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War conditions having rendered it impracticable to hold an Ordinary Meeting on January 26th, 1942, the Paper for that date was circulated to subscribers and is here published, together with the written discussion elicited.

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*LET THERE BE LIGHT : A COMPARISON OF GENESIS  
i, 3-5, AND JOHN i, WITH ROOT-MEANINGS OF  
CERTAIN VERY ANCIENT WORDS.*

By A. COWPER FIELD, Esq.

**I**N the account of the Creation with which the Old Testament opens, we read (Gen. i, 3-5): "God said, Let there be Light: and there was Light. And God saw the Light, that it was good: and God divided the Light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day" (thus our 1611 version, as revised 1885).

And St. John's Gospel commences, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. And the Light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not" (the 1611 version, as revised 1881).

Clearly, these two passages are complementary to each other; in some way mutually explanatory. The purpose of this Paper is an attempt in some degree to elucidate the underlying connection between them, and for this purpose first making use of other references to "light" and "the Light" in Holy Scripture, and then adducing certain facts, ideas and implications gathered from the study of archæology, and from much delving into the scanty remains (all too scanty, one must regretfully admit) of the oldest records of human speech now available.

And we are further handicapped in our comparative study of these passages by the difficulties inherent in any attempt to translate words so pregnant with *underlying* conceptions and

mental associations of ideas from one language into another (since it is often not possible, in faithfully rendering the general sense of a passage, to avoid the use of words separately possessing a very different underlying suggestiveness or involving quite other mental associations); (2) by the fact that we are considering passages originally written in two such widely diverse tongues as the early Semitic of Genesis and New Testament Greek; and (3) by the equally evident fact that St. John's Gospel was dictated in Aramaic (or some dialect of Galilean, or Semitic, thought), and written down in the nearest equivalent Greek words, though frequently with a usage or sense not customary to an ordinary Greek person expressing normal Greek ideas in his own mother-tongue. Of this difference in usage the passage before us is a good example, and we have the frequent use of such words as *φῶς* (light), *σὰρξ* (flesh, meat), *Βάπτισιῶ* (dip, wash), and many others in senses for which no Greek would ever spontaneously have used them. In this passage, the word *λόγος* cannot possess its usual Greek meaning—a word or discourse of human speech, “God is Spirit,” not needing physical organs like created beings to give utterance to thought; so “the Word” here must surely indicate the Mind, Will, or Purpose of God, or the Means used to give effect thereto.<sup>1</sup> There is an ancient tradition, handed down amongst certain devout Jews, reverent students of the Old Testament, and deeply versed in their “traditional readings” of the Pentateuch scriptures, to the effect that “the coming of Light into activity (Gen. i, 3) marks or indicates (though it does not say) the first coming into active relation with the earth and all therein of JHVH,” *i.e.*, of that “aspect,” relation or manifestation (or, as we Christians would say, “Person”) of God made known later as Jehovah. Many references in the Old Testament support this reading, and testify that the *operations* of creation were effected by the JHVH-aspect (or “Person”) of the Supreme Godhead (Elohim). Indeed, it is so stated at the close of the creation-narrative itself (Gen. ii, 4–7), and re-iterated in verses 9, 19, iii, 1, etc., etc.<sup>2</sup> See also such

<sup>1</sup> *Λόγος* covers many meanings besides mind, word or speech, such as a saying or “slogan,” the sentence of a Court, the teaching or doctrine of a “school,” the oration of a speaker, etc. As has been well said, *λόγος*, as used of God, means His Mind, uttered or expressed to man as His Word, or in words of human speech (*cf.* Prov. iii, 19; iv, 18; viii, 22–31).

<sup>2</sup> Throughout these two chapters, wherever JHVH Elohim (LORD God) occurs, JHVH is the “dominant noun,” and Elohim is added in a complementary, almost adjectival, sense. Later it is usually omitted, though often implied.

references as Gen. vi, 6-7 ; Job xii, 9-19 ; Psalm viii, xxxiii, 6-9, etc.

That this ancient understanding of a veiled meaning in the "Light" here mentioned is in full accord with the opening five verses of St. John's Gospel will, I think, be immediately apparent to all Bible students familiar with the constant use of simple, everyday words to convey ideas and conceptions of profound truths and teaching which they—or any human words, for that matter—most certainly do not actually or adequately express. Indeed, most of us are so familiar with the *inner* meaning of many a passage of Scripture that we scarcely notice how very different this often is from what the words actually say.

