Sir William Thomson's special work in science occupies him in a region where it is rather difficult for men of merely ordinary culture to follow in his footsteps. The higher departments of electrical and magnetic speculation, where scientific explorers of his eminence are engaged, are fields in which less advanced students soon lose their way, and grow bewildered. There will, probably, be few persons outside a limited circle who will be able to realise the importance of those researches in terrestrial magnetism in which he describes Sir Edward Sabine as engaged, and in which he touches so nearly on great results. But there is one passage in the present address that will be more readily comprehended, and in which new speculations are contributed to a branch of scientific investigation which has taken a strong hold of late on the popular fancy. Sir William Thomson has out-Darwined Darwin in his conjectures concerning the origin of life on this planet. Peremptorily rejecting all theories of spontaneous generation, the new President declares his firm belief that under no circumstances has life been evolved from meteorological conditions of inanimate matter. When the world first settled into shape and cooled down on the surface sufficiently to tolerate vegetable and animal existence, Sir William holds it to have been impossible—in opposition to all scientific knowledge—to suppose that life began of itself. In reading his speech, simple-minded people may begin to glow with the hope that the British Association is about to declare itself in favour of Adam and Eve, but in this expectation they will be disappointed. The new theory is an enlargement of that by which animal life and vegetation may be accounted for in the case of new volcanic islands emerging from the sea. Seeds and germs of various kinds are supposed to be wafted thither by the winds, or floated thither by the waters from other portions of the animate globe. So when this globe itself was altogether inanimate, it is conjectured that the earliest germs found their way here in consequence of what may be loosely described as cosmical accidents. Other worlds may have come into collision, or in some other way have been wrecked in space, and scattered germ-bearing fragments may to some extent have fallen upon the surface of the earth, there by degrees to be developed into plants, zoophytes, animals, gorillas, and, ultimately, Presidents of the British Association. It is a bold theory, the only fault of which is that it merely thrusts back certain difficulties for a stage, and does not clear them up.

Sir William Thomson is very much to be congratulated upon this inaugural address, which was a masterpiece.
To the Editor of the Bath Chronicle,
Sir,—I do not wonder that "Quondam Pedagogus" is puzzled by the verses of Lucretius, as quoted by him from Paley's edition. My references are to Lucretius vi. 552, 888, and 1072, in Professor Munro's edition. And if he willrefer to the note of that eminent critic on the first of these passages, he will see that *aquae* may be printed as four syllables, the first two short; from which it follows that the verse in the Bath Pump Room is, as I said, metrically correct. I do not contend that the first *a* is long, though I do not concede the "impossibility" of its being so.

F. A. PALEY.
Cambridge, February 10, 1873.

To the Editor of the Bath Chronicle,
Sir,—There can be little doubt that "Quondam Pedagogus" is right in his proposition that the first syllable of *aquae* can by no possibility be regarded as long, though his reference to "Wakefield followed, by the best editor Forbiger" is not reassuring. "Quondam Pedagogus" can hardly be ignorant of the editions of Lucretius by Lachmann and by Mr. Munro, scholars and critics, between whom and each man as Wakefield and Forbiger, the distance is simply immeasurable.

In the three lines referred to by Mr. Paley (Mr. Paley never referred at all to the No. 2 of "Quondam Pedagogus") Lachmann, following Lachmann, quotes Lachmann, reproduces Lachmann, according to Lachmann's note, "Similiter Horatium, quoque mus inter canes, silvis tribus syllabis dixit." The authority is conclusive against Mr. Paley's proposal to pronounce *aquae* as *aqua*, but the Pump-room inscription may still be defended by treating *aquae* as a quadrisyllable. I hardly see, by the way, why "Quondam Pedagogus," in writing *aqua*, as a quadrisyllable, reads it thus—*aqua*-c- unless the extra *a* is a misprint.

Gerald A. E. FitzGerald.
New University Club, 12th February.

In their attempts to establish scientific propositions ancient inquirers were at a great disadvantage, since they were unable to verify their doctrines either by experiment or by very extensive observations. Yet the Epicureans, working on the lines laid down by Leicippus and Democritus, contrived to anticipate with more or less definiteness some very important results of modern research. Lucretius teaches, for instance, that atoms are indestructible; and he makes good his position by an argument which, so far as it goes, is perfectly sound. This argument is that matter obeys unchanging laws, and that it could not do so if its ultimate elements were in course of time either worn or broken by use. Again, he maintains that atoms are not all of the same kind, but vary in size, in shape, and consequently in weight—a theory which was destined to do splendid service, for it was the principle which enabled Dalton to give coherence to those laws of combining proportion by which he revolutionized chemistry. Other remarkable deductions were that atoms are continually in motion, even when they are grouped in solid matter; that they have always moved, and always will move, with the same velocity; and that motion is the only ultimate form of energy. Mr. Masson even thinks that Lucretius had some perception of chemical affinity; but the only evidence for this is that he applies the word "concilium" to any combination of atoms by
THE

NATURE OF THINGS:

A DIDACTIC POEM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

OF

TITUS LUCRETIUS CARUS.

VOL. I.
Dumb, with alarm, with supplicating knee,  
And lifted eye, she sought compassion still.  
'Trumpets and unavailing'
THE

NATURE OF THINGS:

A DIDACTIC POEM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN
OF

TITUS LUcretIUS CARUS,

ACCOMPANIED WITH THE ORIGINAL TEXT,
AND

ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES PHILOLOGICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

By JOHN MASON GOOD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.
1805.
PREFACE.

There is no poem, within the circle of the ancient Classics, more entitled to attention, than the "Nature of Things," by Titus Lucretius Carus. It unfolds to us the rudiments of that philosophy which, under the plastic hands of Gassendi and Newton, has, at length, obtained an eternal triumph over every other hypothesis of the Grecian schools; it is composed in language the most captivating and perspicuous that can result from an equal combination of simplicity and polish, is adorned with episodes the most elegant and impressive, and illustrated by all the treasures of natural history. It is the Pierian Spring from which Virgil drew his happiest draughts of inspiration; and constitutes, as well in point of time, as of excellence, the first didactic poem of antiquity.

