to events comparatively near at hand, that the literal years are indicated.

Why now may not the same principle prevail in respect to the revelation of the *past* time under consideration? We have heard the objection urged: "This Mosaic narrative is not poetry, but plain history." Undoubtedly it is not poetry, for it is a representation of facts in their true succession.

¹ 2 Thess. 2: 2, 3.

² As in Daniel's visions of the great image, and the four beasts; and in the Apocalyptic successions of seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, etc.

When the objector says "it is plain history," he must refer to either the matter or the style. If to the *matter*, he cannot, of course, mean that it is *human* history—a record of God's transactions with men, or of their transactions with each other. It is a revelation of past events, that lie wholly beyond the sphere of human activity and knowledge; and herein *its nearest relation is to prophecy*, which is a like revelation of future events. But if the objector refers to the *style* of the Mosaic narrative, he should remember that symbols do not necessarily require a lofty and poetic diction. The language in which the angel communicates to Daniel the revelation of the seventy weeks, is that of simple narrative. Admitting that it was Jehovah's plan to communicate to men the succession of events in creation under the symbol of six literal days, no reason can be assigned why he should have employed any other than the plain style of history. We think, therefore, that the analogy between this revelation of the past, and prophetic foreshadowings of the future, is real and very striking.

There is, however, one difference which deserves to be carefully noticed. The revelations of prophecy, though not yet human history, and not given after the manner of human history with exact chronological details, are all destined to come within its field, and to be reckoned by its days, and months, and years; and their fulfilment will constitute a striking proof of the Divine origin of the oracles in which they are foretold. If, then, according to the opinion of many expositors, certain prophetic symbols of time, as days and weeks, are to be understood of *exact* periods of a higher order—as a day for a year—we can see, in the testimony which their fulfilment bears to the truth of Scripture, a solid ground for this exact proportion between the symbol and the higher period symbolized. But in regard to revelations of pre-Adamic events, no such ground exists. They can never come within the sphere of human observation, so as to be described by human measures of time. Geology can reveal their *succession*, but not their definite extent in time. A disclosure of the exact number of years and centu-

ries, or, it may be, hundreds of centuries, in the abyss of past ages which they cover, would be altogether at variance with the general analogy of God's dealings with men, and could only gratify a vain and profitless curiosity. If, then, one has come to the conclusion that, in certain prophecies, days are the symbols of years, he ought not hastily to transfer this definiteness of symbolization to the Mosaic days. Their nearest analogy, and we think it very near indeed, is with such prophetic symbols as the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven vials of the Apocalypse; where, according to our view, a definite *succession of events* is revealed, not definite and equal divisions of time.¹

We venture to conceive of this record of the great week of creation in the following manner.

1. It is *complete in itself*. The narrative, from the beginning of the first chapter to ch. 2: 3, inclusive, constitutes a perfect whole, having nothing heterogeneous, nothing superfluous, nothing defective. If ever anything penned by man deserved to be called "*in seipso totus teres atque rotundus*," it is this Mosaic record. From it the following narrative is sharply separated by the introductory clause: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth," a formula which is in no case retrospective, but always refers to the contents of the record to which it is prefixed. What-

¹ By the opponents of this view, who regard the number *seven* as a general symbol for completeness, and think all search after an order of succession vain, it has been asked: "Does God govern the world by sevens?" We think that this question admits of a solid and satisfactory answer. We suppose that the events revealed under one of these sevens constitute a true succession, which may, after their fulfilment, be traced in history. At the same time we believe that the *grouping* belongs to the mind of God. That which he has made of them, though entirely natural, is not the only one to which his infinite wisdom is competent. A classification under different principles and different symbolic representations might have given different numbers, which would still have been natural. In this very narrative of the creation, the events of the third day constitute two separate divisions, and, for anything that we can tell, might have been symbolized by two separate days, had this been agreeable to the Divine plan. We come, then, to the conclusion that God *describes* as well the *formation* as the *government* of the world by sevens; and here we find another strong argument from analogy for the symbolic character of the Mosaic days of creation — seven great divine days represented by seven human days.

ever view we take of the relation of this second narrative to the first, whether that both originally proceeded from the pen of Moses, or that the former, or both of them, existed before Moses, and were by divine direction incorporated into his history, this introductory formula shows that he intended to present the second as a distinct record. It contains *additional particulars* necessary to be known by men, but not needed to complete the former record, so far as concerns the end which it had in view — an exhibition of the order of creation by six successive stages, with especial reference to the institution of the Sabbath.

