

neath the undefined and murky horizon. And here again the *optical* appearance would be exactly that described by Milton :—

“ ‘ Let there be light,’ said God, and forthwith light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
 Sprung from the deep, and from her native east
 To journey through the airy gloom began,
 Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not : she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good,
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere
 Divided : light the day, and darkness night,
 He named. This was the first day, even and morn.”

The second day's work has been interpreted variously, according to the generally received science of the times of the various commentators who have dealt with it. Even in Milton, though the great poet rejected the earlier idea of a solid firmament, we find prominence given to that of a vast hollow sphere of “circumfluous waters,” which, by encircling the atmosphere, kept aloof the “fierce extremes of chaos.” Later commentators, such as the late Drs Kitto and Pye Smith, hold that the Scriptural analogue of the *firmament* here—by the way, a Greek, not a Hebrew idea, first introduced into the Septuagint—was in reality simply the atmosphere with its clouds. “The historian” [Moses], says Dr Kitto, “speaks as things would have appeared to a spectator at the time of the creation. A portion of the heavy watery vapour had flown into the upper regions, and rested there in dense clouds, which still obscured the sun ; while below, the whole earth was covered with water. Thus we see the propriety with which the firmament is said to have divided the waters from the waters.” It is certainly probable that in a vision of creation the atmospheric phenomena of the second great act of the creation drama might have stood out with much greater prominence to the prophetic eye placed in the circumstances of a natural one, than any of its other appearances. The in-