

Sabbath of rest from creative labour, of which the proper work is the moral development and elevation of the species, and which will terminate only with the full completion of that sublime task on the full accomplishment of which God's eternal purposes and the tendencies of man's progressive nature seem alike directed. Now, I am greatly mistaken if we have not in the six geologic periods all the elements, without misplacement or exaggeration, of the Mosaic drama of creation.

I have referred in my brief survey to extended periods. It is probable, however, that the prophetic vision of creation, if such was its character, consisted of only single representative scenes, embracing each but a point of time ; it was, let us suppose, a diorama, over whose shifting pictures the curtain rose and fell six times in succession,—once during the Azoic period, once during the earlier or middle Palæozoic period, once during the Carboniferous period, once during the Permian or Triassic period, once during the Oolitic or Cretaceous period, and finally, once during the Tertiary period. Dr Kurtz holds, taking the Sabbath into the series, that the division into *seven* scenes or stages may have been regulated with reference to the importance and sacredness of the mythic number seven,—the symbol of completeness or perfection ; but the suggestion will perhaps not now carry much weight among the theologians of Britain, whatever it might have done two centuries ago. It is true, that creation *might* have been exhibited, not by seven, but by seven hundred, or even by seven thousand scenes ; and that the accomplished man of science, skilled in every branch of physics, might have found something distinct in them all. But not the less do the seven, or rather the six, exhibited scenes appear to be not symbolic or mystical, at least not exclusively symbolic or mystical, but truly representative of successive periods, strongly distinctive in their character, and capable, with