2. It is *an immediate revelation from God*. With the exception of the last verses, it lies wholly outside of the sphere of human knowledge, so far as any sources open to the age of Moses are concerned. In this respect its agreement with prophetic vision is perfect. Not the solemn announcement of the Apostle Paul: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,"¹ contains a more pure and simple revelation from God, or one further removed from the character of myth, than this Mosaic record of the six days' work of creation.

3. It is *very ancient*. That it was, for the first time, revealed to Moses, does not appear to us any more probable than that the Sabbath was, for the first time, instituted in Moses's day. The weighty arguments for the existence of the Sabbath from the beginning, drawn from the form of this primitive record;² from the clear traces of a division of time into weeks before Moses; from the manner in which the Sabbath is spoken of in the book of Exodus as a well-known existing institution; from its place in the decalogue, where nothing else of purely Mosaic and temporary character is found; and from its necessity as grounded in the universal religious wants of the race — all these arguments go to

¹ 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52.

² See our remarks in a previous Article, Vol. XIII. pp. 788, 789.

show that this account of the creation existed, from the earliest times, at least in the germ,¹ since it is most probable that the institution and its ground were given together, just as they are placed together in this record, and in the decalogue. But here we wish not to make positive assertions. We leave the suggestion with the reader.

4. The *form* of the record—six days of Divine labor followed by a day of Divine rest—is an *essential part of it*, for it is upon this that the form of the Sabbath—six days of human labor followed by a day of rest from human toil, is based.

5. These six days of creation are, in our view, *symbolical of higher periods of time*. In the mind and purpose of God they were symbolical from the beginning; but it does not follow that they to whom the revelation was made saw beyond the six literal days of the symbol. It is in harmony with the general analogy of God's dealings with men, to suppose that the human mind may have been left to rest with the symbol itself, until, in the wisdom of God, the higher ideas which it covered should be revealed. This may be the more readily admitted because, as several writers have remarked, it is not the absolute length of the Mosaic days, but their number and order of succession, that constitutes the essential character of the narrative in its relation to the institution of the Sabbath. It constitutes, to borrow the just and beautiful similitude of Hugh Miller,² a *map* of the work of creation, in which the proportions are faithfully kept, though on a minute scale; and, as such, it is every way adapted to the apprehensions of the primitive men to whom it was revealed. God having, in his infinite wisdom, determined to make known to man the outward form of the work of creation, as a foundation for the outward

¹ We say, at least in the germ; for although we agree with Prof. Lewis that it bears no marks of *human* increase, by heterogeneous additions, we should not venture to deny that it might have received a homogeneous *divine* expansion from the one central idea: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day."

² *Two Records*, p. 42.

form of the Sabbath, it seems to us altogether contrary to the general course of his proceedings that he should bewilder and amaze them with immense periods stretching over many thousands, it may be many hundreds of thousands, of years. We cannot but think it more like his ordinary way of dealing with men, that he should symbolize these periods under that natural division of time which first offered itself to the human apprehension. If their minds rested with the symbol, and saw nothing beyond it, the error was not essential, as it respects the Sabbath, and it was such an error as he has, in other cases, suffered to remain uncorrected, till the appointed time for its removal should come. We affirm not that the "thousand years" when Satan shall be bound are symbolic: but should they be found such in the issue, neither God's veracity nor the salvation of those who had died in the belief that they were to be literally understood, would be in any way affected.