In consequence, nevertheless, of the cloud that, for many centuries posterior to the Christian æra, hung over the Epicurean system, which it is the professed object of Lucretius to develop, this exquisite and unrivalled production became generally proscribed and repudiated, till at last it was rarely to be met with, but in the libraries of the learned, or the curious. Having accompanied, however, Epicurus in his fall, it was destined to be a partaker of his rise; and hence, on the revival of letters in the thirteenth century, when the atomic doctrine became once more a subject of investigation, the Nature of Things...
Things was dragged forth from its learned dust, and its beauties re-investigated and unfolded. On the resurrection of science, Italy first threw off the mouldy shroud that enveloped her; and here first we behold a restoration of the labours of Lucretius. Brescia has the honour of having, on this occasion, led the way, by a folio edition of the original, correctly and sumptuously printed by Ferrandi in 1473; Verona, Venice, and Bologna, speedily and successfully followed. Early in the ensuing century, various impressions appeared in France and Germany; and at last, under the superintendence of Creech, in our own country, in 1695.

To enter into an examination of the comparative merits of these different editions of the original, would be to overstep the bounds of my character as a translator. It is sufficient to observe, that of those which have hitherto appeared, the most approved, and by far the most correct, are Havercamp's and Wakefield's; the latter of which was only published in 1796, and by the elegance of its typography, the accuracy and re-integration of its text, and the rich and comprehensive commentary with which it is accompanied, has amply atoned for the tardiness with which the merits of Lucretius were acknowledged in Great Britain. The Wakefield edition has since been reprinted by M. Eichstadt at Leipsic, or rather is at this time reprinting; the first volume only having hitherto made its appearance, which comprises the entire text, and what was certainly much wanted, a new and very copious Index. Its size is octavo, and its date 1801. The remaining volumes are to contain the notes, together with observations by the learned Editor himself.

The popularity of Lucretius, however, has hitherto been more retarded by the want of poetic talents in his translators, than from any deficiency of original editions; and Great Britain, which was latest
In acknowledging his vernacular merit, possesses, to the present hour, no version that can communicate any adequate idea of it to those unacquainted with Latin; and is still far behind what has been repeatedly effected on the Continent.

The best version which has hitherto been offered to the public, is that, in Italian, of the justly celebrated Alessandro Marchetti, who died in 1714, after having been Professor of Mathematics in the University of Pisa during the greater part of his life. Marchetti's translation is in blank verse, and is fully entitled to the high commendation bestowed upon it by his friend Graziani, himself a celebrated poet, as well as chief secretary of state to the duke of Modena. "You have translated this poem," observes he, in a letter to the Professor, "with great felicity and ease; unfolding its sublime and scientific materials in a delicate style and elegant manner; and, what is still more to be admired, your diction seldom runs into a lengthened paraphrase, and never without the greatest judgment." I shall often have occasion to refer to this version as I proceed, and the reader will hence be enabled to form his own opinion of its excellence. Marchetti, like Lucretius himself, died before his labours were in possession of the public; and, probably in consequence of an interdict from the papal chair, the first edition of his translation was printed in England, by George Pickard, 1717, in 8vo. being three years after the translator's decease. But a much more elegant edition was brought forwards at Paris, in 1754, on the fine woven paper of Olanda, and accompanied with engravings from imaginary, but well-executed designs by Cochin. Yet the value of this splendid edition is much diminished by an almost incalculable number of errors, which have unaccountably been suffered to creep into the text. A new and more
correct edition, with similar engravings, was proposed at Paris about ten years ago: but the political troubles in which France has ever since been involved, have prevented it from being carried into execution.

The translation of "The Nature of Things," however, forms not the whole of the poetical labours of Marchetti; for he published, in 1707, a version of the odes of Anacreon in quarto; and left behind him, in manuscript, a complete translation of the Æneid in ottava rima, and an unfinished philosophic poem, written in imitation of Lucretius and Empedocles, upon The Nature of Things, adapted to the latest discoveries, and the most approved modern systems. It was to this work he intended to have prefixed the beautiful dedication to Lewis the Great, which the Abbé Arnaud alludes to in his Journal, and conceives to have been designed for his translation of Lucretius. It is much to be regretted, that Marchetti did not live to complete this, which appears to have been his favourite, poem, and upon which he had laboured with close application for many years. It is seldom that so large a share of poetic and mathematical talents concentrate in the same person. Signora Borghini, who had been a diligent pupil of the professor's, and had as successfully followed him in the study of poetry as of the mathematics, pays him the following compliment in one of her Canzonets, a collection of which was afterwards published at Naples, and dedicated to her preceptor himself:

Però che dentro saggj, eccelsi, e santi
Carmi, con nuovo stile, e sovrumanaro.
Principj ignoti, e meraviglie ascose
Chiari per te vedransi; e se davanti
A te si dolcemente il gran Romano
Scrisse Della Natura delle Cose,
Di più degne e famose
Opre tu rieto andrai, che al vero lume
Scioglì per l'alta via sicure piume.
Thy heavenly verse, sublime, and sage,
Propounds, through each unrivall'd page,
Truths that, till now, ne'er sprang to birth,
The mysteries of heaven and earth.
By thee the mighty Roman sings
In sweetest strain, The Rise of Things;
But thy own work shall yield thy name
A worthier and a wider fame:
A firmer plumage shall display,
A loftier flight, and brighter day.

For translations of Lucretius I have hitherto sought in vain amidst the literature of Spain and Portugal; and I have reason to believe, that not one of any reputation exists in either country. This, however, is not a little extraordinary, since it is a fact which I trust will sufficiently appear in the ensuing attempt, that both Lope and Garcilasso de la Vega, Ercilla and Camoens, have been indebted to The Nature of Things, for many of their best and happiest passages; and Frachetta has written in Spanish a laborious commentary upon it, in a thick quarto volume, entitled, "Breve Spositione di tutta l'Opera di Lucretio." This last work I have examined, and shall occasionally refer to. In the German language, a version from the pen of M. F. X. Mayr made its appearance in two volumes octavo, in 1784 and 1785. It was printed at Vienna by Mösle, but I have not been able to obtain a copy. I have, however, seen De Wit's Dutch translation, published in 1709, but without being induced to imitate it. The translation is in prose, accompanied with allegorical plates, and strangely subdivides every book into a variety of sections.

