

mighty Spirit was making such motions in it, as prepared, disposed, and ripened every part of it for such productions as were to appear successively in such spaces of time as are here afterwards mentioned by Moses, who informs us, that after things were digested and made ready (by long fermentation perhaps) to be wrought into form, God produced every day, for six days together, some creature or other, till all was finished, of which light was the very first."—*Commentary, in loco.*

Such evidence as this is very satisfactory. For at the present day one cannot but fear that the discoveries of geology may too much influence him insensibly to put a meaning upon Scripture which would never have been thought of, if not suggested by those discoveries, and which the language cannot bear. But those fathers of the Church cannot be supposed under the influence of any such bias; and, therefore, we may suppose the passage in itself to admit of the existence of a long period between the beginning and the first demiurgic day.

Against these views philologists have urged several objections not to be despised. One is, that light did not exist till the first day, and the sun and other luminaries not till the fourth day; whereas the animals and plants dug from the rocks could not have existed without light. They could not, therefore, have lived in the supposed long period previous to the six days.

If it be indeed true, that light was not called into existence till the first day, nor the sun till the fourth, this objection is probably insuperable. But it would be easy to cite the opinions of many distinguished and most judicious expounders of the Bible, showing that the words of the Hebrew original do not signify a literal creation of the sun, moon, and stars, on the fourth day, but only constituting or appointing them, at that time, to be luminaries, and to furnish standards for the division of time and other purposes.

The word used is not the same as that employed in the first verse to describe the creation of the world; and the passage, rightly understood, implies the previous existence of the heavenly bodies. "The words *מֵאֵרֵי הַיָּמִים* are not to be separated from the rest," says Rosenmuller, "or to be rendered *fiant luminaria*, let there be light; that is, *let light be made*; but rather, *let lights be*; that is, serve, in the expanse of heaven,