

to the Hebrew text, places the creation four thousand and four years before the Christian æra.

Why, it has been queried, did not the Almighty create the world at a period much earlier? Presumptuous question! Shall mortal man arraign his omnipotent maker at his bar? Ever ought we to recollect, that He does not act according to the extent of his power; but in conformity to the wise determinations of his sovereign and resistless will. Who can, in any instance, say unto Him, *what doest thou?* Unnecessary is the question, At what season of the year was the world created; whether in spring or autumn? Suffice it to say, the fruits of the earth seem to have been originally produced in a state of full maturity. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that the civil year of the Jews commenced in autumn. I do not speak of the sacred year instituted at their egress from Egypt, which, in succeeding ages, regulated their religious festivals; but of their civil year, according to which they computed time prior to that period.

With regard to the Mosaic account of creation, there are, especially, two questions, which have occupied the attention of learned writers; and on which they have been divided in their opinions. The one is,—whether does Moses, in his history of creation, intend the *original production*, or only the *renovation* of the world, which, after existing for ages, to us, unknown, had now fallen into a state of disorder and decay? The other is—In what extent is the Mosaic account of creation to be interpreted,—whether of our earth only, with its environs; or of the solar system, comprehending the sun its centre, and the several opaque bodies, planets and comets, which revolve about that grand luminary; or of all worlds, visible and invisible, known and unknown? A discussion of these questions I am not now to attempt. The brevity of my plan forbids it. It may suffice for me to say, that, as we have no infallibly certain information concerning the origin of the universe, but what we derive from the sacred vo-