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THE
LESSER
and the
GREATER
LIGHT





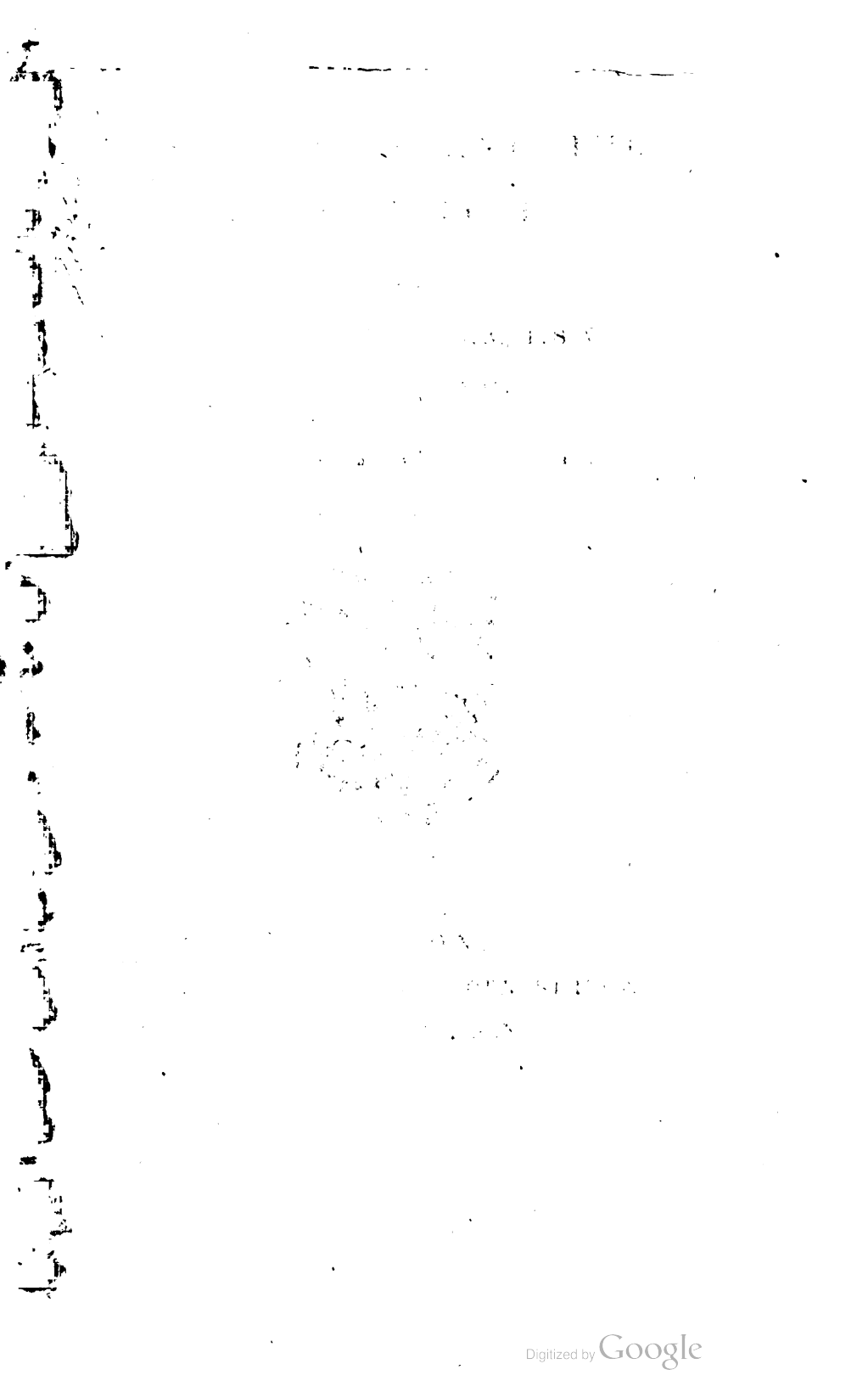


THE LESSER AND THE
GREATER LIGHT.





John Louis Petit



THE LESSER AND THE GREATER LIGHT.

BY THE LATE

REV. J. L. PETIT, M.A., F.S.A.

EDITED BY HIS SISTER.

“The world by wisdom knew not God.”—1 Cor. i. 21.



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In Memoriam.



PREFACE BY EDITOR.



HIS volume is presented to the public in a form unavoidably different from that which the author would himself have adopted, had he been permitted to live to complete the work. The rough sketch of his intended preface, which is given in the imperfect state in which it was left, may suffice to show that the poem was intended chiefly as the vehicle for copious notes, on subjects to which he had devoted much thought and study; but unfortunately very few of his remarks had been thrown upon paper, when he was attacked by an illness which within a fortnight terminated fatally.

The few notes that were found, though apparently the mere outline of what had been designed, I give in their unfinished state, at the foot of the page, without change or addition; as also the few references

and quotations which are clearly marked. There were also some allusions to the works of Leckie, Buckle, and other writers of the day, which I omit, because, without the comments with which they would have been accompanied, their appositeness to the subject in hand might not be perceived. The style of the versification has been chosen, rather perhaps for its adaptation to the subject, than with a view to the prevailing taste of the age; but there are probably many by whom this will scarcely be considered an objection: and the poem, being happily complete in itself, can hardly be said to be dependent on notes; though, had these been finished according to the plan laid out, they would, doubtless, have been a most valuable addition to the work. The little I have said will, I trust, be sufficient to excuse me for offering the volume in its present state; and I feel assured that to the personal friends of the author no apology is needed; for their acquaintance with his character and tone of mind will make every line suggestive, and will enable them to supply much of what has been left unsaid.



UNFINISHED PREFACE BY AUTHOR.



I HAVE chosen to put my ideas into verse, because I may chance to secure one or two more readers than I could obtain if I wrote them in prose; and partly, perhaps, because poetic licence will allow a less severe and definite form of expression;—a suggestion, rather than a clear and decided assertion; and also that if any assertion should be made dogmatically, it will be more readily forgiven.

Poetic licence will admit, on the one hand, a somewhat indefinite and suggestive manner of expression; on the other, a dogmatic form which in prose might be offensive.

I do not profess any originality, for if my views on the subjects to which I turn my attention were

original, they would undoubtedly be wrong ; and they have been too often handled for me to hope for success were I to aim at much originality of expression. Still what is old, familiar, and common-place to one, may be new to another, and therefore may be not altogether useless. It cannot be doubted that religious opinions are in a somewhat unsettled state. We are not contented to take for granted all that we have received on the authority of our old instructors. The discoveries of science, as well as the results of thoughtful study, press hard upon the doctrines we have regarded as sure and infallible. As the tide advances, we shall perhaps have to abandon or modify some cherished convictions, and those which are essential it may cost us a hard struggle to retain.

We must learn the boundary between the knowledge which we are permitted to obtain by the exercise of our reason, and that which could only have been obtained in the first instance by direct revelation, and so handed down by tradition.

The first of these may be constantly on the increase : every century may be in advance of that

which preceded it: new discoveries are added to the former ones.

Now we are not to look for the same natural development of religious knowledge in that which was imparted by revelation and handed down by tradition. In the natural course of things it would rather decay than increase, as the distance from its origin became greater. We must preserve, not advance it.

* * * * *





THE ARGUMENT.

THE retrospect of the past suggests reflection on the future. Wisdom of testing received notions by enquiry. Enquiry supports faith. Science and Scripture not opposed. Science expands Scripture, and speaks on points where Scripture needeth not to speak.

The use and abuse of the mental faculty of speculation. How it misled men in the earliest times, as recorded in Scripture. How it misled Paganism, as seen in Homer's theology. How it led right men who spoke by the Spirit of God, such as David, as seen in his description of the creation and the history of the Israelites. Man has properly a true notion of God, though defaced and perverted by human sinfulness and sin. Reason has an office in religion, but reason in itself not religious. Reason as it worked in Paganism erred, as evidenced in the poetical and philosophical theories of Paganism on God and the universe. The difficulties occurring in these theories solved by Revelation and conscience. Thus reason gives an indistinct and distorted shadow of the truth, Revelation the substance. Hence Revelation to be preferred to reason, though reason is not to be rejected or despised.

Few dogmas are required for faith. Faith opens heaven as it did to St. Paul and St. John, and yet is the privilege of all.

The dogma of the Atonement. God's justice as illustrated in his judgments. God's mercy as seen in the Scriptural account of Bethany and our Lord's doings there.

God in His works perfectly good. Works of sin, and death by sin, illustrated by the facts of geology. Origin of this sin and evil mysterious. Fear and shame spring from it. Good fruits of these.

Man's future uncertain and unsatisfactory, before revelation of our bodily Resurrection. Hence true faith alone can enjoy true hope for the future: but no limits to be placed to God's mercy, in cases of ignorance or mistake. The old covenant of wrath contrasted with the covenant of love. Folly of persecution. Persecution no safeguard of truth. It produces a dangerous reaction against that which it has tried to defend.

True meaning of Freedom of Thought. How, though dangerous through human weakness, it may be and is, in this sense, a bulwark of faith. Our real strength is to defend and strengthen faith by it.

Faith, love, truth within evidenced by fruits without.



THE LESSER
AND
THE GREATER LIGHT.



RE yet the sun be darken'd, and the day,
Which hastens to its close, be past away,
Or ere the shatter'd bowl, and cord
unstrung,

A retrospect
of life sug-
gests the
necessity for
hope and
mercy.

In useless fragments on the dust be flung,
Fain would I track, with a prophetic glance, 5
Retreating time through that untried expanse,
Wherein commingling, yet defin'd and clear,
The tincture of its current must appear.
For as the past contains and shapes a germ
Of hist'ry that shall fill our mortal term, 10
So life's short present throws its influence o'er
That boundless gulf, where Time shall be no more.

B

Onward I gaze perplex'd ; the feeble sight
 Is quell'd, and shrinks from an excess of light.
 Behind a gloomy retrospect is spread 15
 A wasted field, a city of the dead ;
 A sad arrear of unregarded hours,
 Occasions slighted, long neglected pow'rs ;
 The nerveless aim, and ill-resisted snare,
 And passion rip'ning into sin is there. 20
 Where'er I turn, how terrible the view,
 Did hope refuse to mould its forms anew,
 Or heaven-born mercy fail to lend a soft'ning hue. }

Reality and
 vastness of
 the throne.

No fancy lures me with its shadowy dream :
 I long to grapple with a mighty theme, 25
 Whose fearless contemplation lifts the soul
 To regions far beyond the world's control ;
 Th' expanding mind with clearer sense informs,
 Exalts and chastens, purifies and warms ;
 Stamps wisdom's mark on life's unletter'd page, 30
 And wakes afresh the languid pulse of age.

