verse was called into existence at the same instant ; neither is it by any means evident that the chaos of our world was brought into being on the first of those six days during which it was gradually reduced into form. From a passage in the book of Job, (xxxviii. 7), in which we are told by God himself, that when the “ foundation of the earth was laid the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy,” it appears extremely probable that worlds had been created, formed, and inhabited, long before our earth had any existence. Nor is this opinion at all con­trary to what Moses says of the creation of the stars ; for though they are mentioned in the same verse with the sun and moon, yet the manner in which, according to the ori­ginal, they are introduced, by no means indicates that all the stars were formed at the same time with the luminaries of our system. Most of them have been created long be­fore, and some of them since, our world was brought into being ; for that clause, (ver. 16.), “ he made the stars also,” is in the Hebrew no more than “ and the stars ;” the words *he made* being inserted by the translators. The word *verse* therefore ought to be rendered thus, “ and God made two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light with the stars to rule the night where nothing is in­timated with respect to the *time* when the stars were form­ed, any more than in that verse of the Psalms, (cxxxvi. 9), which exhorts us to give thanks to God who made the moon and stars to rule by night ; for his mercy endureth “ for ever.” The first verse of the book of Genesis informs us that all things spiritual and corporeal derive their existence from God ; but it is nowhere said that all matter was creat­ed at the same time.@@1

That the whole corporeal universe *may have been* created at once, must be granted ; but if so, we have reason to be­lieve that this earth, with the sun and all the planets of the system, were suffered to remain for ages in a state of chaos, “ without form and void because it appears from other scriptures, that worlds of intelligent creatures existed, and even that some angels had fallen from a state of hap­piness, prior to the era of the Mosaic cosmogony. That the sun and the other planets revolving round him were form­ed at the same time with the earth, may be confidently as­serted ; for it is not only probable in itself from the known laws of nature, but is expressly affirmed by the sacred his­torian, who relates the formation of the sun and moon in the order in which it took place.

***Obs.*** There i» one part of the Mosaic narrative of the creation which requires to be more particularly noticed, as it has afforded consider­able difficulty to some, and has been laid bold of by others, as inva­lidating the claims of the writer to divine superintendence. It is that in which he informs us, that on the ***first day*** after the produc­tion of the chaos, the ***element of light* was** created ; and yet within a few sentences be declares, that the sun, the fountain of light, was not made till the ***fourth day.*** How are these two passages to be re­conciled ? We answer, that they may be reconciled many ways. Moses wrote for the use of a whole people, and not for the amuse­ment or instruction of a few astronomers ; and in this view his lan­guage is sufficiently proper, even though we suppose the formation of the sun and the other planets to have been carried on at the same time, and in the same progressive manncr, with the formation of this earth. The voice which called light into existence would separate the fiery and luminous particles of the chaos from those which were opaque, and, on this hypothesis, consolidate them in one globe, dif­fusing an obscure light through the planetary system ; but if the earth's atmosphere continued till the fourth day loaded with vapours, as from the narrative of Moses it appears to have done, the sun could not till ***that day*** have been ***seen*** from the carth, and may there­fore, in popular language, be said with sufficient propriety to have been ***formed*** on the fourth day, as it was then made to ***appear.*** But though this solution of the difficulty serves to remove the objection, and to secure the credit of the sacred historian, candour compels us to confess that it appears not to be the true solution.

The difficulty itself arises entirely from supposing the sun to be the sole fountain of light ; but the truth of this opinion is not self- evident, nor has it ever been established by satisfactory proof. It is indeed to a mind divested of undue deference to great names, and considering the matter with impartiality, an opinion extremely im­probable. The light of a candle placed on an eminence may in a dark night be seen in every direction at the distance of at least three miles. But if this small body be rendered visible by means of rays emitted from itself, the flame of a candle, which cannot be supposed more than an inch in diameter, must, during every instant that it con­tinues to burn, throw from its own substance luminous matter suffi­cient to fill a spherical space of six miles in diameter. This pheno­menon, if real, is certainly surprising ; but if we pursue the reflection a little farther, our wonder will be greatly increased. The matter which, when converted into flame, is an inch in diameter, is not, when of the consistence of cotton and tallow, of the dimensions of the ‘20th part of an inch ; and therefore, on the common hypothesis, the 20th part of an inch of tallow may be so rarefied as to fill a space of 113.0976 cubic miles! a rarefaction which to us appears alto­gether incredible. We have indeed heard much of the divisibility of matter ***ad infinitum,*** and think we understand what are usually called ***demonstrations*** of the truth of that proposition ; but these de­monstrations prove not the actual divisibility of real solid substances, but only that on trial we shall find no end of the ideal process of dividing and subdividing imaginary extension.

On the whole, therefore, we are much more inclined to believe that the matter of light is an extremely subtile fluid, diffused through the corporeal universe, and only excited to agency by the sun and other fiery bodies, than that it consists of streams continually issuing from the substance of these bodies. It is indeed an opinion pretty generally received, and certainly not improbable in itself, that light and electricity are one and the same substance ; but we know that the electrical fluid, though pervading the whole of corporeal nature, and, as experiments show, capable of acting with great violence, yet lies dormant and unperceived till its agency be excited by some foreign cause. Just so it may be with the matter of light. That substance may be "diffused from one end of the creation to the other. It may traverse the whole universe, form a communication between the most remote spheres, penetrate into the inmost recesses of the earth, and only wait to be put in a proper motion to commu­nicate visible sensations to the eye. Light is to the organ of sight what the air is to the organ of bearing. Air is the medium which, vibrating on the ear, causes the sensation of sound ; but it equally exists round us at all times, though there be no sonorous body to put it in motion. In like manner, light may be equally extended at all times, by night as well as by day, from the most distant fixed stars to this earth, though it then only strikes our eyes so as to ex­cite visible sensations when impelled by the sun or some other mass of fire." Nor let any one imagine that this hypothesis interferes with any of the known laws of optics ; for if the rays of light be im­pelled in straight lines, and in the same direction in which they are supposed to be emitted, the phenomena of vision must necessarily be the same.

Moses therefore was probably a more accurate philosopher than he is sometimes represented. The element of light was doubt­less created, as he informs us, on the first day ; but whether it was then put in that state in which it is the medium of vision, we cannot know, and we need not inquire, since there was neither man nor in­ferior animal with organs fitted to receive its impressions. For the first three days it may have been used only as a powerful instrument to reduce into order the jarring chaos. Or if it was from the begin­ning capable of communicating visible sensations, and dividing the day from the night, its agency must have been immediately excited by the Divine power till the fourth day, when the sun was formed, and endowed with proper qualities for instrumentally discharging that office. This was indeed miraculous, as being contrary to the present laws of nature: but the whole creation was miraculous; and we surely need not hesitate to admit a less miracle where we are under the necessity of admitting a greater. The power which called light and all other things into existence, could give them their proper mo­tions by ten thousand different means ; and to attempt to solve the difficulties of creation by philosophic theories respecting the laws of nature, is to trifle with the common sense of mankind : it is to con­sider as subservient to a law that very power by whose continued exertion the law is established.

The Scriptures inform us that creation was the work of the Trinity. Moses declares that the heaven and the earth were created, not by *one* person, but by the *Elohim.* The *λoγoς* indeed, or second person, appears to have been the

@@@1 See Lectures “ On the Relation between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science." By J. P. Smith, D.D. Lect. vii. part ii. Lond. 1839, 8vo.