

PART II.

UPON the principle which has been explained, I now propose to the impartial judgment of Bible-scholars, that method of understanding the Mosaic account of the Creation and the Flood, which appears to me just and safe. The way is sufficiently cleared, and the principles explained and confirmed ; so that little will be necessary in showing the application to the cases before us.

I. With respect to the account of the CREATION.

Gen. i. 1. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

The phrase "the heavens and the earth," though not always used by the sacred writers in the full sense, is the most comprehensive that the Hebrew language affords, to designate the universe of dependent being ; and, on account of the connexion, it requires to be so taken in this place. It thus corresponds to the expressions in the New Testament : "All things, that are in the heavens and that are on the earth, the visible and the invisible ;—the all things."* This sublime sentence therefore stands, at the head of the sacred volume, announcing that there was an epoch, a point in the flow of infinite duration, when the whole of the dependent world, or whatever portion of it first had existence, was *brought* into being ; and that this commencement of being was not from pre-existent materials, nor by fortune, chance, or accident, nor through the skill of any finite agent, but absolutely and solely by the will, wisdom, and power of the ONE and ONLY GOD. It was a *creation*, in the proper sense ; not a modelling or new-forming. The phrase, "In the beginning" is used several times in Scripture, to denote the commencement

* Τὰ πάντα, τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς—τὰ πάντα.