

interval of thousands of ages took place before the Mosaic history begins; that during that interval, convulsions and upheavals took place which buried the successive races of animals, and the strata of earth in ruins, and about six thousand years ago the earth was without form, and empty, and then God commanded, and according to Moses, formed the earth and created creatures upon it, and last of all, man. This interpretation was adopted by many eminent men, among whom were Dr. Chalmers and others; but it is losing favor now. There are many objections to it which we shall not presently discuss. Shall we then adopt this interpretation? Let our young theological students who have such great advantages at the present day, add to their Biblical lore a thorough knowledge of the book of nature, so that we may be able to test every inch of ground before we assume a final position in this important matter.

But perhaps the most popular interpretation, and the one most favorably received, is that the six days in which God created the heavens and the earth, were six long periods of time; that during those long periods the earth was undergoing a process of formation, gradually preparing to be the habitation of man, the king of creation. These long periods required ages to complete them. The various races of animals whose fossils are found in the heart of the earth, were buried in ruins, and mineral wealth and treasures were gradually forming for the good of man. Perhaps this view presents the grandest, the most sublime, and the most exalted conceptions of the wisdom and power of the great framer of the universe; and many of the best scientists admit that it is quite consistent with the Bible testimony. This is the view adopted by Dr. Conant, one of the ablest of living scholars, as may be seen from his introduction to his revised version of the book of Genesis. He does not pretend to speak there as a geologist himself, but he takes the teaching of geology from some of the first masters in the science. Dr. Conant says "that those long periods of creative activity were presented to the inspired writer under the symbolism of six days of labour, and the seventh of rest" "This was," he said "a rational and an intelligible application of it, the word 'day' being the simplest, and most familiar measure of time; being used in all languages for any period of duration of greater or less extent." Shall we then now, and evermore adopt this interpretation? It is grand in conception; but is it right? is it the truth? Do we not wish to know how, and when the world we inhabit was constructed? If you were purchasing a residence, you would wish to know its age, the material of which it was

built, and the style of its construction. The view just submitted of the framing of our world is not without its objections and difficulties; but is it the proper view? For our own part we would be willing to fight for the natural days until our sword should be worn to the hilt; but then we are conscious that we are not sufficiently apt in scientific gladiatorialship to defend ourselves. We may be deceived with respect to the strength, expertness, and resources of our opponents. We are already somewhat fearful that they may crowd upon us and force us to yield our favorite position however reluctantly.

The next question is, had this world its present size, shape, and form from the time of its existence? Many of us have been in the habit of believing that the world as to its size, form, and general outlines, has been the same from the time of its creation. We would have admitted that changes might have taken place upon its surface; that valleys, ravines, hills, and elevations, might have been made by floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes, and other natural causes; but as to the general shape, and size, we believed them to have been the same from the beginning of creation. But the hypothesis of modern evolution laughs at these antiquated notions; and would enforce upon us the theory of the growth of our world, and others like it from molecular chaos; that our world has been growing and shaping from the nebulous boyhood of its youth, as Prof. Huxley calls it, through innumerable, and immeasurable ages until it has attained to its present size, form, and density. The hypothesis of evolution, according to Prof. Huxley, supposes that at a given period in the past we might find the earth in shape and size, something similar to what it is now; but growing less similar as you would go back in time, and continually going back, you would come to the time in which nothing existed but a nebulous cloud, or a cloud of mist. Is this, then, the true history of creation? How does it accord with the Biblical account? Can it be reconciled with that? When the Bible says, God created the heavens and the earth, does it mean the creation of that nebulous cloud? Does it mean that the world was created when that nebulous mass was? Or can it mean that God commenced the work of creation then, and continued it until it was finished? We cannot see that it means that: for whatever God did in the creation of the heavens and the earth, was done at the beginning, not commenced at the beginning. By the creation of the heavens we understand the creation of the sun, moon, and stars: is that the action which was done when that faint transparent speck of fog was created? Or does the creation of the heavens mean the evolution of the

heavenly bodies from that gaseous cloud? If that is the meaning, the Bible should have said that God commenced the work of creating the heavens at the beginning. And if all the bodies of the universe have evolved from such an original as that, either by chance, or by the elementary action on principles of matter, how is it that some of them have assumed such great magnitude above others; and how is it that some of them have become suns and bodies of light, while others cannot claim such distinctions? Why should not those elementary principles of matter act similarly, and produce similar effects upon all the detached parts of that nebulous cloud? And lastly, how is it that invariably those bodies of greater magnitude and greater light have assumed a proper position, and have become the centres of their respective systems, controlling all the rest by their preponderating gravity; and also scattering their cheering and benignant rays over them, and making them even resplendent with their light?

Evolutionists do not only apply this method to the inanimate world, but also to the living creation. Prof. Huxley again says: if we traced back the animal creation, we should find animals and plants identical with those which now exist, but increasing their difference as we go back in time; and at the same time becoming simpler and simpler until we should arrive at that gelatinous mass which in the judgment of some scientists is the common foundation of all life. Now let me ask, is that a better account of the creation of man, and of all other creatures than that contained in the Bible? When the Bible says, that God created man from the dust of the ground, does it mean that He created that gelatinous mass, and from which man was evolved by the elementary principles of matter to become the noble, handsome personage he now is? There is one thing very perceptible from all these theories, (viz.) the extremely strong inclination, yea, the apparent anxiety of some men of science to account or find a reason for creation without a Creator. Neither Prof. Huxley nor Darwin may be an atheist, but we would agree with Dr. Hodge, in saying, that their system carried to its logical conclusion leads to atheism. We have no apprehension that the presentation of facts in science will lead to atheism, but the extreme anxiety and strong efforts of many eminent scientists to find a reason for creation independent of a Creator may produce atheistic tendencies in the minds of some. Hence the necessity of students of the Bible becoming also students of the book of nature, that they may be able to test, and discern between theories, and facts in science.

Let Science advance in her discoveries,