Of all countries, however, that have attempted to naturalize The Nature of Things, France has been most prolific in her exertions. Her earliest effort was a prose version published in 1650 by M. de Marolles, an abbé of Villelouin, and, for some reason that I am not
acquainted with, dedicated it to Christiana, queen of Sweden. The
translator makes a boast of having completed his labours in less than
four months; but he appears to have possessed no talents for the un-
dertaking, and rapidity is the only boast of which he can avail him-
self. "If the abbé had succeeded," says Bayle, "only as well as the
English translator Creech, he would have had a better fate; but he
neither understood Latin nor the Epicurean philosophy*." Yet, for
want of a better, this miserable performance long continued to be a
marketable book: a second edition of it was published in 1639; and
a third, in 1663, in which the author attempted to prove, that he was
better acquainted both with the philosophy and history of Epicurus
than the world had given him credit for, and hence subfixed a version
of the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius: at the same time, dissatisfied
with the unsuccess of his first dedication, he descended from thrones
and sceptres, and addressed it to the president of the Academie Royale,
which was then just instituted. It is singular to observe, that in 1677
this very translation, hastily as it was professed to have been written, and
abounding with errors of every kind, was itself translated into French
verse by James Langlois, who hereby unequivocally proved himself
to have been totally unacquainted with the language in which the
poem he undertook to versify was originally composed. It appears
to have met with the contempt it deserved; and the vanity of the ver-
sifier seems to have been solely excited to this absurd effort by a truly
metrical translation of detached parts of Lucretius, in which the clas-
sical muse of Moliere was well known to have indulged herself about
this very time, and the ill fate of which might have served as a sub-
ject for one of his own tragedies. The first intention of Moliere was
to have versified the entire poem; but finding that he was hereby
threatened with a larger portion of labour than he could find time to
engage in, he confined his rhymes to its more decorative parts, and

delivered the rest over to plain prose. A translation thus strangely and uncouthly tesselated, had it ever been completed, must have been highly unworthy of the Roman bard; but it would, nevertheless, at that time, have been no inconsiderable present to the writer's countrymen. It must be confessed, moreover, that Moliere was well qualified for the office of an interpreter from the course of his juvenile studies in the college at Clermont. Gassendi, the modern restorer of the doctrine of Epicurus, was, at that period, one of its professors: the favourite disciple of Gassendi was Chapelle, who, both now, and through the whole of Moliere's life, was his most familiar and intimate friend. With Chapelle, the French dramatist frequently attended the professor's philosophical lectures; and though never a convert to his tenets, from the literary conversations, which hence ensued between himself and his fellow-student, not only during their residence at college, but in their subsequent days, he must have been sufficiently initiated into the doctrines of the Epicurean system. Moliere, as he proceeded with his version, uniformly rehearsed it both to Chapelle and Rohaut, who jointly testified their approbation of the performance. But it was predestined to perish abortively, although, at length, brought very nearly to its completion. A servant of the translator, to whom he had committed the care of his dress-wig, being in want of paper to put it into curl, most unluckily laid hold of a loose sheet of the version itself; which was immediately rent to pieces, and thrown into the fire as soon as it had performed its office. Molière was an irritable man, and the accident was too provoking to be endured: he determined never to translate another page, and flung the whole remainder of his version into the flames that had thus consumed a part of it.

In 1685 appeared another translation, in French prose, by the baron des Coutures, who also published, in the same year, an apologetic treatise, entitled, "Sur la Morale d'Epicure." To his version of the
Nature of Things is prefixed a life of its author, drawn up from the materials already furnished him by Ciunta, Le Blanc, Hubert Giflaine, Lambine, and other commentators upon the poem: and to every book is appended a small body of notes, many of which show him to have been better acquainted with his subject than de Marolles. As a translator, however, he has succeeded less than as an expositor. His version is prolix and paraphrastic, inelegant, and devoid of spirit. It, nevertheless, obtained a second edition in 1692; and a third in 1708, but without any material alterations in either. De Coutures was succeeded in his attempt by Alexander Deleyre, who is well known as one of the writers of the Encyclopedie, but still more so, as the author of a translation of Lord Verulam's philosophic treatises. Deleyre died in 1797, and left this version among several other inedited works. It has not yet been published, nor is it much entitled to such a distinction, if not superior to his metrical romances set to music by his friend Jean Jacques Rousseau. Deleyre was, in all probability, well acquainted with the Epicurean hypothesis, but he possessed little of the fire of genuine poetry. He may have been a well-meaning man, but he was, in the early part of his life, a rigid Jesuit, and in the latter, a morose philosopher.

Be the merit of the manuscript version of Deleyre, however, what it may, the necessity of its publication is now altogether superseded by the very elegant translation, in French verse, of M. Le Blanc de Guillet, which was neatly printed at Paris in two volumes octavo, in 1788 *, and dedicated to M. Dionis du Sejour; and perhaps, by its appearance and intrinsic merit, first of all induced Deleyre to relinquish his design. The version is accompanied with the original text

* I have also seen a work which pretends to be a translation of the Nature of Things, and which was published at Amsterdam, in French prose, about twenty years ago. It is an anonymous performance, and rather an abridgement of the poem than a full version. Its size is small octavo, and it entitles itself Traduction Libre.
in alternate pages, which, from a casual examination, I believe to be Creech's: it is decorated with plates, illustrated by notes, and introduced by a comprehensive preliminary discourse, which contains a biography of the original author, chiefly drawn up from Giffane, or as he is more generally called, Giffanius, and Creech, and possessing whatever inaccuracies have been accidentally committed by the latter, together with some general observations upon the Epicurean hypothesis. In this hypothesis, M. de Guillet does not, however, appear to have been very deeply versed; and hence, even in the translation itself, he is sometimes incorrect, and still more frequently obscure. It is, nevertheless, upon the whole, a work of great merit, and ranks second amidst the translations of Lucretius which have yet appeared in any nation. Of course, it ranges immediately next to that of Marchetti.

