

EXTRACTS FROM A TRACT

ENTITLED REMARKS ON "THE MISTAKES OF MOSES."

By H. L. Hastings.

I recollect hearing Lord Shaftesbury speak in London, of attending a Costermonger's Exhibition of the donkeys with which they drag about their barrows of provisions and merchandise. He said there were fifty donkeys exhibited, looking as sleek and beautiful as if they had come out of the Queen's stables; and the men told him that every, one of the donkeys had each week, twenty-four consecutive hours of rest, and, as a consequence, they could travel thirty miles a day, with their loads, for six days a week, while donkeys which were driven seven days in the week, could not travel more than fifteen miles a day.

Of course a skeptic would sneer at the idea that divine revelation had anything to do with donkeys; or that donkeys were considered in the law of God. But the Creator knew what was good for a donkey, and so he named the donkey in the commandment: "The seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." Deut. v. 14. The Lord well knew that a donkey would do more work in a week if he worked six days, than he would if he worked seven. He therefore made provision that the donkey should have his weekly rest.

Whatever opinion men may hold concerning the perpetuity of sabbatic laws in the change of dispensations, man's physical constitution remains unchanged; and every law which has its foundation in the nature of things, is worthy of the most reverent consideration. They who violate the laws of existence must accept the penalties.

It is a curious fact that after man has overworked himself, and become exhausted, from neglect of the appointed times of rest, when he is sinking under disease, and the frantic struggles of nature take the form of fever, this same law of sevens manifests itself in the process of restoration. His fever runs seven days, and then turns; or if nature be not able to recover herself at that point, the struggle goes on for another seven days; and if the fever does not then turn, it must again run seven days. Fevers do not turn on the fourth, fifth or sixth day. All the doctors in creation cannot make fevers turn, as a rule, except at the seventh day. This shows that the law of sevens is so wrought into the constitution of man, that he cannot escape its control. It is a part of himself; and whether he believes it or not, he is still bound by this universal law. The human constitution is like an eight day clock. It needs to be wound up once a week, and the day of rest affords an opportunity of so doing. Any one who will study the constitution of man, will find that this law, dividing human life into periods of one, two, three and four sevens of days, is an universal law, controlling human existence from beginning to end.

It may be well to notice in this connection, that five modes of measuring time by seven occur in two chapters of the book of Leviticus; in the twenty-third chapter, we have a week of days (v. 3), a week of weeks (v. 15), and a week of months (v. 24); in the twenty-fifth, we have a week of years (v. 4), and a week of sevens, "seven times seven years" (v. 8); a sixth mode of reckoning time by seven is found in the seventy years' captivity, and in the seventy weeks of Daniel; see also Is. xxiii. 7, 17; and a seventh mode of reckoning time in periods of seventy times seven (to which the Lord alludes in his conversation with Peter, Matt. xviii. 22), is illustrated by the charts of Sir Edward Denny; seventy times seven, or four hundred and ninety, with the addition of the jubilee years during that period, make up the spans of five hundred years, twelve of which have nearly elapsed since the period known as the creation.