

tion was the calling forth of light from a temporary darkness (a) which had overspread the rains of the ancient earth.

We have further mention of this ancient earth and ancient sea in the ninth verse, in which the waters are commanded to be gathered together into one place, and the dry land to appear; this dry land being the same earth whose material creation had been announced in the first verse, and whose temporary submer- sion and temporary darkness are described in the second verse; the appearance of the land and the gathering together of the wa- ters are the only facts affirmed respecting them in the ninth verse, but neither land nor water are said to have been created on the third day.

A similar interpretation may be given of the fourteenth and four- teenth verses; what is herein stated of the celestial lumina- rias seems to be spoken solely with reference to our planet, and more especially to the human race, than about to be placed upon it. We are not told that the substance of the sun and moon were first called into existence upon the fourth day: the text may equally imply that these bodies were then prepared, and appoint- ed to certain offices of high importance to mankind; "to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night—to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and for years." The fact of their creation had been stated before in the first verse. The stars also are mentioned (Gen. i: 16) in three words only, almost parenthetically; as if for the sole purpose of announcing that they also were made by the same Power, as these lumina- ries which are more important to us, the sun and moon. This very slight notice of the countless host of celestial bodies, all of which are probably suns, the centres of other planetary systems, whilst our little satellite, the moon, is mentioned as next in im- portance to the sun, shows clearly that astronomical phenomena are here spoken of only according to their relative importance to our earth, and to mankind, and without any regard to their real importance in the boundless universe. It seems impossible to include the fixed stars among those bodies which are said (Gen. i: 17.) to have been set in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth; since without the aid of telescopes, by far the greater number of them are invisible. The same principle seems to pervade the description of the creation which concerns our planet: the creation of its component matter having been an- nounced in the first verse, the phenomena of Geology, like those of Astronomy, are passed over in silence, and the narrative pro- ceeds at once to details of the actual creation which have more immediate reference to man.

The interpretation here proposed seems moreover to solve the difficulty, which would otherwise attend the statement of the ap- pearance of light upon the first day, (b) whilst the sun and moon and stars are not made to appear until the fourth. If we suppose all the heavenly bodies, and the earth, to have been created at the indefinitely distant time, designated by the word beginning, and that the darkness described on the evening of the first day, was a temporary darkness, produced by an accumulation of dense vapours "upon the face of the deep;" an incipient dispersion of these vapours may have re-admitted light to the earth, upon the first day, whilst the exciting cause of light was still obscured; and the further purification of the atmosphere, upon the fourth day, may have caused the sun and moon and stars to reappear in the firmament of heaven, to assume their new relations to the newly modified earth, and to the human race.

We have evidence of the presence of light during long and dis- tant periods of time, in which the many extinct fossil forms of animal life succeeded one another upon the early surface of the globe: this evidence consists in the petrified remains of eyes of animals, found in geological formations of various ages. In a future chapter I shall shew, that the eyes of Trilobites, which are preserv- ed in strata of the transition formation were constructed in a manner so closely resembling those of existing crustacea; and that the eyes of Ichthyosauri, contained an apparatus, so like one in the eyes of many birds, as to leave no doubt that these fossil eyes were opti- cal instruments, calculated to receive, in the same manner, im-

a Professor Percy remarks that "the words 'let there be light,' imply, by no means necessarily imply, any more than the English words by which they are translated, that light had never existed before." The Chris- tian Observer, a periodical distinguished for its evangelical tone, favours the theory of Dr. Buckland: "The first verse I consider to be introductory, asserting generally, that God was the Creator of all things, whenever or however they were made. The second verse informs us of a period when our earth was covered by the waters of the ocean. The atmosphere was so loaded with clouds, and obscured by fogs, that the light of the sun, moon, and stars could not penetrate to its surface; and to a being placed where man was destined to reside, the day and the night would have been both alike. In verses 3-5, we are informed that God willed that there should be light; and accordingly the clouds being partially removed by the wind, and the fog clearing, the light of day became visible."—Ed. Pearl.

b And who has not felt this difficulty on the old hypothesis? Light created on the first day, and the sun not created until the fourth! We know that some have supposed that the light was electric, and others that it was phosphorescent, and in both cases that it was diffused through the space surrounding the earth. Others tell us it was a meteor which gave the light for the first three days. But call it latent light or any other kind you please, yet without the supposition that the sun was created prior to it, you cannot account for the succession of day and night.—Ed. Pearl.

pressions of the same light, which conveys the perception of sight to living animals. This conclusion is further confirmed by the general fact, that the heads of all fossil fishes and fossil rep- tiles, in every geological formation, are furnished with cavities for the reception of eyes, and with perforations for the passage of optic nerves, although the cases are rare, in which any part of the eye itself has been preserved. The influence of light is also so necessary to the growth of existing vegetables, that we cannot but infer, that it was equally essential to the development of the numerous fossil species of the vegetable kingdom, which are co- extensive and coeval with the remains of fossil animals.