But is it wise, with keenly searching test,
 To probe the ground whereon the soul may rests
 When earthly hopes withdraw their fleeting
 aid,
 And mortal prospects glimmer into shade ? 35

Is it no risk with voluntary shock

Is there any
real danger
in it?

To prove the strength of our abiding rock,

To dare the chance of battle, and to place

Contending truth and error, face to face

In stern debate, and cloud the springs of life 40

With needless trials, and a doubtful strife?

An angel stirr'd Bethesda's pool, and gave

No; but
rather profit.

Its healing virtue to the troubled wave.

Thought may thus vivify the depth it moves,

And arm with power the truth its struggle proves.

Full oft the lessons, on our youth impress'd,

Sink in the soul, and stagnate there to rest;

Like dormant seeds by forest shade o'ergrown,

Or priceless metal hidden in the stone;

Unheeded, unproductive, unapplied, 50

Till doubt or trouble stirs the sluggish tide.

Thought, if the balance of the mind be just,

Shakes not but strengthens and expands its trust;

Gives breadth and force to knowledge; searches out

The secret holds of error and of doubt; 55

Presents in various aspects to the soul

The form of truth, that she may grasp the whole;

Imparts to reason energy and weight,

And adds new worth to mem'ry's precious freight;

Between conflicting systems firmly steers, 60
 Which vain device or bias'd judgment rears,
 When in opposing ranks may seem array'd
 God's word reveal'd, and works to sight display'd ;
 As learning spreads her page, or science pours
 In ample stream her ever-growing stores, 65
 Or to new realms Imagination soars. }

The Bible
 and Nature
 really agree.

Not that in real enmity they stand—
 Nature and Scripture—if by wisdom scann'd ;
 Since truth with truth, whate'er its form may be,
 If rightly understood must needs agree ; 70
 Thought will the subtle bond of union find,
 Or own her baffled pow'r and bow resign'd.

The Book is life reveal'd ; and he who reads
 With care and candour grasps the truth he needs :
 We know its author as our God ; the same 75
 Is He who hath on nature stamp'd His name,
 Blazon'd a lasting record in the skies,
 And penn'd on rocks a thousand histories.
 What ! shall we own the written witness true
 And not the record of creation too ? 80
 Those ancient characters, in form distinct,
 In meaning definite, in order link'd,

Are they but freaks of chance, or toys design'd
 To cheat and dazzle some enquiring mind ?
 Shall the clear utterance of the type impress'd 85
 Deceive most deeply him who reads it best ?
 Science, no doubt, hath err'd, will often err ;
 But if from facts establish'd she infer
 A just conclusion, and, while turning o'er
 The leaves which God permits her to explore, 90
 Advance with humble rev'rence as her guide,
 Nor plant her foot on ground unsurely tried,
 Much may she learn which yet was left untold
 Of Nature's page by Israel's seer of old ;
 Or faintly pictured, or obscurely taught 95
 When first with inspiration's glance he caught,
 Th' unfathom'd past,¹ and dash'd upon his scroll
 The wondrous outline of a wondrous whole.

¹ Some drill and bore
 The solid earth, and from the strata there
 Extract a register, by which we learn
 That He who made it, and reveal'd its date
 To Moses, was mistaken in its age.

COWPER's *Task*, bk. iii.

Had the poet lived and written within the last twenty
 or thirty years, we should hardly have found the above
 passage in his works, however justly it might have been applied

Use of
imagination.

From earthly taint and base illusion freed,
In quest of distant truth, with eagle speed, 100

to the geologists of his own time. Let me quote a passage from Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks," a work every page of which is worthy of the attention it invites. "It has been said that the inferences of the geologist militate against those of the theologian. Nay, not those of our higher geologists and higher theologians : not what our Murchisons and Sedgwicks infer in the one field, with what our Chalmers and Isaac Taylors infer in the other. Between the Word and the works of God there can be no actual discrepancies ; and the seeming ones are discernible only by the men who see worst :—

‘ Mote-like they flicker in unsteady eyes,
And weakest his who best describes.’

The geologist, as certainly as the theologian, has a province exclusively his own ; and were the theologian ever to remember that the Scriptures could not possibly have been given to us as revelations of scientific truth, seeing that a single scientific truth they never yet revealed, and the geologist that it must be in vain to seek in science those truths which lead to salvation, seeing that in science these truths were never yet found, there would be little danger even of difference among them, and none of collision. Nay, there is, I doubt not, a time coming in which the Butlers and Chalmers of the future will be content to recognise the geologic field as that of their richest and most pregnant analogies. It is with the history of the pre-Adamite ages that geology sets itself to deal ; and by carefully conning the ancient characters graven in the

(Where reason slowly creeps, or shrinks in fear,)

Imagination wings her wild career.

rocks, and by deciphering the strange inscriptions which they compose, it greatly extends the records of God's doings upon the earth."—Page 265.

We must look upon the first chapter of Genesis as a rapid, vigorous, and effective sketch, sufficiently complete for the purpose for which it was intended ; it is a fitting and necessary introduction to a book in which is revealed the relation of God to man. On this point its bearing is clear and evident : and if, for the sake of reconciling it with the discoveries of science, we find it necessary to abandon interpretations which we have hitherto been accustomed to receive, we may reflect with thankfulness that in so doing we are not shaking the authority or diminishing the value of any one article of faith affecting our salvation. I do not suppose that science, in its highest stage of development, will ever wholly fill up the Mosaic sketch, but it will by degrees clothe the outline with details, and in the process show more and more clearly its wonderful truth and comprehensiveness.

'The problems of astronomy deal with space, as those of geology with time ; yet the former so far confirm the latter, as to fix the date of the creation of at least a part of the universe as preceding, by a vast period of time, that of the creation of man, according to the Mosaic account. If the calculations that have been made of the distance of telescopic stars, and the time occupied by their passage of light, are well-grounded, there are heavenly bodies discernible, the light of which has been upwards of 700,000 years reaching us.'

The Heavens, p. 406.

And instinct; Pure in her nature, instinct guides aright
 Her heav'nward track ; and in her highest flight
 She rises nearest to the source of light. 105 }

Not from above she dreads the withering blow ;
 The danger threatens when she stoops too low.
 Then earth-born phantoms turn her course aside,
 Or darker spirits of rebellious pride ;
 Or gross conceits that rise in endless train 110
 From the polluted mind and clouded brain ;
 Or passions, kindled with unhallow'd fire,
 The devious efforts of her will inspire.

As in ages
 before the
 flood.

'Twas thus, when o'er the earth that giant
 brood
 With harden'd front the Maker's rule withstood ; 115
 Boasted a name of proud renown, and built
 A fabric of impiety and guilt.
 The curious eye, the daring hand, the thought
 With base desire or foul intention fraught,
 O'er man's abode—a scene of force and wrong— 120
 The swelling tide of evil bore along.
 The heart, corrupted to its centre, knew
 Nor law, nor shame ; and vice unfetter'd grew,
 Till outrag'd mercy from the strife withdrew. }

Then rose the day of vengeance ; earth below 125
 Broke her strong barriers with convulsive throe ;
 Heaven answer'd from above, and bade the torrent
 flow.

Forth rush'd the waters from their hiding place
 Resistless, and of man's devoted race
 Spared but a scanty remnant, to record 130
 With trembling voice the judgments of the Lord.

Not, when he rises to his loftier strain,¹
 The bold Mæonian strikes his lyre in vain ;
 When 'mid th' immortal throng Olympian Jove
 Nods his decrees and shakes the realm above, 135
 Or speaks in thunder from the cloud, or gleams
 In angry lightning through its rifted seams ;
 Or, in unruffled majesty serene,
 With calm regard surveys the troubled scene,
 Looks on conflicting armies from his height, 140
 And holds the balance of the wavering fight ;
 Or, when the monarch of the stormy tide
 Spans his dominion with a giant stride,²

Illustration
 from the
 Homeric
 deities.

In their
 higher
 functions.

¹ Homer, II. i. 528.

² II. xiii. 20, “ Τρὶς μὲν ὀρέξαν' ἰών, τὸ δὲ τέτταρον ἔκειτο
 τέκμωρ.”

Or Pallas marches o'er the battle field,
 To guard her warrior with expanded shield ; 145
 The noble image warms us ; and we see,
 Rude and imperfect if the picture be,
 Some shadow of a true Divinity. }

In their
 lower pas-
 sions.

But when gross fancies on the vision swarm,¹
 And hues of earth the glowing scene deform ; 150
 When we behold the bright celestial hall
 Profaned by vile intrigue and factious brawl ;
 Imperious Jove outwitted by his mate,²
 Or vainly struggling in the toils of fate ;
 While man's base passions with unholy stain, 155
 Mar the pure essence ; and through heaven's
 domain

Hate, rancour, lust, caprice, and envy reign.
 Such gods as these nor fear nor homage claim,
 And are but mortals with another name.
 Truth stands abash'd, polluted genius weeps,³ 160
 And, lull'd with fumes of poison, Homer sleeps.

¹ In reference to the whole of this passage also see Homer, Iliad, lib. viii. line 1-29.

² See Homer, Iliad, lib. xix. line 78-133.

³ Plato, Rep. 381, 382.

To purer climes is borne th' uplifted mind,¹
 And leaves the mist and taint of earth behind ;
 O'er conquer'd pride her high affections soar,
 Love is her aim, her prize is to adore. 165

Use of
 imagination ;
 illustration
 from the
 Psalmist.

He, the great source and object of her praise,
 The bold approach with favouring eye surveys,
 Directs her flight to His eternal throne,
 And meets the kindling spirit with His own.
 Thus, when of old the kingly prophet trod 170
 The paths of light, and communed with his God ;
 From Zion's mount and Jordan's groves of palm,
 On wings of fire uprose the glowing psalm,
 Swept through the realms of space, and bore
 along

A stream of praise too vast for mortal song. 175
 In glory of substantial light enshrined,
 The clouds His chariot, and His steeds the wind,
 Jehovah moves. His messengers of flame
 The mighty presence of their Lord proclaim ;
 Attendant spirits His behest obey, 180
 And tokens charged with wonder mark His way.

¹ Refer to Psalms 103 to 111 inclusive.

His descrip-
tion of the
Creation.

Now sang the bard, as on his sense was borne
The vivid scene, Creation's opening morn ;
When first the spirit, breathing on the deep,
Woke into form the void and shapeless heap ; 185
Earth's massive structure by mysterious law
Poised in the vast abyss of space he saw ;
The spangled heavens, the spheres, whose living
light
Rules o'er the changeless change of day and night ;
The treasures stored in mountain springs, or pent
In gather'd cloud above the firmament ; 191
The never-failing sea, the teeming ground,
Fields rich with food, and hills with verdure
crown'd ;
Tribes that possess the forest and the plain,
Or sport tumultuous on the boundless main ; 195
And man, beneath whose sovereign sway they
bow,
His lordly title stamp'd upon his brow.

