

eagle's"—a passage which the Chaldee paraphrase renders, "Thou shalt renew thy youth like the eagle in the world to come."\*

The Aztecs, according to Humboldt, felt the curiosity common to man in every stage of civilization, to lift the veil which covers the mysterious past and the more awful future. They sought relief, like the nations of the old continent, from the oppressive idea of eternity by breaking it up into distinct periods or cycles of time, each of several thousand years duration. There were four of these cycles, and, at the end of each, by the agency of one of the elements, the human family was swept from the earth, and the sun blotted from the heavens, to be again rekindled. The Aztec's conception of the origin of man is nobler, and more approximated to that of the Jewish Scriptures, than either the Egyptian or the Hindoo. The following are extracts from a translation of the *Popol Vuh*, or National Book of the Quiches of Guatemala. How marvelously conformable is the first extract to the story of the earth as recited by geology!

"There was not yet a single man; not an animal; neither birds, nor fishes, nor crabs, nor wood, nor stone, nor ravines, nor herbs, nor forests; only the sky existed. The face of the land was not seen; there was only the silent sea and the sky. There was not yet a body, naught to attach itself to another; naught that balanced itself, naught that made a sound in the sky. There was nothing that stood upright; naught there was but the peaceful sea—the sea silent and solitary in its limits; for there was nothing that was. \* \* \* Those who fecundate, those who give being, are upon the waters like a growing light. \* \* \* While they consulted the day broke, and at the moment of dawn man appeared. \* \* \* Thus they consulted while the earth

\* "In mundo venturo renovabis, sicut aquilæ, juventutem tuam."