But it is not in respect to time alone, that the divinely appointed symbol has been allowed to cover, for the time being, the higher truth which it represented. The ancient sacrifices were undoubtedly of divine appointment; and, since "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," all their true significancy must have lain in prefiguring Christ's atonement. But we are not warranted to affirm that the ancient believer who brought his victim to the altar, even before the days of Abraham, when, so far as we are informed, no revelation had yet been made of the specific way in which the promised seed of the woman should accomplish man's redemption—that this ancient believer saw under his sacrifice the propitiatory offering of Christ. He did see in this transaction the following truths: *first*, that the penalty of sin is death: "without shedding of blood is no remission;" *secondly*, the transfer of this penalty from the guilty to the innocent; *thirdly*, this transfer accepted by God as in some way a satisfaction to his divine justice. This was enough to constitute a resting-place for his penitence and faith till, in the fulness of time, the great antitypal sacrifice should be offered, and

all foreshadowings of it by animal victims, be laid aside forever. The sum of the whole is, that this primitive revelation, whether understood of six literal days, or of six great periods, contains, in either case alike, *the just proportion and succession* which constitute the foundation for the institution of the Sabbath in its outward form; and we see not why the human family should not have been allowed to rest with the symbol—the six literal days—till, in the course of God's providence, the higher days which it covered should be revealed.

The symbolic view which we have advocated, relieves us at once from all difficulty in regard to the *two-fold use of the word "day"* in the Mosaic record; since, according to this principle of interpretation, the term must comprehend in itself both the symbol and the higher period symbolized—the human day of twenty-four hours, and the higher divine day of which it is the representative. It explains also the omission of the formula: "And there was evening, and there was morning, the seventh day." In reference to the seventh day this could not be employed, because the Lord's Sabbath, which the human Sabbath typifies, extends over the whole of the present order of creation, and has not yet come to a close. And, with regard to the alleged difficulty of determining where this peculiar use of the word *day* ceases, we would say, It ceases with this peculiar narrative, a narrative in itself complete and perfectly unique, to which there is not in Scripture "*quidquam simile aut secundum*;" and from which the following narrative is, as we have seen, sharply separated; it ceases precisely where God's revelation of his operations before the era of man ends, and human history begins.

Once more; the symbolic view gives to the formula: "And there was evening, and there was morning, one day," etc., a true and deep significancy. It has been suggested that these words belong only to the *drapery* of the narrative: that God's wisdom having selected the first and most natural division of time, the solar day, as a representative of the great days of creation, an evening and a morning would

naturally be ascribed to it, for the completion of the image, and that we need look for no further meaning. But when we consider the constant repetition of the words under consideration, and the separate affirmation of both evening and morning, we are naturally led to the belief that it contains some special emphasis. If, now, it be lawful to suppose that this revelation was communicated to him who first received it in vision; that the six days of creation, with the work of each, passed before his inner sense in a divine panorama — a waste and dark abyss of waters upon which God's spirit was moving, followed by the light of the first day; darkness again, followed by the light of the second day and the formation of the firmament; and so on throughout the six days — or if, as in the case of some of the revelations made to Daniel, we may suppose both this panoramic vision and an interpretation in words of its import; we have then, as the original form of the revelation, six alternations of darkness and light, in other words, six days made up each of an evening and a morning, and so recorded by the inspired penman. From the nature of the first day's work, the creation of light, it follows that before it there must have been literal darkness: but, in our view, the *symbolization* of darkness and light is throughout the narrative ever the same. The former, we venture to suggest, represents the *absence* or *cessation* of creative energy, the latter, its *presence*. The first day begins with an "evening," the absence of creative power, so far as it is manifested in the orderly arrangement of this world. All is "empty and void." It ends with a glorious "morning," the creation of light. Then there is a cessation from this work, and with this "evening" the second day begins. It ends with a second "morning," when God renews his creative work in the formation of the firmament. If one prefer to consider this Mosaic record as originally communicated without vision in a verbal form, or by the inward suggestion of the Divine spirit, he must still attach to the form: "And there was evening, and there was morning," the same significancy. If, in respect to symbolization, he is not willing to go as far as we have

ventured, he must at least hold, with Prof. Lewis, that the terms in question are used to show that the day is "divided by two contrasted states that could be characterized by no words so well as by those which are afterwards used to denote the corresponding parts of that lesser and more distinctly marked cycle, the common solar day."¹