And the Apostle then proceeds (verse 6) : " There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the Light. There was the true Light, which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him," thus further confirming the ancient significance understood of the "Light" of creation (Gen. i, 3). And, further, in verses 14-16 we read : " And the Word became flesh, and dwelt amongst us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. John beareth witness of Him, and cryeth, saying, This was He of Whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me : for He was before me. For of His fulness we all received, and grace for grace." " Fulness " and " Grace " ; a " Presence abundant in blessing," the very character or nature of JHVH, revealed in the Old Testament, and as more fully made known by Our Lord during His ministry on earth. " But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His Name." " His Name," *i.e.*, the very nature of His Being, JHVH, the Divine Presence abundant in Blessing ! And that St. John had full warrant for all that he here says of the Light of the world (in *every* real sense) we can learn by studying Our Lord's own statements : in John iii, 16-21, He speaks of Himself as " the Light come into the world " ; in viii, 12, He says " I am the Light of the world " ; in xii, 35, He answers the questioning of the crowd by saying " Yet a little while is the Light among you " ; and in verse 46, " I am come, Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me may not abide in the darkness," etc.

It is unfortunate that our translators have not sometimes been very happy in their dealing with the article in Greek, especially when the passage clearly indicates Semitic speech or dictation, in which language the article is often used very differently.

So far we have considered the accord of the "Light" of Gen. i and the "Light" of John i in the absolute or *real* sense, *i.e.*, the creative Light of St. John (i, 9-10) as the Cause of the light of Gen. i, 3-5: let us now examine how far a study of the fragmentary recorded remains of *very* ancient speech, roots, and word-forming elements will assist us to understand Gen. i, 3, as a record of external phenomena, *i.e.*, things or happenings resulting from the Will, Mind, or Purpose of God, expressed through and effected by the activity of JHVH, whom we term the Christ, the "Word" of John i. It is, of course, quite evident that the words "light," "darkness," "day," "night," "evening," "morning," cannot possibly, in *this* passage, the first "day" or stage of creative action, signify what they have subsequently meant in all human experience as resulting from the presence or absence of solar illumination; since we read that the sun did not "give light upon the earth" until the *fourth* "day" or period of creative action, long ages later. What, then, are these words, whose later meaning is so familiar, intended to convey, as used in this passage? Before endeavouring to answer this question, we must digress somewhat to consider the speech of Israel at the time of the Exodus, *i.e.*, the vocabulary still preserved for us in the consonant-groups in which the Pentateuch has come down, since we cannot safely rely on the vowel-pointings, which were not added until long after the *original* Hebrew had ceased to be spoken in everyday intercourse, and were not finally revised until about the ninth or tenth century A.D., and then by learned Jews who, residing in different parts of Europe, and speaking widely-differing languages in their daily conversation, tended still further to confuse the exact sounds properly intended to be given to these vowel-points. And when we have tabulated the words used in each book of the Pentateuch separately, and in Joshua, and noted the close general uniformity in use and meaning of almost every word and phrase throughout Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua (except for the slight change of style in Joshua and in the latter part of Deuteronomy attributable to him), we shall discern something very different in the book of Genesis, and especially in the earlier chapters. The language used by Jacob and his little band when

they went into Egypt was, almost certainly, a Semitic speech, its vocabulary consisting mainly of words closely akin to Assyrian, though probably also containing a good many words borrowed from the numerous colonies of Philistines (? Kretans), Hittites, Egyptians, Horites, and perhaps Elamites, among whose various settlements in Palestine they had travelled about ever since Abram's first arrival in the land, and with many of whom they had frequent converse, as we learn from Genesis. Of this earlier speech we have now no considerable passage on which we can confidently rely as belonging to this period.

The language of the Pentateuch consists partly of Semitic words probably in use in Palestine *before* the Sojourn, of many words borrowed from the Egyptian during the many centuries of that Sojourn; some, probably adopted early, showing considerable modification in sound and often some change in meaning; others, borrowed later—perhaps even shortly before the Exodus—showing little change in either; and a good many words, apparently of Semitic origin, in use in Egypt before Jacob's arrival there, and perhaps re-borrowed by the Israelites (during the Sojourn), with their sound and meanings as modified through long use by the Egyptians. A good many words in the Pentateuch vocabulary seem closely related both in sound and sense to Assyrian words on the one hand, and to Egyptian words on the other; but it is to be noted that many of these words are also used in the symbolic sense also possessed by the related Egyptian words, such symbolic meaning not having been observed in the use of the cognate Assyrian words, so far as I have been able to ascertain.