Of the early
history of the
Israelites.

On Israel's annals then the minstrel dwelt,
The varied fortunes to his nation dealt ;
The oath of promise by the Almighty sworn ; 200
Life, hope and health, for myriads yet unborn

Declared by spoken word, confirm'd by sign,
 To the great patriarchs of the chosen line.
 He sang the youth who, tasting slavery's pain,
 Rose in his faith triumphant from the chain ; 205
 Of kingly rule achieved an equal share,
 And nursed his parent's house with parent's care.

Then spake the bard of Egypt's tyrant pride,
 God's flock oppress'd and God Himself defied ;
 Till arm'd with terrors to the strife He rose 210
 In wrath, and wrought His judgments on His foes :
 The rivers turn'd to blood—the loathsome sport
 Of reptiles swarming o'er the royal court—
 The field laid waste—the sick'ning cattle bow'd
 By deadly plague—the locusts' withering cloud— 215
 Heaven rent with thunders—earth with furious hail—
 The deep, thick, palpable, unyielding veil
 Of threefold gloom—and that more fearful night
 Which felt the shriek of grief and wild affright,
 As death in each abode his ruthless hand 220
 Put forth, and smote the first-born of the land.
 The flight triumphant, when, by God's decree,
 Like walls of granite stood the cloven sea,
 Heap'd up on either side, and left the passage free—

Of the
 plagues of
 Egypt.

Passage of
 the Red sea.

Then, as the foe in wild array pursued, 225
 Closed o'er the self-devoted multitude,
 While rescued Israel gather'd on the shore
 The spoil of hosts they should behold no more.

Of the
 journey of
 Israel
 through the
 wilderness.

But sadder visions move the conscious seer,—
 A sullen murmur of distrust and fear 230
 Creeps through the camp ; anon impatient cries
 Are borne to Heav'n, and Heav'n in wrath replies :
 The desolating flame, the yawning ground
 With deadly chasm, the serpent's fiery wound,
 The wasting pestilence, the watchful foe, 235
 The terrors of that stern avenging blow
 By brethren dealt,— which fell on thousands
 slain,

To cleanse one idol's dark infectious stain,—
 Speak of awaken'd anger ; yet a ray
 Of mercy smiles amid its fierce display : 240

Of the
 glories of
 Messiah's
 reign.

The smitten rock outpours a precious stream,
 The skies and winds with sudden plenty teem ;
 From heav'n appeased a healing balm is shed ;
 The priest, between the living and the dead,
 Stands in the gap to meet impending wrath, 245
 And turns the fell destroyer from his path.

From Canaan's tracts, and Judah's rich domain,
 To higher scenes ascends the glowing strain ;
 A wider Canaan swells its deep'ning tone ;
 A fairer heritage, a brighter throne : 250
 Messiah rules ; —reluctant evil, cast
 Beneath His feet, bemoans her empire past ;
 Captive in chains captivity is led,
 Death quails, and prostrate darkness hides her
 head.

On favour'd nations from eternal stores 255
 Gifts beyond price the bounteous victor pours.
 Heav'n throws its everlasting portals wide ;
 In queenly vesture, radiant at His side,
 The King of glory leads His chosen bride. }
 Submissive monarchs own His sov'reign sway, 260
 Earth's distant shores their willing tribute pay ;
 Exulting saints around His footsteps throng,
 And angels raise the glad triumphant song.

God's ways are not the ways of man ; yet
 still

A voice, apart from reason and from will, 265
 Assures our inmost spirit that they must,
 However dark their course, be wise and just.

Man's prim-
 eval sense a
 guide to
 truth.

But whence is our conviction? How, in sooth,
 Shape we the forms of wisdom, justice, truth?
 On what ideal standard can we frame¹ 270
 Their perfect type? or are they but a name?
 Surely some sense, mysterious, undefined,
 Pervades the deep recesses of the mind,—
 A nameless impulse, which may faintly teach 274
 Truths that elude the grasp, or rise beyond the reach:
 A hidden spark of heavenly origin,
 Not wholly quench'd, when first intruding sin
 The Maker's image shatter'd and defaced,
 Marr'd the bright scene, and laid our Eden waste.
 'Twere hard to say, of objects given to sight, 280
 Why this offends, and that affords delight;
 And harmony, proportion, beauty, rest
 On some obscure, inexplicable test,

This sense a
 reality.

¹ "Sed quid est ipsa natura, explicandum est ante breviter, quo facilius id, quod docere volumus intelligi possit namque alii naturam censent esse vim quandam sine ratione, cientem motus in corporibus necessarios, alii autem vim participem rationis atque ordinis; tanquam via progredientem, declarantemque quid cujusque rei causa efficiat, quid sequatur: cujus solertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando," &c.—*De Natura Deorum*, ii. 32.

Which, when we strive to grasp the crumbling soil,
 Sinks from the tread, and baffles all our toil. 285
 So heavenly things, but for a heaven-born sense
 Fix'd in the soul we know not how or whence,
 Would baffle reason's keen intelligence.¹
 That one great truth—on which all truths depend,
 Their essence, their beginning, and their end — 290
 How could she trace, or, offer'd, comprehend ?
 A God's existence ?—Not the marvels stored
 By boundless wisdom in creation's hoard ;
 Not nature, ruled by firm abiding laws,
 Not miracle, which bids their action pause 295
 Before the mandate of a mightier cause ;
 Not history's record, echoing back the cry,
 Through nations borne, of ancient prophecy ;
 Not all the cloud of witnesses combined
 To prove the truth, and stamp it on the mind, 300
 Could make it felt, believed, and rightly known,
 Did human reason stand unaided and alone.

Reason un-
 aided by re-
 velation, not
 a safe guide
 in heaven-
 ly things.

¹ "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—
 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Man's facul-
ties manifold
and distinct.

Man's faculties by God bestow'd, and bless'd

To highest purposes, ere man transgress'd,
In nature perfect, though distinct in kind, 305
Had each its limit and its scope assign'd ;

Sense.

Material sense, to things material bound,
Within their compass countless treasure found ;
Collected seeds of wisdom, and before
The throne of Reason laid the plenteous store. 310

Reason.

'Twas Reason's delegated task and gift
The mingled mass to analyse and sift ;
Each part to weigh,¹ and with discerning skill
To trace its influence for good or ill ;

¹ Heu, quam præcipiti mersa profundo
Mens hebet, et propria luce relictæ,
Tendit in externas ire tenebras,
Terrenis quoties flatibus acta
Crescit in immensum noxia cura !
Hic quondam cœlo liber aperto,
Suetus in ætherios ire meatus,
Cernebat rosei lumina Solis,
Visebat gelidæ sidera Lunæ :
Et quæcumque vagos stella recursus
Exercet, varios flexa per orbes,
Comprehensam numeris victor habebat.
Quin etiam causas, unde sonora

To range convergent elements, to draw 315
 From scatter'd facts a comprehensive law ;
 And build with proofs display'd on either hand
 A firm foundation on which truth shall stand.
 But if from earthly confines she would rise
 Unchain'd, and hold communion with the skies, 320
 Her claim of homage she must cast aside,
 And take a mightier spirit for her guide ;

Needs in-
 spiration.

Flamina sollicitent æquora ponti ;
 Quis volvat stabilem spiritus orbem—
 Vel cur Hesperias sidus in undas
 Casurum rutilo surgat ab ortu—
 Quis veris placidas temperet horas,
 Ut terras roseis floribus ornet—
 Quis dedit ut pleno fertilis anno
 Autumnus gravidis influat uvis,
 Rimari solitus, atque latentis
 Naturæ varias reddere causas :
 Nunc jacet effeto lumine mentis,
 Et pressus gravibus colla catenis,
 Declivemque gerens pondere vultum,
 Cogitur, heu! stolidam cernere terram.

BOETHII *De Consolatione*, lib. i.

Ah! what a headlong gulf profound
 The deaden'd soul hath closed around!
 Reft of her heritage of light,
 She plunges deep in outer night,

A higher sense must shape her new career,
Must train and mould her for a heavenly sphere,
Life's hidden mysteries spread before her sight, 325
And fill her vision with unearthly light.

Moral
function of
reason.

'Tis Reason's part with warning voice to break
Sin's deadening spell, and bid the soul awake ;
A passage to her secret depths to win,
And rouse the living germ of faith within ; 330

While earth-born tempests onward bear
The tide of ever-wasting care—
Time was, when spurning mortal ties,
She claim'd the freedom of the skies ;
Fear'd not each devious path to trace
Athwart the boundless range of space ;
Gazed on the roseate orb of day,
Or wintry moon's inconstant ray ;
Or track'd some vagrant flame among
The mazes of the starry throng,
With numbers chain'd the fleeting sphere,
And circumscribed its wild career—
Now question'd, whence the blasts that sweep
The bosom of the sounding deep ;
What subtle spirit rules unseen
The movement of the vast machine ;
Why, from his eastern chamber borne,
The fiery sun proclaims the morn,

But if that spark be lost, that germ be dead,
 And the last trace of God's bright image fled—
 (For though, full oft by folly's snare subdued,
 By mercy's power as oft it be renew'd,
 Impenitence at last will quench the flame, 335
 And love of darkness, when the light is shame),
 Reason may thrive and flourish none the less,
 Although her seed and fruit be bitterness.

Though still
 active may
 mislead.

Climbs the wide vault, and sinks to rest
 Beyond the billows of the west—
 Who, tempering spring's serener hours,
 Casts o'er the plain its robe of flowers;
 Who spreads the warm autumnal glow,
 And bids the purple vintage flow
 With precious streams, to crown and cheer
 The labours of the circling year.
 Train'd in the love of nature's laws,
 The sage explored each hidden cause,
 And grasp'd in comprehensive span
 The workings of the wondrous plan.
 Alas! that heaven-born radiance now
 Hath waned and faded from his brow!
 With eyes bedimm'd and wasted brain,
 He drags along a wearying chain,
 Nor dares, nor strives, nor hopes to raise
 From the dull earth his downward gaze.

Her faculties and functions we may find
 Clear, active, vigorous, though to ill inclined : 340
 As reckless deeds of violence and wrong
 Quell not the robber's heart, nor make his arm less
 strong.

