

physical science showed no necessity for supposing a lengthened period to elapse between the creation of the world and the creation of man, it was taken for granted, almost without discussion, that when God had created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, He at once set about the work of arranging them for the use of man; that He distributed this work over six ordinary days, and at the close of the sixth day introduced our first parent on the scene.

Nowadays, all divines, English and foreign, agree that the word employed by Moses, and translated in our Bible by "the beginning" expresses duration or time previous to creation. Reshith, the Hebrew word for beginning, is in the original used without the definite article. The article was expressly omitted in order to exclude the application of the word to the order of creation, and to make it signify previous duration or previous eternity. The words of Moses, then "In former duration God created the heavens and the earth," may mean millions of years just as easily as one. A few verses later, describing the second day of creation, Moses declares that God made the firmament and called it heaven. It is plain from this that the heavens of the first day's creation are different from the heavens of the second day; the difference of time proves a difference of subject. The heavens of the first verse were made in former duration, before the moving of the Spirit, before the creation of light; the heavens of the second day were made after the earth and after light.

Another statement made by Moses is an extraordinary anticipation of the most recent cosmological doctrines. "The earth was desolation and emptiness, and darkness upon the face of the raging deep, and the Spirit of God brooding upon the face of the waters." It is now hardly doubtful that the earth was a molten sphere, over which hung, in a dense vapour, all the water which now lies upon its surface. As the crust cooled, the aqueous vapour that surrounded it became condensed into water and rested on the surface of the land. The conflicts between the waters and the fiery heat, as the crust of the earth was broken, fell in, or was upheaved, are well described by the words of Moses, the earth was desolation and emptiness. It is curious that the great facts of the submersion of the earth and its condition of emptiness should have been thus exactly described by Moses.

We are then told that God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Celsus, Voltaire, and a writer in "Essays and Reviews" have found it strange that there should have been light before the creation of the sun; but according to the theory of cosmogony, now almost universally received, the earth did, in fact, exist before the condensation of the sun. Light there would be, from the gradually condensing mass of nebulous and incandescent matter which occupied the whole space now circumscribed by the orbit of the earth. If Moses had wished to describe the modern doctrines concerning light, he could not have done so more happily. The sun is not called "Or," light, but *Maor*, a place of light, just what modern science has discovered it to be. If light be not matter, but vibrations of luminiferous ether, no words could more precisely explain what must have occurred when God set in motion the undulations which produced light, and said, "Let light be." The account given of the creation of the sun very closely anticipated modern science: "Let there be light-holders in the firmament of heaven, and let them be for light-holders in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth. . . . and the stars." When the sun began to give his light, then, for the first time, the earth's fellow-planets, the stars, began to reflect his brilliance, and become luminaries also.—*Quarterly Review*.

THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

Many of our readers must have seen frequent notices, of late, of the lectures of the Rev. Joseph Cook, in Tremont Temple, Boston, on Modern Skepticism, and specially on the Transcendentalism of the late Theodore Parker, who, some years ago, attracted such crowds to hear him, at the Melodeon, in that city. We