Every reader of the Bible is, of course, aware that the Israelites used many words in two senses—as, indeed, we do in English to-day: a familiar commonplace meaning, and also a symbolic or allegorical one. Nearly all the wealth of symbolism which we find in the Pentateuch is either derived from Egyptian use or is strongly tinged with Egyptian conceptions and/or implications acquired during the Sojourn.\* For the Egyptians, despite their enormous vocabulary, had long before developed a great range of such symbolic meanings in words commonly used for an everyday sense. The rather frequent failure by many

\* Of this, the works of Budge, Erman, Naville, Hall, Sayce and other writers on Egyptian temples, apparatus, worship, religious symbolism, etc., who have given us many translations of very ancient Egyptian hymns and religious writings, afford voluminous evidence, too copious to call for any elaboration in a short Paper.

Egyptologists to observe this when translating early Egyptian hymns and religious poems has often led to some really comic results.

In these early chapters of Genesis, however, we are dealing with a series of narratives, probably for the most part as set down by the various original recorders themselves concerned therein: "these are the records (our version says 'generations') of . . .," and edited long subsequently by Moses, who wove them into a consecutive series, evidently substituting, here and there, words which had become familiar during the Sojourn for others no longer readily understood. When closely analysed, these family records appear to show a slight progressive development, but of the same language.

In the creation narrative,\* especially, we seem to get back to a very primitive stage of Semitic speech, one strong indication being the frequent use of primary monosyllabic words in their elementary meanings, and another the very short abrupt sentences, for the most part containing only nouns and verbs, with scarcely any adjectives, adverbs, or other auxiliary words. The disyllables also have here usually their primitive meanings. Thus, of the words with which we are immediately concerned—light, darkness, day, night, evening, morning, represented by the consonants AWR, ChShK, YWM, LYL, ChRB, BKR, two seem to retain their primitive significance—AWR, light, luminosity, enlightenment; and YWM, occasion, action, time, period, age, when, day, the last being the meaning usually indicated in the subsequent books; LYL, here written, as usually elsewhere, LYLH, seems obviously to be originally a repetitive form of La or Lo (not, no, nothing), meaning absence of action, of anything, of activity, and therefore of light, hence signifying "night" (inaction).

The disyllables ChoSheK, GeReB, BoKar (I insert the most *probable* vowels to enable pronunciation) may be almost as early, since they indicate very primitive ideas. ChoSheK (darkness) seems akin to ChaShaH (to be silent) and to ChaTZah (to divide); darkness silently divides one day from another. GeReB (ChRB) is here rendered evening, and this is the meaning undoubtedly intended most often by this group of three consonants; but,

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\* The Semitic mentality appears not to conceive of anything material as existing prior to the "creation of the heavens and the earth," and the "making" of the "stars" at some stage not indicated; and when the stars were "created," i.e., first given some material substance, is nowhere even hinted at in the Bible.



when we realise that there are at least eight other words all, according to the dictionaries, expressed by these same three letters, possessing such widely different meanings as "surety," "mix," "sweet," "weave," "darken," "raven," "swarm," "willow," "Horeb," etc., and that the early meaning of Yohm (written YWM) indicated an action, effort, occasion, or "period of activity" rather than its more usual *later* meaning of "day," it seems probable that GeReB in this account means "weaving, planning, or initiating" something; a sense from which the later meanings of "woof" and "swarm" or "multiply" seem easily derived. BoKer is here rendered "morning," undoubtedly the usual meaning of this consonant-group from a very early date. Two other words, written in the same consonants, mean respectively "cattle" and "to search." But there was a very primitive verb "BoH," which we find used as early as Gen. vi, 3, to denote the end of a long period (of evil-doing), and again in xxviii, 11, of the sun's setting at the close of the day. And there is another primitive monosyllable "koh" or "kah," meaning "thus" or "so." Written conjoined so as to form the trilateral group favoured by the early scribes of the Pentateuch, this would give us "bo-kah," thus came to pass or thus concluded.\*

It is obvious that an evening and morning could *never* constitute "a day" to any normal human mind, not even if we include both and also the interval between them. From evening to morning might naturally express a *night*, but never a "day," whether thought of as a period of work or activity (the early sense of YWM), a period of daylight (YWM in its later sense), or as what we term a day of 24 hours. What, then, was this phrase "evening and morning day one" originally intended to express?