In error's cause, with specious art and zeal,
 She well can urge the plausible appeal 344
 Of seeming proof, and press the stamp of thought
 On every wild conceit by fancy wrought.
 Nor less at Mammon's call with sense acute
 Can mark the prize and grasp the glittering fruit ;
 Or as a wider range expands to view,
 The track of science fearlessly pursue ; 350
 With eye undimm'd on distant splendours gaze,
 And learn a path through nature's endless maze ;
 Attend the planet in its circling course,
 Measure its speed, and gauge its motive force,
 Yet fail to reach a truth, which dwells at hand 355
 In every flower, each leaf, each grain of sand ;
 But from th' unhallow'd sense is hidden far
 Beyond the glimmer of the faintest star.
 E'en in her own peculiar sphere and realm
 Much will confuse her powers, and much o'erwhelm ;

Nor limit, nor infinity of space

361

Or time the grasp of reason can embrace ;

From each alternative before her cast

In conscious impotence she shrinks aghast.

How can we trust her guidance through a field 365

Needs something above her.

Of mystery, scarce to angel's ken reveal'd,

If her own footsteps be not heav'nward led

By some pure radiance from the fountain-head ?

The Pagan own'd a God ; ¹ that heavenly ray
Through folds of ponderous darkness forced its way ;

Reason working in Pagan philosophy.

¹ "Dico igitur providentiâ deorum mundum et omnes mundi partes et initio constitutas esse, et omni tempore administrari," &c.—CICERO, *De Natura Deorum*, lib. ii. 29.

"Non est igitur natura deorum præpotens neque excellens, siquidem ea subjecta est ei vel necessitati vel naturæ quæ cælum maria terræque regantur. Nihil autem est præstantius deo ; ab eo igitur necesse est mundum regi. Nulli igitur est naturæ obediens aut subjectus deus : omnem ergo regit ipse naturam."—*Ibid.* 30.

"Atque hac mundi divinitate perspecta, tribuenda est sideribus eadem divinitas."—*Ibid.* 15.

"Hanc igitur in stellis constantiam hanc tantam tam variis cursibus in omni æternitate convenientiam temporum non possum intelligere sine mente, ratione, consilio. Quæ cum in sideribus inesse videamus, non possumus ea ipsa non in deorum numero reponere."—*Ibid.* 21.

"Ipsius vero mundi, qui omnia complexu suo coercet et

But when he strove to trace Him, he relied 371
On self, and took his reason for a guide.

continet, natura non artificiosa solum, sed plane artifex ab eodem Zenone dicitur, consultrix, et provida utilitatum opportunitatumque omnium."—*Ibid.* 22.

The following unfinished notes are inserted precisely as they were found in MS.—

Plato, in his Republic excludes from the system of education the Homeric and other poetical fables concerning the gods. "But we should have to repudiate a large part of those fables which are now in vogue; and especially of what I call the greater fables, the stories which Hesiod and Homer and the other poets tell us. They told, and tell, their stories to men. But in these stories there is a fault which deserves the gravest condemnation, namely, when an author gives a bad representation of the characters of gods and heroes. We must condemn such a poet as we should condemn a painter whose picture should bear no resemblance to the object which he tries to imitate.

"Nor yet is it proper to say in any case—what is indeed untrue—that gods wage war against gods, and intrigue and fight among themselves. We are not to teach this, if the future guards of our state are to deem it a most disgraceful thing to quarrel among themselves.

"Stories like the chaining of Hera (Juno) by her son Hephæstus (Vulcan) and the flinging of Hephæstus out of heaven for trying to take his mother's part when his father was beating her, and all other battles of the gods which are to be found in Homer, must be refused admittance into our state, whether they be allegorical or not. For a child cannot dis-

Now link'd with matter the creative mind,
Or to a certain track and groove confined

criminate between what is allegory and what is not ; and whatever at that age is adopted as matter of belief, has a tendency to become fixed and indelible ; and therefore we ought to esteem it of the greatest importance that the fictions which children first hear should be adapted, as far as may be, to the promotion of virtue."

WHEWELL'S *Platonic Dialogues*, vol. iii. p. 175 *et seq.*

If we could accept the poems attributed to Orpheus as genuine productions of the Homeric age, or even of any period prior, let us say, to the Ptolemaic era, we should find among the Pagans the elements of a theology much purer than any we find in other ancient poets, or even philosophers. But had the fragments to which I specially refer been recognized, I cannot see how they could have been left unnoticed by Cicero ("De Naturâ Deorum") where Orpheus is mentioned, and his actual existence is admitted, but no reference is made to any poems bearing his name. The fragments I allude to are the 1st and . . . of the ἀποσπάσματα in Gesner's edition, which have been often cited by Christian writers. The second, I think, bears marks of being spurious. The first contains the well-known lines, ἐς δὲ λόγον θεῖον βλέψας, &c. εἷς δ' ἐστ', αὐτογενής, ἐνὸς ἔκγονα πάντα τέτυκται. The other (. .) is a still more remarkable composition,—

Ζεὺς ἄρσῃν γένετο, Ζεὺς ἀμβροτος ἔπλετο νυμφή.

Anaxagoras made a great step towards truth when he pronounced intellect and matter to be distinct. Plato and his

The working of its will, and held in thrall 375
 The living cause and principle of all ;

school seem to have followed in the same track, but while they considered the Divine Mind as employing itself in disposing and fashioning existent matter, I cannot see that they looked upon the Deity as the creator of matter ; as having called it into being by His power ; or as being independent of a certain necessity, though able by His wisdom to mould all matter, according to its inherent laws, into the best and most beautiful forms. They speak of a certain type or model of perfection as existing from eternity, but I cannot understand whether this was supposed to be framed by the will of the Creator, or to have an independent existence.

Whewell, in his "Platonic Dialogues," remarks on a passage in the *Timæus*, "We see also the assumption of a chaos preceding creation, and, as it seems, independent of the Creator."

It is easy to understand why the ancient philosophers should hesitate to ascribe the actual creation of matter to the Deity, if they defined Him as pure intellect or mind. For they might conceive that the production of substantial matter was not in the province of pure simple intellect. The arrangement of matter already existing, the creation, invention, or production of those types and forms on which matter is modelled into a material universe, they might easily suppose to be the work of mind or intellect, but this is a very different thing from the calling of substance into being from nothing. The mutual action of mind and matter, of which we have constant experience, is a mystery to us ; much more would be the creation of matter by any power or energy of mind.

And gave to stern necessity¹ a share
 Of sovereign order, providence, and care ;
 Now calling fiction's voice to reason's aid
 The purer truth with fable he o'erlaid ; 380
 Now scann'd with curious eye creation's range,
 Its varied order, and recurring change
 With ever-during faculties endued ;
 Self-ruled, self-counsell'd, self-maintain'd he
 view'd
 The realm of nature, and pronounced the reign 385
 Of God alike impossible and vain ;
 " For who could wield the sceptre of command² So Lucretius.
 And hold dominion over sea and land ?
 Grasp in his palm the reins of space, and keep
 In firm control th' immeasurable deep ? 390

¹ ἀνάγκη—PLATO, *Timæus*. Whether the words "must" or "cannot" should be applied in any case to the Deity, see several passages in "Ecce Deus."

² Quis regere immensi summam, quis habere profundi
 Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas ?
 Quis pariter cœlos omneis convertere ? et omneis
 Ignibus ætheriis terras suffire feraceis ?
 Omnibus inque locis esse omni tempore præsto ?

Lucretius, lib. ii. 1094.

With genial fires the teeming field supply,
And shed on earth the bounties of the sky ;
Bid the bright orbs in certain order roll,
And dwell in every part, and guide and guard the
whole ? ”

His views on
the origin of
the universe. Matter and space exist, as some contend, 395
Without beginning, and without an end.
E'en God from nothing nothing can create ;¹
Nor what exists can He annihilate ;
But for the laws, which hold their constant sway,
Of life, of growth, production and decay, 400
Attraction, motion, change, repose and force,
And all that governs nature's even course—
Are these by His eternal wisdom plann'd,
Or did He find them ready to His hand ?

¹ Nullam rem e nihilo gigni divinitus unquam.

Lucretius, lib. i. 151.

Hand igitur redit ad nihilum res ulla sed omnes
Discidio redeunt in corpora materiæ. — *Ibid.* 249.

At quoniam supera docui nil posse creari
De nihilo, neque quod genitu'st ad nil revocari.

Ibid. 544.

If so, why not the forms themselves, the race 405
 Of living tribes, the globes that people space ;
 Why not the whole to full perfection brought,
 Without an effort of contriving thought ?

If self-existent or self-sprung we deem
 Aught to have being, save the One supreme, 410
 Or cause, or type, or matter uncreate,)
 Or necessary law, or chance, or fate,)
 Or aught co-eval or co-ordinate ;
 A chain of reasoning we devise and weave,
 Of which nor end nor break we can perceive, 415
 Till of all power and attribute bereft,
 A God in little else than name is left.
 “ Th’ immortal gods, in their own nature blest,¹
 In changeless peace through endless ages rest ;
 From human cares and toils they dwell apart, 420
 And fear no peril, as they feel no smart.

And nature
 of God.

¹ Omnis enim per se divûm natura necesse'st
 Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,
 Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe ;
 Nam privata dolore omni, privata periclis
 Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
 Nec bene promeritis capitur nec tangitur ira.

Lucretius, lib. i. 57.

Securely calm in self-sufficing power,
 No aid they crave from children of an hour ;
 Disclaim our needless service, nor look down
 On crimes that touch not them with angry frown."
 Thus led by reason, ancient sages taught,¹
 And if no other aid or guide be sought,
 'Twere hard to prove their inference is nought.

426

Answered by
 conscience
 and Revela-
 tion.

But through the gloom in thrilling tones are
 heard

Man's conscious heart and God's unerring word ;
 Sharp as the touch of penetrating steel, 431
 That word through all our spirit's depth we feel ;
 From logic's cheerless subtleties we turn,
 And loudly claim the God for Whom we yearn ;
 A God to Whom our hearts we may confide, 435
 A parent, judge, protector, ruler, guide ;

¹ This applies only to the Epicurean system. Many philosophers held much higher opinions in regard to the Deity, and came therefore nearer the truth, but their systems appeared to have been so complicated, and so encumbered by fancies and conceits, that I question if they could be supported, even against that of Epicurus, by any sound and conclusive argument. There seems, indeed, to be no tenable ground between his system and Christianity.

One we may dare to love, yet love with awe,
And taste unfetter'd freedom in His law.

But let us grant the reasoner, that there be

A God secluded from humanity ; 440

And we will grant him, as we surely may,

A God without a sceptre and a sway, Nothing between
Atheism and
Revelation.

Without creative power, without a sense

Of good or ill, without a Providence ;

A God, in whom the most assured belief 445

Wakes not a hope or fear, nor soothes a grief ;

Quells not a doubt, nor satisfies a need,

And leaves us naught beyond an Atheist's creed.

There still are found, or it were forged in vain, Something
of truth
usually mix-
ed with
error.