In advocating the theory which makes the six Mosaic days symbolic of higher periods of time, we have thus far occupied ourselves mainly with the questions that arise on the side of *biblical exegesis*. But we are not ignorant of the ground taken by some geologists, that every scheme of interpretation which gives to these days an indefinite length fails of its object; since, as they allege, the Mosaic days thus extended do not correspond with the eras of geology. "More accurate investigations," says Dr. John Pye Smith, "have proved that the correspondence just mentioned does not exist. Though, to a superficial view, some plausible appearances of this kind present themselves, the scheme fails, when it is attempted to be carried into details."² Undoubtedly there is a method of interpreting the Mosaic record according to which "the scheme fails." If, as is very commonly done, the ground be taken that all the *existing species* of plants were created on the third day, the scheme utterly fails; and so of the sea-animals and birds of the fifth day. This is the ground of the objection urged against it by an eminent American geologist :

"This hypothesis assumes that Moses describes the creation of all the animals and plants that have ever lived on the globe. But geology decides that the species now living, since they are not found in the rocks any lower down than man is (with a few exceptions), could not have been contemporaries with those in the rocks, but must have been created when man was; that is, on the sixth day. Of such a creation no mention is made in Genesis. The inference is, that Moses does not describe the creation of the existing races, but only of those that lived thousands of years earlier, and whose

¹ Six Days of Creation, Chap. IX. p. 86. But we cannot agree with him that the chief idea in the terms *בְּקָרָב* and *בְּקָרָב* is that of *mingling* and *separation*. See *Ibid.* p. 87.

² Scripture and Geology, Lecture VI. Part II. p. 146.

existence was scarcely suspected till modern times. Who will admit such an absurdity?"¹

This is the objection fairly stated in its full strength. It proceeds, however, upon a principle of interpretation which we are constrained to believe untenable. In our view Moses, in describing the creation of the vegetable kingdom on the third day, or rather, the Spirit of inspiration, in making to man this revelation, describes neither the creation of the particular existing species as contrasted with the extinct species of former ages, nor of these extinct species as contrasted with the species now existing. But he describes *the establishment of the vegetable kingdom in its laws and general forms*, which are valid for all the subsequent geological eras. The grand fact revealed is, that on the third day the vegetable world was *brought into being* under the immutable principles which now regulate its operations. And we ask: Why is not this a fair interpretation of the words, "and the earth brought forth grass, the herb yielding seed after its kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, after its kind?" The reader will notice that the two things made prominent in this account are *law*, as expressed in the formula, "after its kind," and *general forms*, "grass," "herb," "fruit-tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself."² Adopting this principle of interpretation, which, aside from all geological revelations, we hold to be the most natural view of the words, and applying it to the work of the fifth and sixth days also, we are, we think, warranted in affirming that there is a substantial agreement between the "two records" of geology and Scripture. On this point, further investigations are wanted. For its fuller discussion, we refer the reader to Prof. Dana's Article on "Science and the Bible."³

¹ Religion of Geology, Boston, 1852, p. 65.

² See on this point our remarks in a previous Article, Vol. XIII. pp. 775, 776.

³ In the Bib. Sacra for Jan. 1856. It has been doubted whether the early Flora of the globe contained all the great types of the vegetable kingdom, for example, Dicotyledonous Angiosperms. On this point we need further light. See Lyell's Elements of Geology, Chap. XXIV. But, whatever may be the result of future investigations, it cannot, we think, affect the principle upon which we have interpreted the Mosaic record of the third day's work. This gives, as

II. *The Comprehension of the Mosaic Days.*

Here the whole question reduces itself to a single point : Do the six Mosaic days cover without interruption the whole time from the original creation of matter to the formation of man? That they cover all of the *narrative* but the first verse, must be admitted ; for, as we have shown in a previous Article, the darkness of the chaotic period belongs to the "evening" of the first day. If now the earth was originally created as a separate body, and in the state of darkness and emptiness described in ver. 2, then the comprehension of the Mosaic days may be complete. But this supposition is by no means necessary. It may be that the sacred record, after stating what was of the highest importance in a religious respect, that the heavens and the earth are, materially considered, the product of God's creative power, passes directly on to that stage of the universal process which is described in the second verse.