After considerable delving into the fragmentary records and indications of primitive "roots," monosyllable word-elements, and early meanings, I suggest the following as the most probable,

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\* Considerable light is thrown on the original meanings of these primary monosyllabic words and word-elements (probably long persisting with little change from the monosyllabic age of human speech) by a comparative analysis of numerous cognate words in the Chinese, Korean and Tibetan tongues. Unfortunately, however, the many dialectical variations in Chinese pronunciation render this "light" of little use as a reliable illuminant; rather is it a series of flickers or gleams, of varying degree. But the philological student, familiar with those tongues, finds in them a good deal that is still in accord with much in this Paper. See Edkins' "Evolution of Chinese Language" and "China's Place in Philology," and Karlgren's "Analytic Dictionary of Chinese," etc.

or perhaps the least improbable:—"there was planning (or initiation) and there was carrying-into-effect (or completion) stage-of-activity (or action) one." If the BKR of the present text has come to replace an original BKH it is not difficult to see how this may have come about.

We know that the letters of the present alphabet, adopted after the return from Babylon, differ greatly in form from those previously used, and this—and the fact of some of these new letters being very similar and easily mis-read—led to a few errors in the course of early re-copyings. These frequent re-copyings were rendered necessary by two facts: (1) the Books were written on prepared skins or "parchments" not always free from rough or soft patches and blemishes, and with a reed-pen dipped in a vegetable ink not always very permanent; and (2) the constant unrolling and re-rolling of these "rolls" of skin was liable to rub away some of the letters. It may well be that a scribe, reading YWM in the meaning most familiar to him as "day," and GeReB also in a frequent sense "evening," and reading the letters BKH as BKR—possibly the down-stroke of the  $\aleph$  had become rubbed or faded—and BKH occurs nowhere else in the Pentateuch (unless the verb thus spelt, "to mourn or weep" is derived from it (*see* Job xxxi, 38; xxviii, 11)), re-copied this consonant-group as representing the familiar BKR, evening, and thus presented us with the impossible statement that "evening," "morning," and "day" were distinguishable—and this is repeated twice—*before* (as we are subsequently told) the sun (or any other luminary) was "appointed" to occasion these phenomena! Nor can the period "evening-morning" *ever* have meant a "day" in normal human experience, as has been frequently pointed out.

Reverting now to the primitive meanings of AWR (light) and ChShK (darkness, silence), AWR is probably from the primitive monosyllable OR, source or beginning of anything: the primary root seems to have indicated activity of various kinds, rather than objectivity or "things."\* Thus AWR is sometimes used in the Pentateuch of the "dawn." The Assyrian URRu, light, illuminant, is probably close in sound and meaning to the word actually used by Abram and his descendants until they went into Egypt. There they would soon learn the Egyptian form, AUR, often used in a symbolic meaning, though I believe that

\* Cf. Latin or-igo, or-bis, or-do, or - 10, etc. Greek 'ὄρ-ετῶ, 'ὄρ-υυω, 'ὄρ-ω, etc.

such meanings as light, enlightenment (hence, the Light, or Light-giver) had long been implicit in the use of the word among Semitic tribes (*see* Job xxxiii, 30; iii, 20, etc.). And AUR does not only mean light in an objective or passive sense, but also as *giving* light, as in Gen. i, 15, etc., *i.e.*, an action or *activity*. Indeed, it seems to have been the only word then available to indicate any activity associated with light. As we now know, light is an "activity," "energy made visible," an emanation, radiation or power causing or closely associated with many phenomena quite beyond the narrow range of light-rays discernible by our eyes. Thus we speak of infra-red, or ultra-violet rays, of heat-rays, of the radiant action of magnetism, of electricity, of the change of "energy" into "matter," of the formation of ions, of protons, nucleons, atoms, etc. For *none* of these were distinctive words or accurate terms then known. Hence, however completely the original narrator may have understood, even in every detail, what was revealed to him of the *processes* of creational activity, he could only cover *all* these "activities" under the one all-embracing word then available to indicate such working—AUR (ohr), Light.\*

Much the same must be said of ChShK (darkness). The narrator is seeking to distinguish between the region where "creation" is taking place, activity of many kinds and forms, and where it is not, *i.e.*, the complete absence of activity. So he uses the most suitable word available to denote both (1) the absence of *any* activity (darkness or inaction, *see* Job iii, 4-5; xviii, 18, etc.) and "nothingness" (as in Job x, 21-22; xii, 22, etc.). He had no better word available. Many centuries later Our Lord uses much the same phrase, in Aramaic, to express the same Semitic idea, the absence of all effective activity, "cast forth into outer darkness," "cut off (Genesis says 'divided') from the light."† And if AUR and ChShK denote the two opposite

\* Even so much later as the commencement of "Hebrew," in the Pentateuch, we can find no word used to denote any process or activity analogous to, but distinguishable from, what is commonly termed "light." Nor have we any such word, apart from technical terms, in commonly-accepted use in English even to-day. See, for the wide comprehensiveness of these primitive "roots," the works of Bopp, Castren, Logan, Klaproth, Pinches, Max Müller, Edkins, Curtius, F. Muller, Boller, and many others.