Some links of truth in error's deadliest chain ; 450

They make the flimsy mass cohere, and bind

In toils of seeming strength the captive mind.

God by man's actions is untouch'd ; His course,

Firm in its progress, certain from its source,

Nor dreads nor needs an interfering force. 455

Man's love or hate nor help nor hindrance brings,¹

Confirms not on His throne, nor shakes the King of
kings.

¹ " If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him, or if thy

Should all the tribes of earth be leagued and sworn
 Against His cause, their threats He laughs to scorn;
 The hosts of darkness that His rule oppose, 460
 Rebellious subjects, or determin'd foes,
 Are made His glorious purpose to fulfil,
 And work unwillingly His steadfast will.
 So are we bound to think and to confess
 That God is calm, serene, and passionless. 465
 No sudden impulse moves Him : who could stand—
 If passion prompted His uplifted hand—
 Before His presence ? If our acts provoke
 Unbridled anger, who could shun the stroke ?
 The wavering thought, the heart but half sincere ;
 The mind forgetful of restraint or fear, 471
 The word of life unfelt or disbelieved ;
 The blessing with unthankfulness received,
 The frequent murmur at a wish denied ;
 A trial sent, or want unsatisfied ; 475
 The pause of doubt, when duty sounds her call ;
 The vow retracted, the recurring fall,

transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him ? If
 thou be righteous, what givest thou him ? or what receiveth
 he of thine hand ?"—*Job xxxv. 6, 7.*

If by a mortal's anger God be led,
Would not these bring destruction on our
head ?

But that a perfect Being, just and pure, 480

Uncleanness and injustice should endure

May not be thought. No random shaft is sent

In headlong fury, but with stern intent

His justice shapes the certain punishment.

Or if he seems to tolerate offence, 485

He spares in mercy, not indifference.

Much that our God has in his wisdom plann'd,

'Tis hard to learn, conceive, or understand.

Some truths within the secret vaults of heaven

Lie still conceal'd ; of some are glimpses given ; 490

Some without proof or comment are proclaim'd ;

Of some, an inborn image has been framed,

Dim, indistinct ; and e'en the sleeping sense

May roam and glean some shred of evidence.

The power of Reason, if employ'd aright,

Concentrates and collects the scatter'd light,

And casts its radiance on that wondrous scheme,

Which blends with judgment Mercy's gladdening

beam.

Powers of
Reason in
support of
revelation.

If yet beyond her compass much be toss'd
 Far from her grasp, and in confusion lost ; 500
 If vainly searching with bewilder'd gaze
 She miss awhile her land-marks in the maze,
 Better that sense and intellect should quail,
 Than faith and love, the soul's true guardians, fail.¹

Nothing between the
 Epicurean
 and the
 Christian
 scheme.

If from the stand which Epicurus based 505
 On reason's dreams, our footsteps be displaced ;
 If we affirm that man's Creator deigns
 To watch his hopes, his struggles, and his pains,
 On all his paths a careful eye to turn,
 And mark his varied progress with concern, 510
 Where is a middle station to be found
 Before we rest upon the Christian's ground ?
 Can we suppose a cure divine to be
 Imperfect in its manner or degree ;
 A faint regard, a feebly burning zeal, 515
 A favour, such as man for man may feel ?
 Will mercy, or will justice, aught devise
 Short of its mightiest, highest exercise ?

¹ "Epicurus vero ex animis hominum extraxit radicatus religionem," &c.—CICERO, *N. D.* i. 43.

Where God has moved in love or anger, still
 'Tis with unabated energy of will.
 In all His works, on which our eye can rest,
 The fulness of the Godhead stands confest.
 The swiftly changing cloud, the transient flow'r,
 The glitt'ring insect of a summer's hour,
 The quivering mote, that in the sunbeam plays, 525
 No mark of careless haste, or flagging zeal betrays.
 In seeming imperfections oft we find
 The surer traces of the master mind :
 Thus when attraction of another sphere
 Sways and disturbs the planet's circling year, 530
 Its wand'ring from the regulated line
 Speaks not of faulty work, but deep design.
 The least deflection claims a hand as true
 As e'er the bound of distant ocean drew,
 Or in the rainbow blent each soft harmonious hue. }
 The dim faint nebule of a nascent sun, 536
 The comet's race interminably run,
 The trackless lightning, and the meteor's glare,
 No chance hath order'd, but eternal care :
 Care, whose transcendent energies surround 540
 Spirit and space, and know not rest or bound.

Vastness
 and perfec-
 tion of the
 Divine
 energies.

Hence God's
love its own
witness.

If then some wondrous token of the bond
'Twixt God and man be proffer'd, far beyond
Aught that the heart could fathom, or the flight
Of fancy compass at its boldest height ; 545
The council of Almighty love reveal'd
By its own vastness is confirm'd and seal'd.

The fable of
Prometheus.

With noble outline, and unfading hue
The tragic muse of Greece a picture drew,¹
Not all of heavenly type, yet somewhat more 550
Than vision raised from earth's fantastic lore ;
Fetter'd in bonds of adamantine chain
To the lone rock that frowns o'er Scythia's plain,
A man in suffering, but of race divine,
The dauntless friend of man is doom'd to pine } 555
In lengthen'd pangs, a terror and a sign.
Around dim Ocean's daughters throng to wail
The harsh decree, and listen to the tale,
How when heaven's new-crown'd sovereign would
efface
From life's bright page the transitory race 560
Of hapless man,—alone he dared withstand
The fury of the Thunderer's lifted hand ;

¹ ÆSCHYLUS, Prometheus Vincit.

Rescued creation from its doom, and stay'd
 The menaced ruin with defiant aid.
 From heaven's ethereal torch its genial glow 565
 With venturous theft he bore to earth below ;
 Taught man to mould and tame with conquering
 skill

Reluctant nature to his use and will ;
 The hidden gifts of remedy bestow'd ; 569
 Lighten'd and soothed with precious balm the load
 Of pale disease ; and, veiling from the sight
 A dreary future in impervious night,
 Banish'd the phantoms of o'erwhelming dread,
 And viewless hopes awaken'd in their stead.
 For such offence is doom'd to writhe and groan 575
 The tortured victim on his bed of stone ;
 Such is the wrath with which relentless Jove
 Exacts the penance of that mighty love.

Is this a poet's dream, a burst of thought,
 Wild, incoherent, yet with meaning fraught,
 Or a great truth, distorted and curtail'd
 Of fair proportions, and in fiction veil'd.
 An image not in human brain design'd,
 Yet dear to man, seems shadow'd on the mind ;

Shown to be
 an obscure
 shadow of the
 Christian
 scheme.

No ruthless tyrant we behold, elate 585
 With his new power and dignity of state ;
 But Him Who in eternal glory reign'd
 Calm, unapproach'd, ere Being was enchain'd
 By Time, or Nature's harmonies were stirr'd
 To ceaseless music by the primal word : 590
 No rebel power, but an obedient Son,
 Loved by the Father, with the Father one ;
 A sharer of the counsel framed on high
 To snatch the lost from their sad destiny ;
 A willing Sacrifice, Whose pains atone 595
 For other's guilt and trespass not His own ;
 Bearer of gifts—transcending far in worth
 All that to bold invention owe their birth,
 Or sleep imbedded in the depths of earth ;
 Of living fire—whose heav'nly beams illume 600
 Through clouds of doubt and dread the spirit's gloom ;
 Of priceless balm—whose quick'ning virtue brings
 Renewal to the life's exhausted springs ;
 Of hope—no longer baseless, vague, and blind ;
 Of wisdom—shed abundant o'er the mind ; 605
 Not such as he, the fabled Titan, gave,
 To earthly needs the minister and slave,

But destined to awaken and supply

The vast desires of immortality.

Shall man expostulate with God ? arraign	610	Why turn
His just decrees, declare His counsel vain ?		from the full
Dictate the terms His boundless love shall grant,		to the more
And set at naught the saving covenant,		imperfect
If some strange element his mind confuse,		light ?
Or some condition square not with his views ?	615	
Or shall he seek in ancient proofs a flaw ;		
Or spurning words of heav'nly wisdom, draw		
His creed and maxims from the Pagan law ?		
The Pagan knew not truth ; his purest dream	619	
Reach'd not the depth or height of mercy's scheme ;		
Whate'er of heav'nly love might stir his thought,		
He own'd its force, but learnt not how it wrought ;		
And thus, on insecure foundation laid,		
His changing systems rise, decline, and fade.		
'Tis not for us to scorn his shackled pow'rs,—	625	
But if a spring of clearer light is ours,		
Why turn we to the half-instructed sage ¹		
For truth, and miss a certain heritage ?		

¹ "Heaven's early care prescribed for every age ;
First in the soul, and after, in the page.

The neces-
sary dogmas
of faith are
few and in-
telligible.

Few are the dogmas that we need ; they dwell
Easily stored, in mem'ry's nearest cell,— 630
Are prompt and present when the heart, dismay'd
By trial, calls for more than human aid.
Their solemn mysteries in abundance yield
Health, vigour, hope, and life ; alike reveal'd
To wise and simple, and alike to each 635
Within the grasp of faith, beyond the reason's reach.

The power of
faith.

Faith, which unfolds a world conceal'd from sight,
Gives to the soul the privilege and right
To hold communion with her God, and prove
The full perfection of exhaustless love. 640

Witness the
visions of St.
Paul and St.
John.

Like him who borne aloft by holy spell
In body or in spirit, who can tell ? ¹

More safe and much more modest 'tis to say
God would not leave mankind without a way :
And that the Scriptures, tho' not every where
Free from corruption, or entire, or clear,
Are incorrupt, sufficient, clear, entire,
In all things which our needful faith require."

DRYDEN, *Religio Laici*.

¹ "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell ; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth ;) such an one caught up into the third heaven."—2 *Cor.* xii. 2.

Beyond the scope of human gaze or thought,
 A glimpse of scenes unutterable caught ;
 Pierced through the barriers of the threefold
 sphere,

And dwelt on words which baffle mortal ear : 646
 Or him who, in his island solitude ¹
 Entranced, the glories of the Godhead view'd,
 Drank the full music of angelic choirs,
 And saw the lamps which burn'd with heav'nly
 fires. 650

Before his eyes, in tempest, wrath, and gloom,
 Was open'd, seal by seal, the book of doom.
 The proud ones of the earth, in wild dismay,
 Shrank from the terrors of that fearful day ;
 Call'd on the headlong rocks to hide their shame,
 And hills to shield them from th' avenging flame ;
 Through the wide vaults of heaven in furious
 blast

'Twas his to mark the battle as it past ;
 Rebellious pow'rs from their dominion thrust,
 Their hosts o'erthrown, and scatter'd as the dust ;

¹ Rev. i. 9, &c.

