

Egyptians.³⁵ The same week is found in India among the Bramins; it has there, also, its days marked by those of the heavenly bodies; and it has been ascertained that the same day has, in that country, the name corresponding with its designation in other nations.

The notion which led to the usual designations of the days of the week is not easily unravelled. The days each correspond to one of the heavenly bodies, which were, in the earliest systems of the world, conceived to be the following, enumerating them in the order of their remoteness from the earth:³⁶ Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, the Moon. At a later period, the received systems placed the seven luminaries in *the seven spheres*. The knowledge which was implied in this view, and the time when it was obtained, we must consider hereafter. The order in which the names are assigned to the days of the week (beginning with Saturday) is, Saturn, the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus; and various accounts are given of the manner in which one of these orders is obtained from the other; all the methods proceeding upon certain arbitrary arithmetical processes, connected in some way with astrological views. It is perhaps not worth our while here to examine further the steps of this process; it would be difficult to determine with certainty why the former order of the planets was adopted, and how and why the latter was deduced from it. But there is something very remarkable in the universality of the notions, apparently so fantastic, which have produced this result; and we may probably consider the Week, with Laplace,³⁷ as "the most ancient monument of astronomical knowledge." This period has gone on without interruption or irregularity from the earliest recorded times to our own days, traversing the extent of ages and the revolutions of empires; the names of the ancient deities which were associated with the stars have been replaced by those of the objects of the worship of our Teutonic ancestors, according to their views of the correspondence of the two mythologies; and the Quakers, in rejecting these names of days, have cast aside the most ancient existing relic of astrological as well as idolatrous superstition.

Sec. 8.—The Circles of the Sphere.

THE inventions hitherto noticed, though undoubtedly they were steps in astronomical knowledge, can hardly be considered as purely abstract and scientific speculations; for the exact reckoning of time is one of

³⁵ Laplace, *Hist. Astron.* p. 16. ³⁶ *Philol. Mus.* No. 1. ³⁷ *Hist. Ast.* p. 17.