† To the Semitic mentality, it would appear that "darkness" is conceived of as continuous, "the perpetual nothingness of outer space" as we might term it, the "outer darkness" of Matthew viii, 19; whilst "light" (or activity) is "separated" (marked off) from it. And the periods of (or for) activity "days" are similarly contrasted with "night," analogous to darkness, but "ruled" or moderated by the "lesser light," the moon.

conceptions of activity and its absence, we may expect that YWM and LYL (day and night) will indicate more defined stages or periods of creational activity, *i.e.*, actions (and their absence); YWM contrasted with intervals LYL.\*

And this would appear to be much the meaning which YWM-originally bore, a time or period of activity; in other words, "a job of work" or act (much as we now say "it's all in the day's work" or "it's part of my job" without measuring "day" or "job" by any precise period of time). And Our Lord thus uses "day" as primarily meaning time or opportunity for action or work (John ix, 4; vi, 5, etc.; Math. xx, 6, etc.).†

There are many other philological details which might be adduced as more or less relevant to our subject, but enough has been said to show that there is considerable ground for regarding the "light" of Gen. i, 3, as implying far more activity than merely the one *visible* result or form of such activity (perhaps even as also indicating "the Light" Who is the Source and Cause of *all* such activity), and "darkness" as denoting the absence of anything—"nothingness," absolute negation: whilst "day" denotes a period of creational activity or "action," and "night" its opposite—the state or region of "inaction." We should note that a "day" and a "night" are never associated as together forming a continuous period of time, what we term a day of 24 hours, and this is highly significant. Day always means daytime and daylight only.

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\* It has been suggested that present-day scientific opinion would not regard "darkness" as "nothingness." I nowhere suggest that it would, but that the early Semitic mind appears to have regarded them as closely analogous, if not indistinguishable. Or they *may* have used one general word to express two distinct ideas, as we often do in English to-day. We must not demand of this very ancient creation-narrative the precise terminology of a present-day scientific text-book; these, even now, contain three classes of statements: observed facts, proved deductions, and much (usually more or less speculative) theory; often without these being, respectively, made very readily distinguishable to the non-technical reader.

† OR (AWR) and YWM (YOM) may well be early differentiations from the same primary root, since R and M are often interchangeable in early speech, the primary general idea being activity or opportunity for action (of various kinds). Cf. our current phrase, "I must have daylight to do that," where we think of the proposed work as needing daylight, and of the daylight as enabling, giving opportunity, for it to be done. There are many derivatives from OR, actions or activities of many kinds (I have given only a few), whilst YWM is also employed in many senses, before becoming almost restricted to the meaning "day" in the sense of "daytime" or daylight, permitting work to be done, as opposed to night, when it cannot (John ix, 4).

To conclude this very incomplete Paper, I think we may safely sum up by saying that these opening verses of St. John's Gospel reveal the Divine Mind or Activity in the creation, of which the opening verses of Genesis record the manifestation in material results—the Spiritual as the Cause of the physical.

Surely Our Lord re-iterates and summarises *all* that is implied in the age-old Semitic conception of Light as also meaning activity—or work—when He says: “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” I can add nothing to that! “Let there be Light.”

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

Sir CHARLES MARSTON wrote: An instructive Essay. The only contribution I feel capable of making concerns the language used by Jacob and his sons, and the language and script of the Pentateuch.

The writer has omitted all reference to the Hyksos occupation of Egypt in the days of Jacob and to the evidence that these Hyksos were Arabs or Hebrews, as stated by Josephus.

A further important consideration is the evidence that the Habiru, who appear as mercenary soldiers in Babylonia and Assyria before the days of Abraham, were the Hebrews. This I understand is being pretty generally recognised. Their language would be primitive Hebrew such as was used in the alphabetical scripts found a few years ago at Ras Shamra in Syria—these date to just after the death of Moses.

Lastly—the Pentateuch would be written before the Captivity in the Phœnician Hebrew script which was found at Lachish. This may have been the script used by Moses. The Sinai Hebrew script, still earlier, appears to have been in existence before his time. Both these scripts were alphabetical ones. The Sinai Hebrew has not been entirely deciphered up to the present. It might have a very important bearing on the author's contentions.