" There is no need of supposing the first and second verses relate to immediately continuous events. Moses frequently places events together, though there were long intervals between. Thus, in the second chapter of Exodus, the first verse begins : ' And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.' The second verse proceeds : ' And the woman conceived and bare a son, and when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.' The connective *and*, and Hebrew *ו*, is the same as between the first and second verses of Gen. i. There is as much reason for supposing the events to be consecutive [i. e.

it seems to us, the *entire plan* of the vegetable world in its laws and general types — the vegetable kingdom *in its idea as a whole* ; and this will remain its meaning, even though the disclosures of geology should show that the development of some of its details was reserved for subsequent days.

Again, it has been doubted whether any *exclusively* vegetable era can be found in geology. To this it has been replied that from the nature of the case vegetables must have existed before animals, and that geology gives us grounds for believing that this was the fact. But aside from this answer, some adopt the principle : *a potiori nomen fit*. There was an era whose grand characteristic was vegetation on a most magnificent scale ; another characterized by its "creeping things" and "fowls ;" "a period of whale-like reptiles of the sea, of enormous creeping reptiles of the land, and of numerous birds ;" another still, extending down to the era of man, when "beasts of the field" became the main characteristic. This is the view of Hugh Miller. See his "Two Records," pp. 27—32.

immediately consecutive] in the one case as in the other. Now the child alluded to, as being born after this marriage, was Moses. But it appears he had a sister old enough to watch over the ark. He had also an older brother, Aaron. There was, then, an interval of some years between the first and second verses, of which no intimation is given. We find it in other ways. It is the style of the Bible thus to compress vast intervals into connected passages. No notice is given of things which it is not necessary to state."¹

This case we consider as fairly parallel. It shows that we are allowed, if necessary, to assume an interval between the first and second verses. We do not affirm that this is necessary; but, proceeding upon the ground that it may be a legitimate assumption, we propose to examine an interpretation of the first verses of the Mosaic record which has for its basis the "nebular theory." This theory supposes that the entire matter of the universe was originally created in a gaseous form, "the simplest and most homogeneous of all forms of matter;" or, at least, that such was its state so far back as we can follow matter in its outward form. "This vast body of gaseous matter in a state of expansion," contained, in itself, all the materials which were afterwards separated into galaxies, suns, planets, etc.; and it is *the deep* and *the waters* mentioned in ver. 2. The Spirit of God brooded "not *in*, as the modern pantheists would have it, but *upon*, the face of the waters"—this mighty gaseous atmosphere containing in itself the whole creation in an elemental form—"thus indicating the action of God then and in the time to come."

Light was the result of chemical action. The gaseous concentration of the molecules of matter, by gravitation, followed by their chemical combination, produced a luminous nebular mass, separated from the surrounding dark void. Thus "God divided the light from the darkness." This was the work of the first day.

Next, the vast primary nebula of the first day was separated into an immense number of nebulae, and these into stars. Thus God divided the waters—this gaseous ex-

¹ Narrative of the Creation in Genesis, Bib. Sacra. Jan. 1855, p. 113.

panse—from the waters. The nebulæ detached to constitute the celestial bodies, are “the waters above the firmament;” that which was detached to form the earth is “the waters under the firmament.” This is the work of the second day.

In the narrative of the third day, the waters under the heavens are suddenly taken, in a new and literal sense, to mean the ocean, which at that time covered the globe; and thenceforward the interpretation of the Mosaic narrative is substantially that which we have given in a former Article.¹

We wish it understood that to the nebular theory itself we urge no objection. Of all existing hypotheses we consider it best sustained by both present phenomena and the general analogy of God’s proceedings. But to this interpretation of the words of Moses under consideration, we cannot yield our assent for the following reasons.

