

No rational objection can lie against the statement, that the Creator was pleased to distribute these works through the space of six natural days ; instead of effecting the whole by an instantaneous volition. It is sufficient for us to know that Infinite Wisdom chose this method of proceeding : we are sure then that it was *the best*. But we may very reasonably suppose that the gradual character of the process furnished valuable instruction for superior creatures, and filled them with devout rapture ; “ when the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Nor can we be insensible to the lessons to which the Scriptures apply this part of the counsels of Jehovah, for the religious, and not overlooking the physical, benefit of mankind in all following time.

The condescending principle of the narrative is manifested, in a striking manner, by the description of the fourth day. The sun is mentioned as the *greatest* luminary, the moon as the *next* in magnitude and importance, and the other shining orbs are grouped together as if they formed, even when all combined, the *least* object of consideration. The heavenly bodies are represented, not as being at that time created, but “ made,” *constituted* or *appointed*, to be “ luminaries,” for such is the meaning of the word used : and their design is specified with an exactitude very observable : to afford light, and to furnish standards for the divisions of time, the operations of agriculture, and religious or other social observances. Had it been the purpose of revelation, to give a view of creation according to the physical reality, can we imagine that no reference would have been made to superior creatures, of whom the subsequent Scriptures say so much, under an appellative which designates only their work and office,—angels ? Or that no mention would occur of the planets, and their satellites, as distinct from the fixed stars ? And that all the notice taken of the astral system would lie