

SCIENTIFIC.

THE SACRED HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

CONCLUDED.

The process of creation, in the primitive construction of our earthly fabric, has not been detailed by the Hebrew legislator. He mentions no more of its massive composition than this short sentence :—

‘The earth was without form, and void ; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of Elohim moved upon the face of the waters.’

‘The earth was without form.’ It had therefore to be put into form. Its material substance had been created, but had not been arranged into any specific formation. It was also ‘void ;’ it was therefore empty ; vacant of all that now adorns its surface, or that was afterwards made within it. It had to receive and to be replenished, both internally and externally, with all those additional and organized things and beings, or more specific metals and minerals, which were intended to be within it and upon it. As ‘darkness was upon the face of the deep,’ there was in its primeval state a deeper abyss—a vast obscure concavity ; and as ‘the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,’ its surface must have been covered with the aqueous fluid. Thus the first state of our earth which is noticed to us after the general creation, is that of a dark mass, unformed and void, with an abyss within, and whose surface was covered with moving waters, but on which the Divine Spirit was operating. The effects of this operation are not stated, but we may presume them to have been to produce those formative arrangements which constitute its present structure—its great masses of rocks and strata—its geological system and construction.

At this point of time, when its specific composition was taking place, the Divine command was issued for the appearance of the luminous fluid. The introduction of this grand agent of the creative process is mentioned with that sublimity of diction which arises from the emphatic consciousness of imperative dignity :—

‘And Elohim said, “LIGHT ! BE,” and light was.’

It came instantaneously, pouring on and pervading the terrestrial mass ; and the operations of this beautiful element, whose penetrating, universal, and marvellous agencies are yet so little understood, fulfilled its authors wishes :—

‘Elohim saw the light, that it was good.’

The next act of the Deity was to make a boundary, or division, between the effect of the visible presence or action of light, and the darkness which arises from its latent state or disappearance ; calling the duration of our luminous sense of it ‘day,’ and the time of its absence ‘night.’ Their succession was made to constitute that portion of time which we designate by a natural day.

The evening and the morning were the first day.’ Our earthly day is that space of time in which our globe turns once completely round. This section of time, which we subdivided into twenty-four parts, or hours, does not depend upon the sun, nor arise from it. As it is only an entire rotation of the earth, it could occur as well without a solar orb as with one.

The annual circuit, or a year, which is the completed orbit of the earth round his luminary, could not take place without a sun ; but a day requires the exist-