It appears highly probable from recent discoveries, that light is not a material substance, but only an effect of undulations of ether; that this infinitely subtle and elastic ether pervades all space, and even the interior of all bodies; so long as it remains at rest, there is total darkness; when it is put into a peculiar state of vibration, the sensation of light is produced: this vibra- tion may be excited by various causes; by the sun, by the stars, by electricity, combustion, etc. If then light be not a substance, but only a series of vibrations of ether; that is, an effect produced on a subtle fluid, by the excitement of one or many extraneous causes, it can hardly be said, nor is it said in Gen. i: 3, to have been created; though it may be literally said to be called into action.

Lastly, in the reference made in the fourth commandment, Exod. xx: 11, to the six days of the Mosaic creation, the word *asah*, "made" is the same which is used in Gen. i: 7. and Gen. i: 16, and which has been shown to be less strong and less com- prehensive than *bara*, "created"; (c) and as it by no means necessarily implies creation out of nothing, it may be here em- ployed to express a new arrangement of materials that existed before.

After all, it should be recollected that the question is not re- specting the correctness of the Mosaic narrative, but of our interpretation of it; and still further, it should be borne in mind that the object of this account was, not to state in what manner, (d) but by whom, the world was made. As the prevailing tendency of men in those early days was to worship the most glorious ob- jects of nature, namely the sun and moon and stars; it should seem to have been one important point in the Mosaic account of creation, to guard the Israelites against the Polytheism and idolatry of the nations around them; by announcing that all these magnificent celestial bodies were no gods, but the works of one Almighty Creator, to whom alone the worship of mankind is due.

THE PRAISE OF PIANOS.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

A pianoforte is a most agreeable object. It is a piece of furni- ture with a soul in it, ready to wake at a touch, and charm us with invisible beauty. Open or shut, it is pleasant to look at; but open it looks best, smiling at us with its ivory, like the mouth of a sweet singer. The keys of a pianoforte are, of themselves, an agreeable spectacle—an elegance not sufficiently prized for their aspect, because they are so common, but well worth regarding even in that respect. It is one of the advantages of this instru- ment to the learner, that there is no discord to go through in get- ting at a tone. Tone is ready-made. The finger touches the key, and there is music at once. Another and greater advan- tage is that it contains a whole concert within itself, for you may play with all your fingers, and then every one performs the part of a separate instrument. True, it will not compare with a real concert—with the rising winds of an orchestra; but in no single instrument, except the organ, can you have such a combination of sounds; and the organ itself cannot do for you what the piano- forte does. There are superlative ears that profess not to be able to endure a pianoforte after a concert; others that always find it to be out of tune; and more who veil their insensibility to music in general, by protesting against "everlasting tinkles," and school-girl affectation or sullenness. It is not a pleasure, which a man would select, to be obliged to witness affectation of any sort, much less sullenness, or any other absurdity. With respect to

c Professor Bush in his work on Genesis says that the original word for *made*, *asah*, often implies constituted, appointed, or set apart.—Ed. Pearl. Professor Sedgwick in his remarks on the relations which Geology bears to natural religion, thus sums up his valuable information—"The Bible instructs us that man and other living things, have been placed but a few years upon the earth; and the physical monuments of the world bear witness to the same truth: if the astronomer tells us of myriads of worlds not spoken of in the sacred records; the geologist, in like manner, proves (not by arguments from analogy, but by the incontrovertible evidence of physical phenomena) that there were former conditions of our planet, separated from each other by vast intervals of time, during which man, and the other creatures of his own date, had not been called into being. Periods such as these belong not therefore, to the moral history of our race, and come nei- ther within the letter nor the spirit of revelation. Between the first crea- tion of the earth and that day in which it pleased God to place man upon it, who shall care to define the interval? On this question scripture is silent, but that silence destroys not the meaning of those physical monu- ments of his power that God has put before our eyes, giving us at the same time facilities whereby we may interpret them and comprehend their meaning."