In our own language, the first attempt to naturalize the poem before us was by Evelyn in 1656; upon which occasion, almost every friend of his who could write in rhyme seems to have flattered him with complimentary verses. Evelyn, however, and it is a proof that he was not altogether deficient in taste, still felt himself unqualified for the task. He had, at this time, only published a small fascicle containing the first book, with an appendix of notes which discover no small degree of general reading and acquaintance with his subject. But conscious, upon actual trial, of his own inability, and trembling at the difficulties which lay before him, he took shelter under a critical remark of Casaubon, and doubted, to adopt his own version of it, "whether it were possible for any traduction to equal the elegancy and excellency of the original;" at the same time adding, that "he is persuaded, men will rather take the pains to converse the original, than stay till the rest be translated into English." With the first Vol. I.
book, therefore, closed the labours of Evelyn; and no one who is acquainted with his version, will regret that it did not extend farther.

About twenty years posterior to this unsatisfactory effort, Creech introduced, before the public, his translation of the entire poem; and shortly afterwards published, at the Oxford press, a new and valuable edition of the original, with Latin notes. Creech was an admirable scholar, and no contemptible poet; but he generally wrote with too much rapidity, and hence became alike inaccurate and inelegant. He was, moreover, at all times, more studious to convey a knowledge of the simple idea of his author, than of the ornamental dress in which it was conveyed. His version of Lucretius, however, is sometimes loaded with ideas, and even whole lines which have no foundation in the original, and sometimes abruptly curtailed of others that are absolutely necessary to the force and elucidation of the argument. Of such redundancies and defects I shall occasionally have to take notice in the prosecution of the work before me. But after all, it is no small share of praise to Creech, that he completed a task, which Evelyn, in a copy of complimentary verses addressed to the former on the publication of his poem, frankly declares, he was unable to accomplish, and which no one, to the present moment, has since dared to encounter.

Dryden was, at this time, a young man; but though green in years, he was mature in poetical powers; and equally disgusted with both translators, he was resolved to try the effect of his own talents, and, if possible, to give his countrymen some idea of the real excellencies of the original. For this purpose, he selected a variety of passages, but chiefly of the ornamental kind, as the beginnings and endings of the different books; and upon these he bestowed all the polish and elegance
of which he was master. The applause to which he was entitled, he abundantly received; and had he translated the entire poem with the same felicity and spirit which he has infused into these detached morsels, the version of Creech would have been long since forgotten, and that of the ensuing pages, perhaps, never made its appearance. Yet Dryden has, in general, rather paraphrased than translated; his lines are often double the number of the original; and he has, at times, unfortunately attempted to improve his author by ideas of his own creation.

To Dryden's specimens succeeded a prose version of the entire poem by Guernier and his colleagues. It was published in 1743, in two volumes octavo, and, like the French version of de Guillet, is accompanied by Creech's edition of the original in opposite pages. The translator's motive for preferring prose to verse, he thus explains in a brief introduction: "Our language, though copious in compliment and love-expressions, is but very narrow and barren in terms of art, and phrases suited to philosophy; and the technical words we have invented move coarsely and cloudily in verse. For these reasons, the poetical translation of Creech is often more perplexed and harsh than the original; it is, in many places, a wide and rambling paraphrase; in others, the translator contracts and curtails his author, and is frequently guilty of omissions for many lines together. This is no wonder; for the poet he undertook is not to be confined and shackled by the rules of rhyme; his verse is nearest, and runs more naturally into prose than any other, Juvenal and Horace only excepted, among all the classics. I have endeavoured, because disencumbered from the fetters of poetry, faithfully to disclose his meaning in his own terms, and to shew him whole and entire."
But it is impossible to shew Lucretius \textit{whole and entire} in a prose translation of any kind; and to exhibit him merely as a philosopher, and not as a poet, is to rob him of by far the greater portion of his merit,—of that which is peculiarly his own. For, whatever may be the value we affix to his doctrines and scientific inductions, the splendour of his imagery, and the harmony of his numbers are still infinitely more valuable. The translator’s animadversions upon Creech are, unquestionably, avowed; yet the unfavourable opinion he has expressed of the English language, proves him to be but little acquainted with its extent or flexibility. Of itself, and without a recurrence to abstruse or technical terms, it possesses a vocabulary sufficiently varied and rich for all the common purposes of science and literature; yet the present day affords ample proofs that under the plastic hands of a judicious poet, the most recondite terms of the learned languages may be introduced into it with elegance, perspicuity, and melody; nor is it possible, perhaps, to instance any modern tongue with which they will so harmoniously amalgamate as our own.

In 1799, another effort was made to introduce \textit{The Nature of Things} in an English dress, by an anonymous author, who presented the first book alone as a specimen of his abilities for this purpose. The sample thus offered was in Iambic rhyme, and the rest of the poem was to have followed, as soon as the public had testified its approbation of the attempt. Without obtrusively depreciating the talents of a contemporary writer, it is sufficient to observe, that nothing farther of this version has been heard of; that the decision of the public was unfavourable; and that the author appears, in consequence, to have submitted, with suitable modesty, to the tribunal to which he appealed.

It results then, from this general survey, that no translation of \textit{The Nature of Things} has hitherto been presented to the public
by any means worthy, either of our own language, or of the intrinsic merits of the original.

To remedy this defect in English literature, is the object of the present attempt; an object, unquestionably, accompanied with difficulties, and difficulties which no effort has yet been able to surmount. I shall not, however, attempt to aggravate them, by disingenuously depreciating the powers of the language in which I write, or by affecting to discover a general obscurity in the original, which, to those who have closely studied its style and design, by no means exists.

Contrary to the example afforded by my predecessors, I have preferred blank verse to rhyme; not, however, from any dread of superior labour, but from a persuasion that, in mixed subjects of description and scientific precept, it possesses a decisive advantage over the couplet. It bends more readily to the topics introduced, it exhibits more dignity from its unshackled freedom, and displays more harmony from its greater variety of cadence. I have also attempted, what ought, indeed, to be the attempt of every translator, to give the manner, as well as the matter, of the original, to catch its characteristic style, and delineate its turns of expression.

