

the burning earth. During the Primary epoch, the vegetable kingdom, newly created, extended itself over the whole globe, which it soon covered from pole to pole with an uninterrupted mass of verdure. During the Secondary and Tertiary epochs, the vegetable and animal kingdoms divided the earth between them. In the Quaternary epoch the *human kingdom* appeared. Is it in the future destinies of our planet to receive yet another lord? And after the four kingdoms which now occupy it, is there to be a *new kingdom* created, the attributes of which can never be anything but an impenetrable mystery, and which will differ from man in as great a degree as man differs from the other animals, and plants from rocks?

We must be contented with suggesting, without hoping to solve, this formidable problem. It is a great mystery, which, according to the fine expression of Pliny, "lies hidden in the majesty of Nature," *latet in majestate naturæ*; or (to speak more in the spirit of Christian philosophy) it is known only to the Almighty Creator of the Universe.