pianofortes not perfectly in tune, it is a curious fact in the history of sounds, that no instrument is ever perfectly in tune. Even the heavenly charmer, music, being partly of earth as well as of hea- ven, partakes the common imperfection of things sublunary. It is, therefore, possible to have senses too fine for it, if we are to be always sensible to this imperfection; to

"Dio of an air in acromatic pain;"

and if we are to be thus sensible, who is to judge at what nice point of imperfection the disgust is to begin, where no disgust is felt by the general ear? As to those who, notwithstanding their pretended love of music at other times, are so ready to talk of "jingling," and "tingling," whenever they hear a pianoforte, or a poor girl at her lesson, they have really no love of music what- soever; and only proclaim as much to those who understand them. They are among the wisecracks who are always proving spleen at the expense of their wit.

CHRISTIAN UNION.—No 3.

SECTARIAN EDUCATION—REPROACHFUL EPITHETS.

1.—Another effectual means of perpetuating divisions among Christians consists in the illiberal prejudices instilled by a party education into the minds of youth. The religious department of instruction is occupied, by many a parent and tutor, not so much with the inculcation of the fundamental doctrines and cardinal duties of Christianity, as in teaching their pupils the peculiarities of their own party, and the errors and evils of those from whom they chiefly differ. But even were they sensible of this impro- priety, and disposed to avoid it, where is the stream of ecclesias- tical history to which they can point the youthful lip, unadulter- ated by the ore and earth of the party-channel through which it flows? and how few the youth who have read treatises of doc- trinal theology without imbibing prejudices against a party, owing to the unjust representation they received of its peculiar ten- ents, or of their supposed practical consequences. Thus charac- ter is poisoned in its infancy, by the very means which should have been its aliment and life. The mind becomes a soil pre- pared for the growth of every root of bitterness; predisposed for whatever is intolerant in spirit, angry in controversy, and slan- derous in report. The party whose prejudices he inherits gains a bigot; every other party, an enemy; and the universal Church of Christ, whose agent and ornament he might have become, is stain- ed with disgrace.

2.—The application to our opponents of reproachful epithets is also to be numbered among the auxiliaries of schism. Terms of this kind have always been acting an important part in the his- tory of mankind. On every subject exciting the passions, whe- ther good or bad, their influence has always been great; and es- pecially, therefore, on that most momentous and exciting of all subjects—religion. Here, almost every appellation has been either a weapon, a stigma, a pass-word, or a badge. Nearly every leading ecclesiastical term has an eventful history of its own. Epithets which at first were innocent and merely distinc- tive, like the distinctive rods of the Egyptian diviners, have been changed into serpents by the necromancy of the passions. Terms which, at first, only served, have at length, like many an obscure individual in eastern lands, come to exercise a despotic sway, and terms which were once *offensively* employed, have at length, like ancient weapons of war, been displaced by others more sure in their aim, and more destructive in their effect; and have even come to be employed as terms of honor and excellence. The *transmigration* of ecclesiastical terms is no fable.

The epithets, Puritans, Methodists, Sectarians, Schismatics, Saints, Evangelicals, Voluntaries, Compulsories, have each in turn been pressed and sworn into the service of party. And the worst purposes of party they answer in two ways. They are so easily remembered and expeditiously applied, compared with an argument, that numbers who could neither comprehend nor em- ploy the latter, are retained in the cause of faction by means of the former. And, having once employed them, their anger rises, and their contempt of those against whom the epithets are cast in- creases, in exact proportion to the frequency with which they are repeated. And, besides inflaming the passions of those who employ them, by excitement, they wound and irritate those who are their objects, by insult. An argument might be answered or evaded; a historical fact might be met by a counter fact; and an assertion be neutralised by denial; and, in either case, the second person feels that he has done something, and is satisfied. But a term of reproach is the barbed and poisoned arrow of controversy which remains and rankles; which turns anger into hatred, and an opponent into a foe. True, he may retaliate in kind; but in that case the evil is doubled; the rent is made worse.—From "Union" by the Author of "Mammon."

FAST DRIVING.—"Coachman," said an outside passenger to one who was driving at a furious rate over one of the most moun- tainous roads in the north of England, "have you no considera- tion for our lives and limbs?"—"What are your lives and limbs to me," was the reply; "I am behind my time!"