The translation is accompanied with a perpetual commentary, in the form of subjoined notes, and a correct copy of the Latin text. With respect to the propriety or advantage of the latter, I was for some time doubtful. Mr. Wakefield was the first who proposed it to me; the plan was afterwards strenuously advised by many other literary friends of the first eminence, and I at length resolved to adopt it. In the choice of an edition, I found no difficulty: the intrinsic excellence, and pre-eminence of Mr. Wakefield's own, precluding all hesi-
tation upon the subject. I have at present, however, a motive for reprinting this edition, of which, I could not, at first, be aware; for almost all its copies were unfortunately consumed by the fire that, about two years ago, destroyed Mr. Hamilton's Printing-offices. To this edition, nevertheless, I have not, in every instance, adhered in my translation; on some few occasions preferring the lection of prior expositors, and in two or three cases suggesting emendations of my own: yet, not choosing to break in upon the integrity of Mr. Wakefield's text, I have merely pointed out, and defended, such variations in the commentary.

This commentary is composed of notes of different descriptions, which will, in general, be found equally original in their design and materials. It consists of parallel passages, or obvious imitations of Lucretius by other poets, whether Latin, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, or English; together with original passages from Greek writers, to which our poet has himself occasionally referred, or from which he has manifestly borrowed. It consists, likewise, of casual observations on the different versions of Lucretius in our own, as well as foreign languages; and comparisons of the doctrines elucidated or animadverted upon in the course of the poem, with others of a similar tendency, which have been advanced or maintained by more modern philosophers. As I chiefly design this publication for the use of the English reader, I have, moreover, been punctilious in suffixing translations of all the passages from foreign writers, whose works I have found it necessary to quote. In cases where we have already adequate translations of such works in our own language, I have readily availed myself of such assistance: but in all other instances, as also where the version in common use is not sufficiently close to the original author to answer the purpose of the quotation, I have taken the liberty of giving a version myself. This, as will be
obvious, has largely augmented my labours, but it was a trouble that seemed imperiously demanded.

In attentively perusing the poem before us, it is impossible to avoid noticing the striking resemblance which exists between many of its most beautiful passages, and various parts of the poetic books of the Scriptures: and the Abbé de St. Pierre, as well as several other Continental writers, have hence conceived Lucretius to have been acquainted with them. The idea, it must be confessed, is but little more than a conjecture, but it is a conjecture which may easily be defended. Virgil, who though considerably younger than Lucretius, was contemporary with him, and attained his majority on the very day of our poet's decease, was indisputably acquainted with the prophecies of Isaiah; and Longinus, who flourished during the reign of Aurelian, quotes from the Mosaic writings by name. It is not difficult to account for such an acquaintance; for different books of the Bible, and especially those of the Pentateuch, appear to have been translated into Greek by the Jews themselves, at least three centuries anterior to the Christian æra, for the use of their brethren, who, at that time, were settled in Egypt, and other Grecian dependencies, and, residing among the Greeks, had adopted the Greek language. The Septuagint itself, moreover, was composed and published about the same period, by the express desire, and under the express patronage of Ptolemy Philadelphus; who, convinced of the importance and excellence of the Hebrew Scriptures, was desirous of diffusing a knowledge of them among the various classes of men of letters who, at his own invitation, had now thronged to Alexandria from every quarter. Theocritus was at this time among the number, and largely partook of the liberality of the Egyptian monarch; and Sanctius seems fairly to have established it, that the labours of the Grecian idyllist are deeply imbued with the spirit, and evince
manifest imitations of the language of the Song of Songs. Dr. Hodgson has, indeed, ascended very considerably higher, and even challenges Anacreon with having copied, in a variety of instances, from this inimitable relic of the sacred poetry of Solomon. This accusation may, perhaps, be doubtful; but it would be easy to prove, if the discussion were necessary in the present place, that, during the dynasty of the Ptolemies, not only the Muses of Aonia were indebted to the Muse of Sion, but that the eclectic philosophy, which first raised its monster head within the same period, incorporated many of the wildest traditions of the Jewish rabbis into its chaotic hypothesis. The literary connection which subsisted between Rome and Alexandria is well known; and it is not to be supposed that writings, which appear to have been so highly prized in the one city, would be received with total indifference in the other.

Be this, however, as it may; be the parallelisms I advert to, designed, or accidental, I trust I shall rather be applauded than condemned, for thus giving a loose to the habitual inclination of my heart. Grotius, Schultens, Lowth, and Sir William Jones, have set me the example; and, while treading in the steps of such illustrious scholars, I need not be afraid of public censure. Like them, I wish to prove that the sacred pages are as alluring by their language, as they are important in their doctrines; and that, whatever be the boast of Greece and Rome with respect to poetic attainments, they are often equalled, and occasionally surpassed by the former. The man who, professing the Christian religion, is acquainted with the ancient Classics, ought, at the same time, to be acquainted with biblical criticism; he has, otherwise, neglected his truest interest, and lived but for little purpose in the world. I delight in profane literature, but still more do I delight in my Bible: they are lamps, that afford a mutual assistance to each other. In point of importance, however,
I pretend not that they admit of comparison; and could it once be demonstrated, that the pursuits are inconsistent with each other, I would shut up Lucretius for ever, and rejoice in the conflagration of the Alexandrian library. Having thus occasionally extended my researches and resemblances to the Hebrew, the reader must excuse me, if, from a love of Asiatic poetry, I sometimes lead him into the sister languages of Arabia and Persia: yet, I trust, he will seldom have to repent of his journey, or return without an adequate recompense for its distance and fatigue.

To the general work, I have prefixed a biography of our poet. Those, I have hitherto met with, are little more than dry catalogues of dates and names, uninteresting in narrative, barren in facts, and questionable in chronology. I have pursued a different plan, have presented Lucretius, as far as I have been able, in the circle of his connexions, delineated him from his own writings, analysed the doctrines he professed, and defended him from the attacks of malevolence and ignorance. In a subjoined Appendix, I have given a comparative statement of the rival systems of philosophy that flourished in his own aera: have followed them, in their ebbs and flows, through succeeding generations, and identified their connexion with various theories of the present day. At the end of the work is added a copious, and, I trust, a useful Index.