Rev. Principal H. S. CURR wrote: I have enjoyed Mr. Cowper Field's paper with its reverent and meticulous investigation of the precise meaning which ought to be attached to words which may be accurately described as Biblical key-words. His interpretations are new to me, and all the more interesting and instructive on that

account. In making some comments on the conclusions reached in the paper, I have no desire to criticise Mr. Field's contentions, but rather to state some opinions which seem to me to be relevant to his subject, and well worthy of mention.

Thus some reference may appropriately be made to Genesis i, 3. (And God said, Let there be light : and there was light) as an outstanding example of sublime diction. It has been so regarded by rhetoricians for many centuries, not only in Hebrew, but in the English rendering as well. The poetry of the words will be more profoundly appreciated when it is remembered that in the Orient day begins as suddenly as night falls. The latter is like the fall of a vast pall or veil on the earth. The former is like the ignition of a gas jet, or the turning of an electric switch in the rapidity with which darkness flees away. These figures are admittedly exaggerated but they may be none the worse on that score as a means of elucidating what is meant. Thus the verse becomes a description of the first break of day, the rising of the curtain on universal history. To the devout mind God bids the light arise each morning, since the coming of day and night are recurring miracles which should never lose their power to stir our souls to wonder, love, and praise.

Science now recognises that light may be independent of the sun in the form of luminiferous ether, thus disposing of an old objection to the vision of creation in Genesis i, as it has been called, in view of the fact that sun, moon, and stars are not mentioned until the fourth day. As for these days, they must be regarded in the first instance as denoting periods of twenty-four hours since, to the Oriental, day begins in the evening and not, as with us, in the morning. It is a well-known fact that the Jewish Sabbath commences early on Friday evening, and terminates on the Saturday evening.

As for the meaning of these days, that septuary which forms the most wonderful week ever known with the possible exception of Passion Week, we must not rule out as utterly preposterous the theory that seven literal days are meant despite the prodigious difficulties with which such a hypothesis is hindered and handicapped. With God all things are possible. There is, of course, ample justification for taking these days as periods of creative activity. The elastic use of the word in the Bible gives ample warrant for such an

explanation. Thus the seven days are described as one day in Genesis ii, 4. (These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the heavens and the earth.) Gladstone's theory was that the days represent chapters in the story of creation, that period of time being chosen by the inspired writer under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the simplest and easiest division of time, being far superior to a year for such a didactic purpose.

The Rabbinic theory, that in Genesis i, 3, we have the first reference in the Bible to the works of Jehovah, is interesting, although not very clear and obvious save in a mystical approach to the Old Testament. While it rejoices the heart of the true believer, it should be held in subordination to that grammatico-historical exegesis of Holy Writ on which the Reformers laid such stress. When students begin to depart from the sense of the words, dictated by their ordinary and common use, the door is opened to all manner of extravagances. Such a method, when employed by the evangelical scholar, yields nothing but good, but the same procedure, followed by other types of students, will result in perversions of what the Bible teaches.

Mr. Cowper Field has rendered useful service by calling attention to the close parallel between the opening verses in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, and the wonderful beginning of the Bible. To my thinking the two are complementary, the earlier deals with creation, and the latter with redemption. The light of Genesis is natural, that of John is spiritual, and the wonder and glory of the latter is that it furnishes such an impressive reminder that the ultimate source both of natural and spiritual light, the seen and unseen illumination, is the Eternal Word of God. Thus whenever a soul is saved, He speaks saying, Let there be light : and there is light. The same soul owes its existence to the same cause which enables it to be born again into the marvellous light and liberty of the gospel

Mr. W. H. MOLESWORTH wrote : Much in this paper is new to us, particularly that part relating to ancient Semitic thought and words, and here the author has exceptional knowledge.

The first verses of St. John's Gospel are founded on the opening verses of Genesis and have for centuries been called "The Genesis

of the New Testament," yet a connection has never before, so far as I am aware, been given.

Those who have studied and tried to understand verses 3-5 of this wonderful first chapter of the Bible, found both warning and guidance.

*Firstly.* Darkness, and physical light of which our sun is the source, are fully alluded to in verses 14-18, yet darkness and light are prominent in verses 3-5.

Why this gap between verses 5 and 14 ?

The author rightly explains that the early Semitic vocabulary was very small, and consequently a single word was then used to convey many different ideas and meanings, for which later there were distinctive terms ; the student finds abundant proof of this.

*Secondly.* The first few verses of John i relate back to the creation and here the language is figurative, whereas verses following relate to Our Lord's Ministry of Redemption and are in the literal.