'Twas his to note that small but glorious band, 661
 Gather'd and garner'd by their Master's hand
 From distant graves, who nobly dared to tread
 His rugged path, and in His contest shed
 Their martyr blood, the first-fruits of the dead. 665
 New earth, new skies, expanding as the old
 Pass from the scene, their realms of bliss unfold ;
 No envious cloud, athwart its azure driven,
 Ruffles the deep serenity of heav'n ;
 Nor troubled sea disturbs with angry strife 670
 The tranquil waters of eternal life.
 Hush'd is the conflict of tumultuous fears,
 Nor place is found for anguish or for tears ;
 The lurid pall of night is rent in twain, 674
 Darkness hath fled, and death hath ceased to reign.
 Through gates of pearl, her splendours ever new,
 Thrice hallow'd Salem opens to the view ;
 No sunbeams on her golden mansions fall,¹
 Nor moonlight radiance sleeps upon her wall ;

¹ "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."—*Rev.* xxi. 23.

No temple, solemn in majestic height, 680
 Speaks to the votary with mysterious rite ;
 The Lamb is altar, shrine, priest, sacrifice, and
 light.

Such visions bless'd the saints. To all is given Faith brings
 Afar to muse and meditate on heav'n ; comfort to
 On promised strength in hopeful trust to lean, 685 all.
 And grasp the substance of a prize unseen.
 What if the transport of self-conscious pride,
 Or burst of fiery rapture be denied ;
 What if the faith, still unassured and weak,
 Its full reward of comfort vainly seek : 690
 Yet, search'd with care, the word of truth will
 cheer

The fainting soul, and prove her title clear.

Form'd in creation's noblest mould, before The Atone-
 Sin marr'd it, man his Maker's image bore. ment.
 The Son incarnate, man Himself, hath shown 695
 That image pure and perfect in His own ;
 Hath cleansed the deadly stain of man's offence
 By Man's acknowledged, stainless innocence ;
 Restored the fall'n nature, pluck'd away
 The ransom'd flock from Death's eternal sway ; 700

Given the full price for its deliv'rance set ;
 With His own blood the claim of justice met,
 And paid the vast, incalculable debt. }

Yet more—As God, in His mysterious plan,

Took the full nature and the form of man, 705

So to complete the threefold bond of love, ¹

And fit the sons of earth for thrones above,

Gift of the
Holy Spirit.

To man, descending from the heights of heav'n,

Himself, in His own spirit hath he given ;

Himself shall in the awaken'd soul abide, 710

To teach, to warn, to strengthen, guard, and guide

The pilgrim in his onward path, and fill

With holy fervour his obedient will.

Spurn not the proffer'd blessing. Vengeance waits

With stern intent at mercy's closing gates ; 715

God's mercy
and ven-
geance

And mercy, slighted and despised, gives room

To wrath, and hastens on the impending doom.

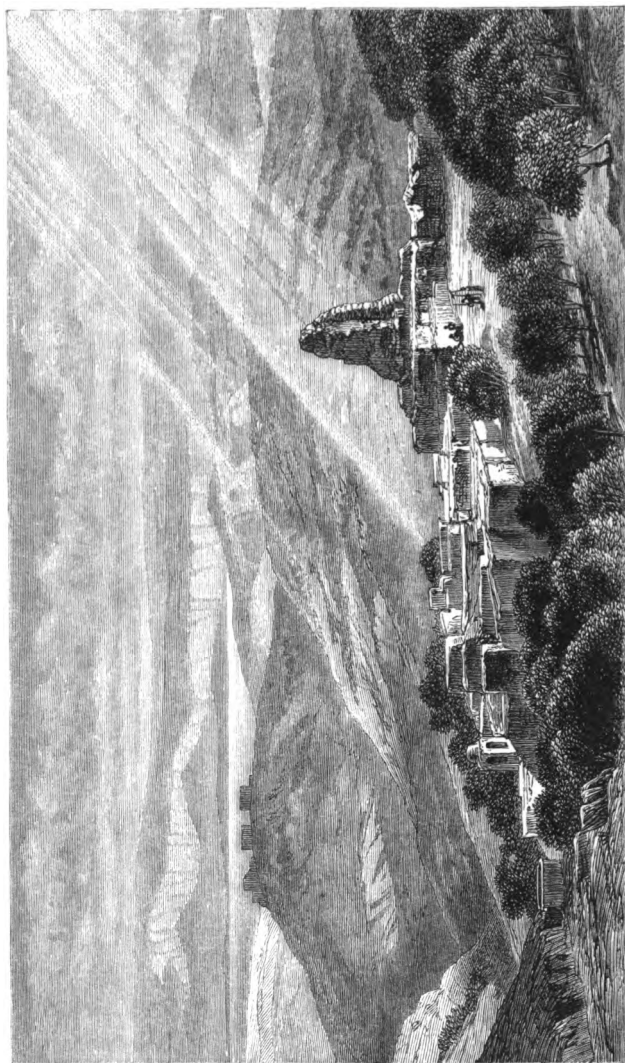
Mercy and wrath ! The trackless depths of each

Lie far beyond the range of thought or speech.

But from enduring monuments we know 720

How sweet the blessing and how sure the blow.

¹ " A threefold cord is not quickly broken."—*Eccles.* iv. 12.



Philip H. Delamater, del.

Sketched by Rev. J. L. Pett.

BETHANY AND THE DEAD SEA.

Mark well yon distant lake ; its sullen strand Dead Sea.

Shrinks from the touch of Nature's bounteous
hand ;

The poison'd streams and desolated plain
Bear still the record of that fiery rain 725

Pour'd down in vengeance, when the sinner's cry,¹
Loud and defiant, pierced the wrathful sky.

Another scene ;—in that secluded glade
The peaceful olive waves her silver shade ;
Earth's fleeting gems, in wild profusion strown,
Outshine the pomp of Israel's richest throne.² 731

That lowly wall, those humble dwellings claim,³ Bethany.

'Mid frequent change, an old and cherish'd name.
Pause on the spot—'tis consecrated ground ;
A home and welcome here the Saviour found ; 735
Far from the councils of the proud and base,
In faithful hearts He chose a resting-place,

¹ " And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous."

Genesis xviii. 20.

² " And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."—*Mat.* vi. 29.

³ " And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany ; and he lodged there."—*Mat.* xxi. 17.

Repaid the tender ministry of love
 With words of life, and treasures from above.
 Here, with compassion's sweet resistless power, 740
 He soothed the mourners in their darkest hour,
 Himself a mourner, at the tomb where slept
 Their loved and lost companion, "Jesus
 wept." ¹

E'en while the promise and the pledge He gave
 Of life renew'd and triumph o'er the grave, 745
 The Son of Man His tears of pity shed ;
 The Son of God aroused the slumb'ring dead.
 True to the nature He had deign'd to share,
 Each depth He proved of human woe and care ;
 Felt keen affection's pang as mortals feel, 750
 And sorrow'd o'er the wounds He came to heal.

God and
 His works
 perfectly
 good.

To man from none but Deity alone
 The nature of the Godhead can be known.
 That Infinite Perfection would we sound,
 No rule or standard but Himself is found. 755
 Good is the substance of His thought and will,
 Its negative and opposite is ill.

¹ "Jesus wept."—*St. John xi. 35.*

He scann'd, as on creation's verge He stood,
His work complete, and "saw that it was good."¹

• How then did evil enter? Long ere man 760 Entrance of
Lived or transgress'd, the reign of death began.
evil.

Through periods scarce conceived, the world of life,
So nature teaches, was a scene of strife.

Bound in the rock's impenetrable veins,
Mysterious earth preserves the dead remains; 765 Witness of
Geology.

Myriads of tribes, long blotted from our sphere,

In scatter'd relics dimly re-appear;

Huge monster shapes, by ceaseless carnage fed,

Traversed the dull waves of that heaving bed,

Upheld by central fires, whose vap'rous field 770

Not yet to solid structure had congeal'd;

Forms, too, distorted, torn, and crush'd, retain,²

Graven in stone, the mark of sudden pain,

¹ "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."—*Gen.* i. 31.

² "The river bullhead, when attacked by an enemy, or immediately that it feels the hook in its jaws, erects its two spines at nearly right angles with the plates of the head, as if to render itself as difficult of being swallowed as possible. The attitude is one of danger and alarm; and it is a curious fact to which I shall afterwards have occasion to advert, that in this

As if a seething stream of death had flow'd

In full resistless tide on life's abode.

775

attitude nine-tenths of the pterichthys of the lower old red sandstone are to be found. We read in the stone a singularly preserved story of the strong instinctive love of life, and of the mingled fear and anger implanted for its preservation. 'The champions in distorted postures threat.' It presents us, too, with a wonderful record of violent death falling at once, not on a few individuals, but on whole tribes."—*The Old Red Sandstone*. HUGH MILLER, p. 84.

"At this period of our history some terrible catastrophe involved in sudden destruction the fish of an area at least a hundred miles from boundary to boundary, perhaps much more. The same platform in Orkney as at Cromarty is strewn thick with remains which exhibit unequivocally the marks of violent death. The figures are contorted, contracted, curved; the tail in many instances is bent round to the head: the spines stick out; the fins are spread to the full, as in fish that die in convulsions. The pterichthys shows its arms extended at their stiffest angle as if prepared for an enemy. The attitudes of all the ichthyolites on this platform are attitudes of fear, anger, and pain. The remains, too, appear to have suffered nothing from the after attacks of predaceous fishes; none such seem to have survived. The record is one of destruction at once widely spread, and total so far as it extended. There are proofs that whatever may have been the cause of the catastrophe, it must have taken place in a sea unusually still. The scales when scattered by some slight undulation, are scattered to the dis-

Do these primæval monuments recall
 An earlier race of man, an older fall ?
 Or are they shadows of events foreknown,
 And seen in ages distant from our own,
 Visibly present as outspread they lie, 780
 Beneath the gaze of an all-searching eye,
 In one vast moment's universal span,
 Unmark'd by years and centuries of man ?

tance of only a few inches, and still exhibit their enamel entire, and their peculiar fineness of edge. The spines, even when separated, retain their original needle-like sharpness of point. Rays well nigh as slender as horse-hairs are enclosed unbroken in the mass. While ichthyolites occur, in which not only the parts survive, but even the expression which the stiff and threatening attitude conveyed when the last struggle was over. Destruction must have come in the calm, and it must have been of a kind by which the calm was nothing disturbed. In what could it have originated ? By what quiet but potent agency of destruction were the innumerable existences of an area, perhaps ten thousand square miles in extent, annihilated at once, and yet the medium in which they had lived left undisturbed by its operations ? Conjecture lacks footing in grappling with the enigma, and expatiates in uncertainty over all the known phenomena of death."