I have thus put the reader into possession of his bill of fare, and may perhaps be allowed to hope, without vanity, that he will not be dissatisfied with the entertainment provided for him. "A good book," says an elegant writer of our own times, "is a creation; a good translation, a resurrection*." In the present instance, the creation is indisputable, the resurrection remains yet to be proved.

* Marquis de Boufflers. See his Discourse on Literature, delivered in the Academy of Sciences and Polite Arts at Berlin, Aug. 9, 1798.
Concerning this inimitable poet, and most excellent philosopher. History presents us but with few authentic documents: and hence there are many circumstances of his life upon which writers have not been able to agree. For this dearth of materials, it is not difficult to account. Lucretius lived and died in a period in which the eye of every citizen was directed to public concerns; when the Roman empire was distracted by the ambition of aspiring demagogues, and the jealousies of contending factions: and when the party that triumphed in the morning was often completely defeated by night. Added to which, the life of Lucretius was spent in the shades of philosophy and quiet: a situation, undoubtedly, best calculated for the improvement of the heart, and the cultivation of philosophy or the muses, yet little chequered with those lights and shades, with that perpetual recurrence of incident, and contrast of success and misfortune, which are often to be met with in the lives of the more active: and which importunately call for the pen of the biographer.
while they afford him abundant materials for his narrative. From the records that yet remain, however, and the most plausible conjectures of his editors and annotators, I am enabled to present the reader with the following pages.

Titus Lucretius Carus was born at Rome, in the second year of the 171st Olympiad *, the 658th of the city, and the 90th anterior to the Christian æra, during the consulate of Licinius Crassus, and Quintus Mutius Scaevola; being one year younger than Cæsar, and nine than Cicero. His name imports, that he was a descendant, and he is generally admitted to have been so, from one of the most ancient and illustrious families of the commonwealth; whose collateral branches had successively been elected to the highest offices in the state, and had often evinced the most distinguished abilities in their respective characters of consuls, tribunes, and prætors. From which of these

* I have followed the Chronicle of Eusebius, in fixing the dates both of the birth and death of Lucretius; for they so well correspond with the few political facts which are incidentally connected with his life as to carry along with them a strong internal proof of precision and veracity. These dates, however, have been disputed by a variety of biographic critics; and, almost every one of them having offered a different ground for his dissent, no man, perhaps, has ever had so many periods fixed, either for his nativity or decease. Lambinus asserts, that, upon the calculation of Eusebius, he must have been born under the consulate of Domitius Aenobarbus and Caius Cassius Longinus; but this would be to fix his birth in the first, instead of in the second year of the 171st Olympiad, and of course in the 657th, instead of the 658th year of the city. Creech, on the contrary, supposes him to have been born a year later, instead of a year sooner than Eusebius has computed. Peter Criniti, a Florentine writer, declares that he was older, and commonly allowed to be older, than Cicero, Terence, or Varro. De Poet. Lat. I. ii. De Contures, in the life of Lucretius, prefixed to his French version, brings him into the world not less than twelve years earlier than Cicero; and he is countenanced by Giffarius, and Pares, the editor of the Dauphin edition. Even Gassendi, whose accuracy is seldom to be impeached, has, upon this point, made a most extraordinary mistake; and, confounding the day of his decease with that of his birth, asserts that, according to the Chronicle of Eusebius, Lucretius died in the 171st Olympiad, at the age of forty-three; and then, reasoning from the very error into which he had been betrayed, proceeds to contend that he must have been even older than Zeno, the preceptor at Athens, of Cicero, Atticus, Memmius, and our poet himself. De Vita Epic. ii. 6. It is either from a blind copy, or a similar misapprehension, that our own countryman, P. Blount, assigns him an equal degree of antiquity, and contends that he was born about the year of the city 620; consequently, not less than twenty-seven years anterior to the undisputed nativity of Cicero.
branches, however, our poet immediately derived his descent, we have no satisfactory document to inform us: but his praenomen of Titus naturally refers us to the direct line of that warm and excellent patriot, the celebrated Titus, son of Spurius Lucretius, memorable from his election to the office of inter-rex, on the abolition of the Roman monarchy, and brother of the chaste and virtuous Lucretia, who slew herself upon the violation of her person by Tarquin the sixth, and thereby produced the expulsion of the Tarquin family from the Roman throne.

It was upon this expulsion of the Tarquins, that Spurius Lucretius was unanimously chosen inter-rex, or king for the time being, till the meditated change in the constitution was completed, and the people had decided on the two citizens best qualified to support the new dignity of consuls. On this decision, little debate seems to have been necessary, and Junius Brutus, and Tarquinius Collatinus, the widowed husband of Lucretia, were unanimously inducted into the consular office. Upon the death of Brutus, who fell a short time afterwards, fighting gloriously for his country, against the combined forces which the Tarquins had mustered up with a vain hope of regaining possession of the Roman throne, Spurius Lucretius was elected consul in his stead *. Collatinus had retired from public service to the tranquillity of a rural life, and the celebrated Valerius, afterwards sur-named Poplicola, divided the consulate with him. Spurius Lucretius, however, enjoyed this additional proof of public estimation and gratitude but for a very short period. He died only a few days after his election to the chief magistracy: and Titus Lucretius, his son, from whom it appears probable our poet immediately descended, was unanimously appointed in his stead. The consulate was a dignity which Titus Lucretius enjoyed repeatedly; and he had always the

* Cic. de Fin. lib. ii.
additional dignity of possessing Valerius Poplicola for his colleague; the most able general, as well as the most consummate politician of his age. In the assault of Porsenna upon the Roman bridge, in favour of the Tarquins, and which immortalized the gallant Horatius Cocles, Titus Lucretius commanded the left wing of the Roman army; but was under the necessity of retiring from the field of battle, in consequence of a dangerous wound, before Cocles had signalized himself by his desperate resistance. He was likewise consul, and joint commander in chief with Poplicola when, in the year of Rome 247, the Sabines were completely defeated in their first attack upon the Roman state*, after it had assumed the form of a republic.