Writers appear agreed that verses 4 and 5 of John i must be regarded as spiritual, and indeed there is every reason for believing St. John so intended. This tells us to look for spiritual revelation in Genesis i, 3-5 ; it further explains the reason of the gap between verses 5 and 14, for the Light (in verses 3-5) is not solar radiation, but the Infinite Power which flows from The Son of God and of which He (with His Father) is the Source.

*Thirdly.* Light, which is power or energy, is described as YOM in verse 5 ; how is YOM to be translated here ? We do not describe electricity as " month," how comes it that in our Bible YOM is translated " day," for Day is a time measure ?

Science holds that there is no such thing as time and that time and time measures have no meaning whatever apart from the brain of man.

It is therefore astonishing to find YOM translated " day " before man existed and therefore before time measures had any meaning ; also as the author points out before the sun had been appointed to make distinguishable either day, night, evening or morning. We learn from this paper *Yom* had other meanings than " day " in these early times, namely act, activity and so on.

Such words as action, activity, energy, etc., certainly supply a relationship between Light and YOM, but St. John points to the



spiritual significance of Divine Power (Light), using the word Life, which is akin to activity.

“ And Elohim called the Divine Power, Life.”

*Fourthly.* Another word, bearing on our subject, is worth mention :—

מִלְאָכְתוֹ (mlackto) Genesis ii, 2. Tregelles says the root of this noun is “ to send,” and the dictionary gives—mission, ministry and work. Our Bible translates it “ work,” and Driver, who objects to “ work ” suggests “ business.” “ Ministry ” is a very appropriate translation, particularly if Genesis i, 3-5, proclaims the commencement of Christ’s Ministry of Creation and Genesis ii, 1-3, proclaims the completion of this ministry.

From these considerations certain inferences may be drawn. Since St. John represents “ Divine Power ” by the word Light, it is logical to conclude that spiritual “ darkness ” is power of an opposite character, *i.e.*, an evil and malevolent power. Also, since St. John gives these spiritual meanings to Light and Darkness (words obviously taken from Genesis i) they are the true meanings of Light and Darkness in Genesis i, 3-5.

If these assumptions are correct we learn why God divided or separated Light and Darkness (verse 4), namely, that Satan was hostile to God’s plans of creation from their very inception ; hence separation to prevent the Rulers of Darkness from marring or frustrating His creative work.

Mr. Field substitutes “ action ” for day and “ inaction ” for night ; it may well be that this inaction was due to separation, and that Darkness, always a hostile force, was rendered potential or inactive during Creation, *i.e.*, whilst Divine Power was in action.

This paper is a thoughtful attempt to restore knowledge of revealed truth, which must have been commonplace 2,000 years ago. It is well to remember that despite the fact that Genesis i was probably in writing or engraved upon stone over 5,000 years ago, and has since passed through transcription, translation, changes in thought and language, it is still, with the exception of a few words, clear and unmistakable to readers of all nations, learned or unlearned.

MR. LESLIE I. MOSER wrote : I write to thank Mr. A. Cowper Field very much indeed for his learned and illuminating paper on Light.

I have always felt and said that we need further light on much of Scripture. We do not perceive the "underlying conceptions" the language is intended to convey. Not only the language, but I think it applies also to much of the narrative.

#### AUTHOR'S REPLY.

With Rev. Principal H. S. CURR's very encouraging observations I would like to associate myself, and to thank him for them, especially for his last paragraph. As St. John says, "In Him was Life, and the life was the Light of men." Now life evinces energy and action, and so does light—which accords with the implication that the "light" of Genesis i, 3, indicates the energising activity of Him Who is the Light of the world and the Life of all.

I have also to thank Mr. L. I. Moser for his kindly comment. I fully agree that the "underlying conception," *i.e.*, what the words symbolise or suggest, rather than what they actually *say*, is often the true purpose of a passage, *e.g.*, when Our Lord said, "I am the Light of the world," He did *not* mean that He was the solar orb, although He was its Maker (see Psalm xxxiii, 6, etc.). It is a most interesting and instructive study to take certain Egyptian words and, having noted what these had sometimes symbolised to the religious Egyptian, then to trace the same words (Hebraicised, of course) where these are used symbolically in the Pentateuch, and note the deeper, more spiritual significance therein (developed from the Egyptian usage). For example, Egyptian *tcheser* or *tcheseru*, rock, also often means "foundation"; but the religious Egyptian sometimes understood it to symbolise or indicate "basis." In the Hebraicised form, *tzoor*, rock or foundation, often symbolises the basis or Source of all, the Great First Cause, *i.e.*, God himself (Deut. xxxii, 4, 15, 18, Psalm xxviii, 1, xlii, 9, Isaiah li, 1. Matt. vii, 25, xvi, 18, etc., culminating in St. Paul's final exposition, "that Rock was Christ"; 1 Cor. x, 4). There are many other examples.