1. A use of the words *waters* and *deep* so extraordinary and unparalleled cannot be admitted. Both are of common occurrence, but no where else do we find attached to them the vestige of such a meaning. It is said: The Hebrews had no word but *water* to represent an expanse of gaseous matter. Of gaseous matter in the *strict scientific sense*, we are quite sure that they had no idea, and, therefore, no word to express it; but neither had the Greeks, Romans, or modern nations of Europe, until within a comparatively recent period. Of matter in a *nebulous state* these nations had the idea in common with the Hebrews: yet which one of them all would have used the word *water* to express it, and not rather some more appropriate term, as Gr. ἀτμός, Lat. *vapor* or *nebula*, the very word which modern science has appropriated to itself, and which answers exactly to the Hebrew מַיִם? Still more incongruous, if possible, would be the use of the expression: “the waters which are above the firmament,” for the celestial bodies, and, “the waters which are under the firmament,” for the earth.

¹ In this brief statement we have followed partly our own recollection of Prof. Guyot’s lectures, and partly the sketch that is given of his theory in the *Bib. Sacra* for April, 1855, Article “The Narrative of the Creation in Genesis.”

2. The interpretation under consideration makes the separation of the light from the darkness one of *space*, and not of *succession in time*. The *day* in v. 5 is the luminous mass of gaseous matter, and the *night* is the surrounding dark void. But a cursory glance over the narrative, shows that the several names which God assigns — “Day,” “Night,” “Heaven,” “Earth,” “Seas,” — are all the current names of well known objects taken in their ordinary signification.¹

3. The context is wholly against such an interpretation of the word *waters*. It is manifest, at the first glance, that the narrative occupies itself with these waters until they are finally disposed of. In v. 2, they are introduced to us as covered with darkness: in v. 3, God commands the light to shine upon them: in v. 6, he separates them into the waters above the firmament, and the waters under the firmament: in v. 9, he gathers “the waters under the heaven” into one place. What are these “waters under the heaven,” but “the waters under the firmament” of v. 7? Has not God himself just named the firmament “Heaven,” thus making “the waters under the heaven” identical with “the waters under the firmament,” as clearly as human language can do so? Now the interpretation which we are reviewing holds that the waters of v. 2 over which God’s spirit brooded, are the same as the waters of vs. 6 and 7, namely, an expanse of gaseous matter; but all at once changes them in v. 9 to literal waters. Of such a change the context will by no means admit. If we begin with gaseous matter, we must end with gaseous matter: and if we end with proper water, we must begin with the same.

4. This violent forcing of language is unnecessary. Admitting the nebular hypothesis as true, we are at liberty to suppose, as has been already shown, that the sacred writer, after stating what it was important that all should understand, that the heavens and the earth are, in their substance, the product of God’s creative power, passes immediately on to the time when the earth was in the condition de-

¹ See our previous Article, Oct. 1856. p. 769.

scribed in v. 2; and this is not only a possible, but a natural supposition. It is agreed on all sides, that the design of the writer is to describe the process by which this earth was fitted to be the abode of man. He takes his stand, so to speak, on its surface, and not in the universe at large. The firmament and the heavenly bodies are introduced only in their relations to the earth, and as they minister to its uses. It is natural, therefore, to suppose that he would *begin* his description precisely where our interpretation places its beginning, at the time when the earth, already existing as a separate body, was a dark and cheerless void, utterly unfit to be the residence of its future tenants. Why should we insist upon his going back to the period when it had no separate being, and when the elemental mass was no more *the earth*, than it was Jupiter, or the sun, or Sirius?