Though it seems to be uniformly admitted that this is the family, and probably the branch of that family, from which our poet sprang; history affords us not a single glimpse of information as to the phenomena, or profession of his father: the rank he maintained in the republic, or the patrimonial property he was possessed of. Cicero incidentally enumerates three citizens of the name of Lucretius, who were contemporaries with Carus, and probably connected by the consanguinity of brothers, or cousins; Marcus Lucretius, an acquaintance both of the Roman orator and of Caius Verres †, Quintus Lucretius Vispillio, and Lucretius Aphilia, both of whom he has introduced into his book of Celebrated Orators, and whose talents he has discriminated by representing the former as deeply skilled in the law, and admirable as a chamber counsel, and the latter as possesst of abilities better adapted for popular harangues than for legal opinions ‡. He likewise speaks of a Quintus Lucretius, who fled from Sulmo, the birth-place of Ovid, upon the approach of Marc Antony §, and who appears to have been

* Plut. in Poplic. † In Verr. lib. i.
‡ Erat in privatis causis Q. Lucretius Vispillo, et acutus, et jurispritus: nam Aphilia (in other copies Aflia, Ofella, Oiiius), aptior concionibus, quam judiciis. § Ad Attic. lib. viii.
a friend of his own, and his brother Quintus. But it is most probable, that the Quintus Lucretius here mentioned, is the same person as Lucretius Vispillio, and who, moreover, according to Caesar, was of senatorial dignity, and that Cicero has only in this place incidentally omitted his surname.

Lucretius Offella, who is highly celebrated in history for his military exploits, and more especially for his able conduct at the siege of Prænestè, must have been many years older than our philosopher, and seems to have been rather an uncle, than a relation of any other kind. He fell a sacrifice, in the eighteenth year of the age of Lucretius Carus, to the infamous and arbitrary power of Sylla, who was then perpetual dictator. Offella, presuming on the favour of the people, whom he knew to be generally attached to him, offered himself for the consulate: Sylla was determined he should not succeed, but, at the same time, fearful of the issue of a fair competition, he procured him to be suddenly murdered by a centurion in the very centre of the comitia. The citizens were highly enraged, but their fury was now become idle.

Besides these who were contemporaries of Titus Lucretius, if we ascend about fifty or sixty years anterior to his birth, we meet with three of the same family occupying simultaneously some of the most important offices of the commonwealth: Caius, who, during the war with Perses king of Macedonia, in conjunction with Matienus, was elected naval duumvir *, or lord high admiral, and attacked, with singular success, a variety of fortified posts on the shores of Thessaly, and who was afterwards elected prætor †; for the services he rendered his country; and Spurius ‡, and Marcus, the brother of Caius, who for many years successively were also either prætors § or tribunes ||. It must be con-

* Liv. lib. xl. cap. 26. † Id. xlii. 56. ‡ Id. xlii. 18. § Id. cap. 28. || Id. cap. 19.
fessed, however, that but little real dignity can attach to our philosophic poet from the former of these ancestors: for he was accused before the senate, and at the forum, of having been guilty of the basest misconduct and rapacity during his different praetorships; of having made slaves of many families under the immediate protection of the Roman republic; of having exacted immense contributions for his private use; and of having even decorated his sumptuous villa at Antium with paintings plundered from the temple of Æsculapius at Abdera*. Charges of this kind, indeed, were but too frequently exhibited against the praetors of almost every province: like many adventurers to distant colonies in the present day, they too often solicited these high offices for the sole purpose of amassing immense fortunes in a short period of time; and when once they had obtained their appointments, moral rectitude, and the honour of their country, were completely discarded, and every engine was set to work that could contribute to their immediate object in view. Nothing, therefore, could be more wretched than the situation of a province dependant upon the Roman power: it had the liberty of complaining by ambassadors extraordinary, it must be confess; nor was the government generally indifferent to the accusations alleged; for the obnoxious viceroy was commonly removed, but he was, at the same time, as commonly succeeded by one as iniquitous as himself. With regard to Caius Lucretius, however, he was not only recalled, and severely reprimanded, but most heavily fined for his rapacity†.

Yet nothing of this kind of guilt appears to have sullied the character of the father of Lucretius Carus. The silence of history respecting him, completely proves that he never possessed any office of great political distinction or dignity: and it is hence highly probable that, like his son, he preferred a life of retirement and study to the pomp

* Liv. cap. 43.  † Id.
and pageantry of public occupations. From the juvenile friendships of our poet, and the liberal education bestowed upon him, there can be no doubt, however, of his having lived in a state of considerable respectability and affluence.

The period in which Titus Lucretius was born was highly favourable to philosophy; the Romans having now begun to discover an enthusiasm for Grecian literature, and to cultivate a polite and classical taste with regard to their own tongue. The disputes of Marius and Sylla had not yet lighted up the torch of civil war throughout the republic: the elegant writings of Polybius, whom Scipio Aemilianus had not long before attached to the Roman interest, and induced to desert Greece for the metropolis of this aspiring people, were in the hands of every one: and, charmed with the style of the Grecian historian, as well as emulous of his literary fame, Rutilius Rufus, the consul, had lately published, in Greek, a history of his own country.

The study of the Grecian language had indeed become fashionable from another cause; for the Achaean hostages, who were sent to Rome, upon the reduction of their own country, towards the close of the preceding century, and whose number was not less than a thousand, were, for the most part, men of taste, and elegant accomplishments, while many of them were scholars of profound and eminent erudition. The whole city became enamoured of the various acquisitions of its new visitants; and in matters of polite literature, the conquerors soon yielded to the conquered. Hence, schools for the study and exercise of rhetoric and eloquence, superintended by native Greeks, became in a short time so frequent, that scarcely a Roman youth could be without instruction in the art of oratory.

