

further life to this tree and its congenates. A still higher antiquity is claimed for the *Taxodium* (*Cypressus disticha*,) an American tree, which attains the height of seventy feet and a circumference of thirty. It is stated by Professor Henslow, to possess a longevity of 4000 to about 6000 years. One now growing in the churchyard of Santa Maria de Tesla, near Oaxaca in Mexico, and which was observed as a tree of wondrous magnitude by the Spanish conquerors of that country, is affirmed by M. de Candolle to "go back certainly to the origin of the present state of the world; an epoch," he says, "of which it is the most indisputable monument."* With regard to the period that has flowed since the creation of man, the Christian world generally consents to use Archbishop Usher's system, because to depart from it would perplex us in our ordinary reading; yet most educated men are aware that the evidence runs in favour of a longer period. Perhaps no man has laboured on this subject with greater assiduity than the late Dr. Wm. Hales, in his *Analysis of Ancient Chronology*. According to him, we are now in the 7250th year from the creation; and the 4994th from the deluge.

Now the physical argument is, that the flood could not be universal, because these trees exhibit an age which, for the Boabab, goes upon the common chronology to 1045 years before the date of the deluge; and, according to Hales, to 238 years: and, for the *Taxodium*, each of these numbers is increased by some centuries.

Will it be contended that these trees might live, submersed in water for near 300 days? Certainly it is impossible to try the experiment; but all analogy, all physiological reasoning from the functions of vegetable life, decide in the negative, and determine that elephants and oxen and men might live so long under water, almost as well as dicotyledonous trees.

Mr. Rhind attempts to meet the argument by denying its premises. He affirms that, "in tropical regions, some dicotyledonous plants never show indications of annular circles at all, while many have them very irregular; while it is far from improbable but that some species may produce more than one woody circle in a year."† These asser-

* "Il remonte certainement a l'origine du monde actuel. C'est le monument le plus irrecusable d'une époque sur laquelle l'opinion des savans n'est pas entièrement fixée." *Bibliothèque Universelle; Sciences*; vol. XLVI. p. 393; 1831: He probably alludes to the difficulties of Chronology, arising from the discrepancies of the Hebrew text, the Samaritan, the Septuagint, Josephus, &c.

† Age of the Earth; p. 120. I assure the reader that there is no mistake in transcribing this paragraph!