The advocates of the nebular theory suppose that our globe was originally detached from the universal mass in a nebulous form. Afterwards, by the condensation of its particles, connected with intense chemical action, it would become a sun in a highly electrified and incandescent state. Then all that now constitutes the Ocean, and probably much more matter, would be driven from its surface in the form of highly elastic vapor. As chemical action abated, and the earth's crust cooled and ceased to be luminous, this vapory atmosphere would be gradually condensed in the shape of a universal Ocean. But long after this process had commenced, the immense mass of vapor yet remaining would utterly exclude the light of the sun. Here, upon the supposition that the nebular is the true hypothesis, would we place the beginning of the sacred narrative. On the first day the surrounding vapory atmosphere was, according to this assumption, so reduced in quantity and density, that the *diffused* light of the sun reached the earth, while her diurnal revolution, which we have every reason to believe existed from the beginning, produced as now the alternations of night and day. On the second day a proper atmosphere was constituted, yet so that the heavens remained overspread with one unbroken cloud, while it was

not till the fourth day that the skies were cleared up and the heavenly bodies themselves were revealed as recognizable objects.

To sum up all in a word: we do not know that the nebular is the true hypothesis ; but if it be, the above seems to us the most probable interpretation of that part of the Mosaic narrative which is contained in the second verse, and in the work of the first, second, and fourth days. If the nebular hypothesis be rejected, it is still easy and natural to suppose, immediately before the work of the first day began, a complete obscuration of solar light by a dense mass of circumambient vapor.

The view of the six Mosaic days which has been maintained in this Article is presented as a *possible* (and, in our view, the most *probable*) mode of bringing the revelations of geology into harmony with the sacred record ; not by any means as a theory on which we would stake the truth and Divine authority of the Mosaic narrative. This stands firm on its own foundation, whether we have, or have not, found the true principle of reconciliation. Here we beg leave to appropriate to ourselves the words of an eminent Christian geologist of our own country.

“I remark that it is not necessary that we be perfectly sure that the method which has been described, or any other, of bringing geology into harmony with the Bible, is infallibly true. It is only necessary that it should be sustained by probable evidence ; that it should fairly meet the geological difficulty on the one hand, and do no violence to the language or spirit of the Bible on the other. This is sufficient, surely, to satisfy every philosophical mind, that there is no collision between geology and revelation. But should it appear hereafter, either from the discoveries of the geologist or the philologist, that our views must be somewhat modified, it would not show that the previous view had been insufficient to harmonize the two subjects ; but only that here, as in every other department of human knowledge, perfection is not attained, except by long-continued efforts.”¹

In bringing the discussion of this subject to a close, we wish simply to add, that the Mosaic narrative of the creation has suffered greatly from two opposite classes of expositors.

¹ Religion of Geology, Lect. II. p. 63.

The men of the first class have implicit faith in God's word; and, assuming the strictly literal as the only possible interpretation of the word *day*, to the exclusion alike of the figurative and the symbolic principle, they have rejected all other views as infidel in their character, or, at least, as tending to infidelity. These men treat geology very much as the Hindoo ascetic, who rejected with abhorrence all animal food, did the microscope which revealed to him the unwelcome fact that his boasted vegetable diet was plentifully stocked with animal life:— they dash it to the ground with indignation. The other class of men are unbelievers; and, assuming with the former the strictly literal as the only possible interpretation, and unreasonably rejecting every plan for reconciling science with Scripture, they exalt the former to the discredit of the latter. Thus, between these two classes, God's truth is placed very much in the situation of the famous General Putnam, when tied to a tree between the opposing fire of his friends and his enemies.

ARTICLE IV.

JEHOVAH CONSIDERED AS A MEMORIAL NAME.¹

By Alexander MacWhorter, New Haven, Ct.

It is of great moment to man, that any term in which the Creator reveals either his character, or his relation to the race, should be clearly understood. If there is any one word, which He has adopted, and declared to be his memorial to all generations, that word should be the theme of earnest inquiry. If any uncertainty hang over the true significance of its ancient forms, the uncertainty should be dispelled by

¹ A more popular exhibition of this subject will be found in a volume entitled "Yahveh Christ, or the memorial name," with Introductory Letter by N. W. Taylor, D. D., Dwight Professor of Theology, Yale College. Gould and Lincoln, Boston. London, 1857.