With most of the suggestions expressed by Mr. W. H. Molesworth in his contribution to the discussion I have long been well acquainted; indeed, most of them can clearly be shown to be in full accord with many passages in both the Old and New Testaments. But the problem of *when*, *i.e.*, at what stage, Satan's opposition or hostility to God's purposes commenced is a matter which lies outside

the scope of my paper, and as to which I do not feel that the Scriptures afford us any clear guidance or enable one to form any definite opinion. I cannot discern any hint or suggestion of spiritual evil or Satanic opposition to God's purposes in creation in either of the passages with which I sought to deal in the paper. I must accordingly be excused from venturing to speculate on the problem.

Sir Charles Marston comments on my omission to refer to the Hyksos' occupation of Lower Egypt, and to the evidence that they were Arabs or Hebrews. I purposely did not introduce any reference to the Hyksos "invasion," as I could not discover sufficient really reliable evidence to satisfy me (1) the approximate date of this invasion, (2) how far it was really an extensive occupation of Egypt, and whether of the whole country or only of Lower Egypt, (3) or whether it was merely a transient domination by a powerful military clique (something like our Norman Conquest); nor yet (4) the extent of its effective influence on the Egyptian people, on their speech, their religious ideas and symbolism, their culture, social life and so forth. As to all this, very much still seems only vague and uncertain; and, as the limits of the paper did not permit the lengthy digression necessary to discuss these questions at all adequately, I felt a brief reference would be of little value. Nor do I consider that a detailed consideration of the possible influence of the Hyksos period is really very germane to the analysis of the very primitive words met with in the early chapters of Genesis in a form and sense indicating their use at least some eight to ten centuries before the Hyksos migration into Egypt.

As regards the exact forms of the letters used in the texts to which Sir C. Marston refers, the Ras Shamra, Lachish, or "Sinai Hebrew" scripts—I regret I have had no opportunity to study and compare facsimiles of these; I much wish I had. If their respective dates can be established with reasonable accuracy, or even approximately, this might prove of much value (1) as to a comparison of the spelling and meanings of certain words used by Semitic tribes who remained in Palestine with those of the same words as we find them used in the Pentateuch, and (2) as to the symbolism and mental association of ideas—especially of religious ideas—which these non-Israelite records may indicate. But I fear this might not, necessarily, be of much assistance in our effort to establish the *original* meanings of certain

monosyllabic words and of a few words compounded of two monosyllables which we find in the creation-narrative.

For it is my opinion (though I have not been able to find any real evidence to justify the use of a stronger term) that, in the first four chapters of Genesis (and, perhaps, in a few passages in Chapter 5/10), we can still trace the remains of original narratives, expressed in very primitive language, in which some of the original words were replaced occasionally as they became obsolete or no longer readily understood by later ones then in current use. It is impossible now to say how often or how many such replacements may have occurred (the latest appears to be due to Moses, when several Hebraicised Egyptian words, adopted during the Sojourn, were thus substituted for earlier ones presumably no longer in use); or when these narratives were first put into some written form of record, after—it may be—having been, earlier, carefully learned by heart and thus passed down from generation to generation, as is still the practice among unlettered races to this day. It is easy to call such transmission by word of mouth “mere folklore” or “tradition”; many of our present-day best attested historical documents, long since recorded in written form, were originally transmitted—sometimes for considerable periods—in much the same way. Archæological discovery and the careful examination of other contemporary records and evidence where such exist, together with a painstaking philological analysis of the records themselves, will usually afford a good deal of guidance; and often corroboration in a striking degree, sometimes even of minute points: and it is remarkable to how great an extent most of the Pentateuch has now been corroborated in this way. It must be evident to anyone who considers the matter that the original account of creation must be the result of revelation, for the very verbiage of the narrative in Genesis shows that it must have been in existence, closely in its present form, long before Israel went into Egypt. Yet not until quite a recent period could anyone have been possessed of sufficient knowledge of the studies we now include under Astronomy, Palæontology, Physiography, Botany, Zoology and Physics as to be able to devise an account of creation so substantially accurate as to so many facts, and even in such detail, as we find in Genesis—and this is putting it at the very lowest!