The Old Red Sandstone. HUGH MILLER, p. 277.

Or did the Dragon's pestilential train
Through every channel pour the subtle bane, 785
Infect creation with its noxious breath,
And in life's pasture sow the seed of death?

The origin of
evil baffles
enquiry.

Man as we learn, by Satan tempted, fell ;
But who first tempted Satan to rebel ?
And whence originate the powers of hell ? } 790
Is it that liberty of will, and thought,
Void of control, its own destruction wrought ?
Or did divine Omnipotence decree
That heav'n's bright host, in will and judgment free,
Some trial of allegiance should abide, 795
And stand, by vict'ry proved and glorified ?
Yet those immortal spirits, pure, exempt
From want or suff'ring, who or what could tempt ?
Around the throne of the Creator ranged
In glorious ranks, unthreaten'd and unchanged, 800
Rich in the knowledge of His truth and might,
Fill'd with His goodness, radiant with His light,
What outward influence, or what seed within
Was found, to ripen and expand to sin ?
Here reason and imagination fail 805
Perplex'd, nor faith herself withdraws the veil ;

The baffled spirit in confusion strays
 Round the deep myst'ry, and in wild amaze
 From point to point directs her curious gaze. } 809

Vain is the search, on dang'rous ground we tread,
 Perhaps the riddle may at last be read

When sin and Satan are no longer free,
 And death is swallow'd up in victory.

To matter laws and limits are ordain'd ;
 The mind, if perfect, ranges unconstrain'd ; 815

Can choose the good or ill, to error turn
 Or truth, and wisdom's call obey or spurn.

But as she heeds or slights that heav'nly voice,
 Life or corruption waits upon her choice.

Let once the clear drawn boundary be cross'd, 820
 She mourns her birthright of perfection lost.

When man was pure and sinless, fear and shame Origin of
fear in man.
 Were yet unknown, but with transgression came

The sadd'ning cloud ; no causeless terror now
 Sank in the heart, and paled the cowering brow. 825

By a new impulse of his conscience moved, ¹
 He fled the Presence of the God he loved ;

¹ " And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid."—*Genesis* iii. 10.

Not that his love had perish'd, but it quail'd
 Beneath the shock, as guilt and dread prevail'd,
 Nor dared to give from its polluted stream 830
 The full reflection of too pure a beam.

Good springs
 from it. Guilt sow'd the germ of fear; but from that
 seed,

So mercy wills, may spring a fruit we need;
 And the dull sense of hopeless, abject care
 May ripen into penitence and prayer. 835
 Since that first day of sorrow, fear hath led
 The steps of love, with slow uncertain tread.
 The work of duty fear must now begin,

Office of fear. Restrain the hand, the tongue, the heart within,
 Curb the presumptuous fancy, check and chide 840
 Unruly will, and crush the seed of pride.
 Nor only conscience speaks the threat'ning word,
 But signs of judgment must be felt and heard,
 Else would the tide of evil, uncontroll'd,
 O'erwhelm the few who bide within the fold; 845
 To these the tokens of a wrath reveal'd
 Are strength and hope, a safeguard and a shield;
 Nor may we think the God of truth will deign
 With empty terrors to assert His reign,

Appal with phantoms the bewilder'd eyes, 850
 And mock the soul with unrealities ;
 Foil'd by no distance, nor appeased by time,
 Be sure that judgment ever clings to crime.

If the long treasured sin of one, on all Future pros-
 Who from his source derive their being, fall ; 855 pects of man.
 If the Creator gives, with life and breath,
 A cheerless heritage of pain and death ;¹
 Were it not best, as ancient poets say,
 Ne'er to be born,—or swiftly pass away,
 Like some light fleeting vapour from the scene, 860
 And fade to nought, as we had never been ;
 Might we not wish that the first dark'ning cloud
 Which lower'd on man had been his final shroud,
 And he, the father of a fallen race,
 Had left no branch or blossom in his place ? 865
 But if a certain remedy be found
 To cleanse the stain, to heal the deadly wound,

¹ “ Μὴ φῦναι τὸν ἅπαντα νι-
 -κᾶ λόγον· τὸ δ' ἐπεὶ φανῇ,
 βῆναι κείθεν ὅθεν περ ἦκει
 πολὺ δεύτερον ὡς τάχιστα.”

SOPH. *Œd. Col.* 1221.

To renovate the being, and restore
 To man the godlike image that he bore,— 869
 Then may we bless, with note of thankful praise,
 Each moment added to our term of days ;
 Each hour of trial, by whose wise employ,
 We press the nearer to a crown of joy.
 Death's shadow on our dark horizon low'rs :
 But, seen beyond, a promis'd life is ours ; ¹ 875
 The children of the past, the countless years
 Of earth's futurity that prospect cheers.

¹ " Nec perit in tanto quicquam, mihi credite, mundo,
 Sed variat, faciemque novat : nascique vocatur,
 Incipere esse aliud, quam quod fuit ante ; morique
 Desinere illud idem. Cum sint huc forsitan illa,
 Hinc translata illuc ; summa tamen omnia constant."

OVID. *Met.* xv. 254.

" Quod mutatur enim dissolvitur, interit ergo."

Lucretius, iii. 756.

" At nunc, inter se quia textus principiorum
 Dissimiles constant æternaque materies est,
 Incolumi remanent res corpore, dum satis acris
 Vis abeat, pro textura cujusque reperta.
 Haud igitur redit ad nihilum res ulla, sed omnes
 Disidio redeunt in corpora materiai."

Ibid. i. 245.

Nature, with reproductive power endued,
 Her stream of life through ages hath renew'd
 By swift succession, and, ourselves destroy'd, 880
 With other selves shall fill the craving void ;
 Perhaps the very substance, which of old
 Form'd our own frame, she shapes in different
 mould,
 And from the scatter'd fragments of the dead
 Builds up another being in our stead ;¹ 885

Heathen
views of.

¹ " Nil tamen hoc ad nos, qui cœtu, conjugioque
 Corporis, atque Animæ consistimus uniter apti.
 Nec, si materiam nostram conlegerit ætas
 Post obitum, rursumque redegerit, ut sita nunc est ;
 Atque iterum nobis fuerint data lumina vitæ,
 Pertineat quicquam tamen ad nos id quoque factum,
 Interrupta semel cum sit repetentia nostra."

LUCRETIVS, lib. iii. 857.

" To us what boots it, should some future time
 Collect our atoms, the dismantled frame
 Restore entire, and e'en with life relume,
 When once the memory of ourselves is fled."

Good's Translation.

It is remarkable that both the Pythagorean and the Epicurean should each bring forward his own system, the one of

Nay, she may range our particles once more
 In the same form and order as before,
 And give them life, yet not ourselves restore ;

the immortality of the soul, the other of its utterly perishable nature, as an argument against the fear of death.

“ O genus attonitum gelidæ formidine mortis
 Morte carent animæ
 Omnia mutantur, nihil interit.”

OVID. *Met.* xv. 153, 158, 165.

But the fact is, the doctrine of transmigration is tantamount to that of destruction if the individuality is destroyed or broken. Lucretius's argument is perfectly sound and philosophical, assuming the eternity of matter itself, and the finite nature of any of its combinations, individual life being one of those combinations ; cœtu “conjugioque corporis atque animæ,” &c.

The interruption of the consciousness in the “vitæ pausa” being the virtual finish of our existence. But this same interruption is equally assumed by the Pythagoreans. The soul generally enters into one state in an utter oblivion of that from which it has passed. For though Pythagoras professes to recollect his former existence in the form of Euphorbus, this is clearly looked upon as an exceptional case, the general rule being that pronounced in Virgil's sixth *Æneid*,—“Lethem ad fluvium Deus evocat ordine magno, scilicet immemores,” &c. So that after all the Pythagorean system does no more than give a longer period, so to speak, of identity.

I cannot help thinking that some of the difficulties, or rather incongruities of ancient systems, arose from a supposed neces-

Nor reunite that strange mysterious chain
Of consciousness, which death hath rent in twain.

sity of attributing to the soul a retrospective eternal existence. Many arguments rest upon the assertion that a beginning implies an end, that what is to exist through eternity must have existed from eternity. This is an assertion we can neither admit nor reject; since we cannot conceive eternity, look at it as we may, nor ground any position respecting it, on other than a purely divine revelation. I suppose we may accept Ovid's lines, in the fifteenth book of the *Met.* as giving a true account of Pythagoras's doctrine. They are evidently carefully written, and show a greater amount of study and finish than perhaps any other part of his work, and aim rather at clearness of expression than redundancy of poetical ornament.

The more I read Lucretius the more I feel that his mind was capable of receiving doctrines of a far higher nature than those which he professed to uphold. As in every case, where a great multitude of arguments is brought forward to establish a position, a great many are feeble and inconclusive, some almost childish; and his explanations of natural phenomena do not show that his views in that respect were at all in advance of the age; but many of his arguments, assuming his groundwork to have any value, are sound, ingenious, and rational, and suggestive of trains of thought which would lead us near the truth.

His maxim (*Lucretius*, vi. 30), "*Ignorantia causarum conferre Deorum*," &c., is one which, taken properly, is of truth

Not thus the God, on whom we fix our trust,
 Shall raise His slumb'ring children from the dust :

and value ; for its consideration guards us, on one hand, from the danger of being led by imposture into the belief in a false miracle ; and, on the other, it furnishes in many cases a test by which we may distinguish a true miracle. For instance, most of our Saviour's miracles,—as the turning of water into wine ; the feeding of a multitude with a few loaves and fishes ; the raising of Lazarus—not only could not be attributed to any known or perceptible natural causes, but it must have been evident that no natural causes existed by which to account for them ; that in fact they were contrary to natural laws, and therefore could only have been wrought by supernatural agency.

But the natural philosopher, if his mind be rightly constituted, finds that, in tracing things to their remote causes, there is a point at which he must stop : his ignorance drives him into the admission that there must be some first cause beyond any that he has been able to investigate,—in fact, a God. Of course the poet's meaning is, that where we cannot see the natural causes of things, we are not to suppose that none exist, and so avoid the difficulty by confessing the agency of a higher power.

The opinion of the Epicureans was, that the Gods have an eternal existence in a state of tranquillity, and do not concern themselves in the affairs of men ; that the matter of which the universe was made is eternal, and has certain properties which cause it to collect together in the forms in which we see it ; that though its particles are indestructible, it undergoes con-

Themselves in person shall He call by name,
 Each in his own identity of frame,
 Body and soul renew'd, yet still the same ;

Christian
 view.

