

creation, and, therefore, he conformed to a chronological order only so far as his leading object required. It would be natural for him to begin his pictures with the world in a chaotic state, buried by darkness and water, with the light just breaking in. According to ancient ideas there was an ocean above as well as below, and this might have suggested the formation of the firmament on the second picture. It was natural next to bring up the submerged land and adorn it with vegetation. This might awaken the thought of introducing the heavenly bodies. And now it might occur that everything was ready for the introduction of animals into the atmosphere and the waters; and last of all to let the most perfect of animals come in with man.

These may not, and probably were not the reasons why, as we suppose, Moses departed from a chronological arrangement of his six pictures; but they show that there might be reasons for doing this. It has been and still is almost universally assumed, that Moses gives a connected and chronological history of creation; and then ingenuity has been taxed to the utmost to accommodate the facts to such a supposition. But if we may reasonably suppose that he meant *only to give certain leading and selected facts, conformed to a chronological order only so far as suited his purpose*, just as one might select certain facts from the early history of the country, and show them by pictures arranged so as to produce the best effect, without reference to dates, it relieves the sacred writer from all responsibility as to chronological order and scientific arrangement, and really does more to bring out the beauty of the Mosaic history of creation, and to bring it into harmony with science, than almost all other principles.

13. *Geology and the Bible agree in representing physical evil as in the world before man.* Geology shows that the same mixed system of suffering and enjoyment, of liability to painful accident and inevitable death, has always prevailed as they now do. The Bible, too, intimates that death and other evils preceded man. Of what use was the threatening of death if no example of it existed among animals? Again, plants were created with seeds in them, and animals made male and female for the production of a succession of races, and such a system implies a correspondent system of death. The human family might have been specially preserved by the fruit of the tree of life, perhaps, from the com-