895

stant change. That not only the body but the soul is material; that it is the junction of the two that constitutes our individual existence; and that when these are separated, our existence altogether terminates, and is never again renewed; in short, that personally we have no future state, even if the same particles are again combined so as to take a living form. Now I cannot help thinking that the poet's feelings and reason, at least the opinion he professes to hold and advocate, go together; because he rises in his tone and language whenever he speaks of Deity. The invocation to a heathen goddess, with which his work opens, is not in the language of one who looks upon the gods as being wrapt up in their own uninterrupted happiness, and careless of the fate of mortals. The lines which I have quoted, "*Quis regere immensi summam,*" &c., seem to be dictated rather by a sense of wonder and admiration of Divine power, than by a spirit of opposition.

The Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration, which Plato seems in some measure to have adopted, virtually cuts off the prospect of immortal existence as much as the Epicurean. The consciousness is supposed to be utterly destroyed by the waters of Lethe: the soul passes into its new habitation, whether of human being or animal, in utter oblivion of its former condition. All that Lucretius says of his material soul appears to apply equally to the translated soul of the Pythagorean: there is the same "*Interrupta repentia,*" the same

His own true body, and his very soul,
 United once again, a living whole.
 How mem'ry knits anew her sever'd strings,
 How to itself the riv'n existence clings,
 We know not.—But the Being who inspires
 Each high affection, mocks not its desires :
 Myself, and not a stranger in my place,¹
 Shall meet my God, and stand before His face ;
 With my own lips my Saviour's promise plead ;
 Of my own works receive the allotted meed ; 905
 In my own person hear and undergo
 My final sentence, endless bliss or woe.
 The proffer'd terms are known, within our scope
 Abides the vision of a certain hope :
 And should our bold presumption seek to found 910
 A title or a claim on other ground,

Some hope
 in.

“*vitaï pausa.*” Whether the prospect of living again in the form of a beast is calculated to allay the fear of death may reasonably be doubted.

The theory of a previous eternity of the soul, as being necessarily combined with its future eternity, seems to have made a difficulty.

¹ “Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.”—*Job* xix. 27.

nd Edinbro'.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
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71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

900

Ours is the risk ; 'twere impious to complain

That all our toil and all our care is vain.

Unbidden worship, superstitious fear,

And false belief, although it be sincere,

915

Danger of
error.

Betray the soul with unsuspected snare ;

Nor while we grieve and pity, can we dare

Her pardon or acquittal to declare.

The task is ours to guard with watchful eye

A sacred trust in all its purity ;

920

To 'stablish and confirm with holy pledge

The unconscious infant in his privilege ;

To train with timely guidance wav'ring youth ;

To sow, where error dwells, the seed of truth ;

And from a fount of healing waters pour

925

The priceless gift on earth's remotest shore.

If well assur'd that error is akin,

Whate'er its pretext or excuse, to sin,

Love, with untiring energy and force,

Will struggle and contend to check its course ;

930

But if we hold it void of risk or blame,

Why need we truth, and right, and life, proclaim ?

Yet e'er from Scripture's certain rule she draws

Its harshest inference, charity will pause ;

Yet it is not
for man to
fix bounds to
the mercy of
God.

Nor press conclusions, which the reas'ner deems
 Legitimate, to terrible extremes. 936
 The child of faithless parents, snatch'd away
 Ere sense, or thought, or action could obey
 Sin's foul behest ; the Pagan yet uncall'd ;
 The soul in helpless ignorance enthrall'd ; 940
 Or in her honest search of truth betray'd
 By some false gleam. Shall these be strictly weigh'd,
 And mark'd for endless woe, without resource or aid ?
 Where God pronounces judgment, it is fit
 That man with humbled spirit should submit ; 945
 But not the office of a judge assume
 Himself, and urge th' inexorable doom ;
 Or fix a bound to mercy, and deprive
 Th' Almighty of His own prerogative.
 Some scheme of love, by boundless wisdom plann'd,
 Though unreveal'd, may still efface the brand ; 951
 And the one perfect sacrifice atone ¹
 For sin, by channels yet to man unknown.

¹ " And though no name be for salvation known,
 But that of His eternal Son alone,
 Who knows how far transcending goodness can
 Extend the merits of that Son to man ?

DRYDEN, *Religio Laici*.

With stern remorseless vigilance of old 955
 The law of wrath o'ershadow'd Israel's fold ; The cove-
 And he who from its precept turn'd aside nant of
 Beneath the stroke of justice surely died. wrath.
 The rebel or idolater, whate'er
 His station or his plea, 'twas sin to spare ;
 Or if the arm of man, by fear unnerved, 960
 Or favour, from the task of vengeance swerved,
 God's anger bid the blow descend, or sped
 A wider, deadlier judgment in its stead.
 Thus man's proud heart by instant fear was
 school'd ;
 Protecting power, and jealous anger ruled 965
 In concert, and, at length, prepared the way
 For a new covenant, whose gentle sway,
 Stricter in moral claim, more merciful
 In earthly sentence, should that law annul.
 Fix'd on the heart's affection, not the dread 970 Of Love.
 Of plague or smart, Messiah's kingdom spread.
 His faithful ranks, by meek endurance known,
 Struck not, but suffer'd to defend His throne.
 Sad was the hour, when first unreas'ning zeal
 Upheld the truth of life with scourge and steel ; 975

And Zion flung, as from her depths she rose,
 Her surest, noblest weapon to her foes.
 That weapon, which, so oft in danger tried,¹
 The fiery darts of hate had turn'd aside,
 Against herself she pointed, when she dealt 980
 The tyrant blow she had so lately felt;
 And error learnt by suffering to sustain
 Her strengthen'd cause, and widen her domain.

Persecution
 no safe-
 guard, but
 source of ill
 and danger.

From that dark source not yet hath ceased to
 flow
 A sullen tide of peril and of woe ; 985
 And peace, insulted, spurn'd, and trampled down
 By hate and pride, withholds her promised crown.
 E'en now, perhaps, the troubled atmosphere
 Tells of an hour of doubt and terror near.
 In purpose fix'd, though changeable in form, 990
 Are seen advancing heralds of the storm ;
 The gath'ring gloom extends, a sudden gust
 Now flings aloft the spire of whirling dust ;
 Now shatters into spray some em'rald crest
 Of ocean billow surging from its rest. 995

² See Leckie's *Rise and Progress of Rationalism*.

Forth rolls the solemn peal ; a fitful glare
 Obliquely glances thro' the depths of air ;
 Wild struggling masses mingle as they fly
 Tumultuous, earth with sea, and sea with sky.
 Perchance the surface, toss'd and torn, may show 1000
 Some hidden movement heaving from below
 Through the vast frame ; some living element,
 Long dormant and in earth's recesses pent,
 May strive and struggle till it finds a vent ;
 Ordain'd, we know not if to clear and chase 1005
 Pernicious fumes and vapours from their place ;
 Afar and wide the seeds of death to cast,
 With desolating fire, and sulph'rous blast.

Freedom of thought was once the scoffer's boast, Freedom of thought.
 And he who least believed exulted most. 1010
 Might not the phrase another meaning bear ?
 Freedom to search, examine, sift with care ¹
 The Book of Life ; with reverence to assay
 Its inmost worth, and all its purpose weigh.
 Like those Bereans who of old were stirr'd 1015
 To trace the records of their treasur'd word

¹ See *Ecce Deus*, and other works of the present day.

With noble energy of zeal, and found
Its utt'rance echoed by the Gospel sound.

Yet may the mind, from chains of usage freed,
Abandon, all too lightly, form and creed ; 1020

Danger of. And, in her dread lest thought and intellect
Be cramp'd by terms and watchwords of a sect, }
O'erleap the bounds which shelter and protect. }

Thus fade or fly, by newer lights estranged,
Opinions long revered, and long unchanged ; 1025
And truth itself, tho' built upon a rock
Of more than earthly strength, may tremble with the
shock.

Man fails. God's revelation cannot err, but man,
When he interprets or explains it, can :
And since 'tis reason's office to explain 1030
And to interpret much, we seek in vain
A system framed with perfect skill, to doubt
Impervious, and infallible throughout.

Yet, if we see the structure firmly stand,
Although the working of a mortal hand 1035
Truth at- Be clearly traced ; if heav'nly substance still
tainable. Pervade its framework, and its texture fill ;

If clearly taught, and rightly understood,
 Abide the doctrine needful for our good ;
 If wisdom's spirit prosper and direct 1040
 The teacher's honest labours, and protect
 The majesty of truth's establish'd throne ;
 Banishing error to some outer zone
 Of barren speculation, empty strife,
 And curious themes that touch not faith and
 life ; 1045

To such defence 'tis well the soul should cling,
 Nor wildly wander on uncertain wing,
 Nor from a living though reflected ray
 In eager self-dependence turn away.

 We stand prepared. The watchman from his Our true
 tower 1050 strength.

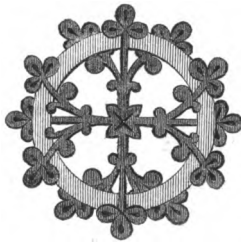
Marks in the distance danger's coming hour.
 The workman toils incessant to repair
 Each fracture and each flaw with skill and care.
 Should fierce and ill-directed zeal, intent
 On forcing error from her hold, have rent 1055
 The firmer, purer, fabric ; or the foe
 With hatred's weapon dealt the shatt'ring blow.

Yet Zion's safety rests not in the guard
 Of frowning battlement or portal barr'd.
 Himself, the fortress and abiding rock, 1060
 The Heav'nly Shepherd dwells, among His flock :
 Far o'er the waste His hospitable light
 Gleams, not to warn or threaten, but invite ;
 His call is heard, to welcome and to press
 The weary stranger from the wilderness, 1065
 Or gently win with love's persuasive voice
 The blinded wand'rer to his better choice.

God's pre-
 sence in the
 heart of man
 evidenced by
 its fruits.

Love flows uncheck'd,—the blessings that we
 share
 Of blessings yet to come an earnest bear.
 And if the frequent token be display'd, 1070
 Of mercy beaming through affliction's shade,
 Of earthly bonds by heav'nly weapon riven,
 Of renovated hopes, of sins forgiven ;
 If quicken'd by the genial warmth of prayer,
 The soul awake, emerging from despair, 1075
 Or borne aloft on strains of worship rise
 To higher spheres, and richer harmonies ;
 If anxious doubt, and care's o'erwhelming tide
 Be vanquish'd, and in heaven-born calm subside ;

If wild rebellious passion take her flight, 1080
 And duty and obedience yield delight ;
 If strength renew'd from each new trial spring,
 And fear, by love o'er-master'd, lose her sting ;
 Then know we that no fond delusive dream
 Mocks our affection with a transient gleam. 1085
 More sure than aught which eye or ear conveys
 Home to the sense, or Memory's touch portrays,
 Is that unspoken evidence and sign
 Of God's own presence in His living shrine.





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