* Vide Sueton de Clar. Rhet. i. who thus appeals to the words of Athæneus, which unquestionably relate to the rhetoricians of Greece: "Παρουσία τῶν νεώτερων ἀκαδημιῶν ἥμετ' ἵνα τοὺς μαθητὰς τῶν Ἁθηναίων τῆς ἀκαδημίασ τόν χαῖρῃ. Dioppephor. 1. xiii.
found, who would engage in any other avocation; and the whole body of philosophers and rhetoricians were expelled by a decree of the senate, during the consulship of Fannius Strabo, and Valerius Messala, in the year of the city 592. A general taste for Grecian literature, nevertheless, still continued to predominate; and it was considerably augmented towards the beginning of the seventh century of the Roman æra, by a comparison between the true classical taste which had been uniformly evinced by these unfortunate scholars, and the tribe of Latin sophists and declaimers, who, in consequence of their exile, sprang up, and began to usurp their place: men who were bloated with conceit, instead of being inspired by wisdom, and who substituted the mere tinsel of verbiage for the sterling gold of argument and fair induction*. With this foppery of learning, also, the Roman government soon became disgusted, and in 661, during the censorship of Crassus, the Latin declaimers shared the fate of the Greek rhetoricians, and were formally banished from Rome†. In their own language, therefore, we meet with but few successful specimens of prosaic eloquence down to this period; yet Cato the censor, Laelius, and Scipio, were orators of no inconsiderable powers, and eminently as well as deservedly esteemed in their day. In poetry, however, the republic had already a right to boast of its productions: for Andronicus, Naevius, and Ennius, had long delighted their countrymen with their dramatic as well as their epic labours; Pacuvius, and Accius, Plautus, Cæcilius, and Afranius, had improved upon the models thus

* The first of these Latin declaimers was Plotius Gallus, who erected his school when Cicero was a boy; and as all Rome flocked to hear him, Cicero was stung with disappointment, because his wiser friends prohibited him from being of the number. He thus relates the transaction in his treatise to Marcus Tullius, a treatise now lost, but the present passage from which, is preserved by Suetonius, and is as follows: Equidem memoria teneo, pueros nobis, primum Latine docere coepisse Lucium Plotium quendam: id quem quum fecerit concursus, quod studioissimus quisque apud eum exerceretur, dulcibus mihi idem non liceret. Conticitar, autem, doctissimorum hominum auctoritate; qui existimabant, Graecis exercitationibus ali melius ingenia posse. De Chr. Rhet. ii.

† Aul. Gell. et Sut. t. c.
offered them in the former department, and Terence had just carried it to its utmost point of perfection.

Public museums, libraries, and collections of valuable curiosities from Greece, Syracuse, Spain, and other parts of the world, were, at this period, also becoming frequent and fashionable. Italy was never more emptied of its elegancies and ornaments by Bonaparte, than Syracuse was by Marcellus, when stratagem and treachery at length gave him an admission into this city. In the forcible words of Livy, "he left nothing to the wretched inhabitants but their walls and houses." Spain and Africa were in the same manner ransacked by the elder Scipio; Macedon and Lacedaemon by Flaminius; Carthage by Scipio Africanus, and Corinth by Mummius. But the most important library and museum, which at this period attracted the attention of the Romans, and excited a taste for classical study and the fine arts, were established under the patronage and superintendence of the illustrious L. Æmilius Paulus, and consisted of an immense number of volumes, statues, and paintings, which he had imported from Epirus, upon the general plunder and destruction of that unfortunate country, in consequence of its adherence to Perses of Macedon, and which had been accumulating ever since the reign of Alexander the Great. This primitive library was founded about fifty years prior to the birth of Lucretius; it was continually augmented by the accession of other books, presented by men of letters or warriors, into whose hands they occasionally fell, as a part of the public spoil; but was more indebted to Lucullus, who had studied philosophy under Antiochus the Ascalonite, than to any one else, and who, about the eighteenth year of our poet's age, added to it the whole collection of volumes he had seized from Mithridates, upon his conquest of Pontus. Yet the transplantation into the Roman capital, of the extensive and invaluable

* Nihil prater memnia et tecta Syracusanis relietum, l. xxvi. 30.
libraries of Aristotle and Theophrastus, contributed perhaps, more than every other circumstance, to inflame the Roman people with a love of Grecian literature. This was effected by the fortunate conquests of Sylla, and anteceded the public present of Lucullus, who, from being a menial dependent upon, became a legate of the former, by about fifteen years, consequently during the infancy of Lucretius. These unrivalled libraries were the property of Apellicon of Teia, who had accumulated an immense collection of books of intrinsic value, at an incredible expense. Apellicon does not appear to have been by any means a scholar; but he was a man of prodigious wealth; and, as it sometimes occurs in the present day, notwithstanding his ignorance of literature, a library was his hobby-horse, and the greater part of his rental was expended in augmenting it. For this purpose, he ransacked all the public and private collections of books in Asia; he surpassed, in many instances, the offers even of the emperors Eumenes and Mithridates, for volumes that were become scarce as well as valuable; and where he had not an opportunity of purchasing, he frequently, by considerable presents, tempted the librarians to steal for him. During the first war, however, between Mithridates king of Pontus and the Roman republic, in which Sylla eventually triumphed, and acquired a high degree of personal glory, the city of Athens had unfortunately united itself with the Asiatic prince: and hence, at the conclusion of the war, was left totally at the mercy of the Roman conqueror. Sylla appears to have thrown a most wishful eye upon every thing of intrinsic value that lay within his reach:—and, having sacrilegiously invaded the groves of Academus and the Lyceum, the library of Apellicon was one of the next objects that captivated his attention. He was determined to add it to his other treasures; but force was now become unnecessary; for, at this very moment, the book-worm Apellicon died, and he met with no resistance from his relations *.

* Plut. in Sylla, Strab. 1. xiii.
Sylla immediately transported this invaluable acquisition to his own palace at Rome, and the eye of the public was uniformly directed to its contents. The original manuscripts of Aristotle were found to be much injured: Apellicon had purchased them of Nileus of Scepsis, during whose possession of them they had been for a long time buried under ground, to prevent their falling into the hands of Eumenes king of Pergamus, in his attack upon this city. They had, hence, become in many places mouldy and moth-eaten, and the chasms which were hereby introduced into the text, it was found difficult to fill up. But they had experienced even a greater misfortune still, by the clumsy attempts of Apellicon himself to restore these ruined passages: for the mistakes into which he had fallen had added obscurity to obscurity. Sylla pursued a better plan, and, well knowing that he was totally incompetent to the undertaking himself, employed first of all Tyrannio, a celebrated grammarian and critic from Pontus, and afterwards, the still more celebrated Andronicus Rhodius, to make a complete revision of these invaluable writings, and to supply their defects from the best collateral copies *.

But the literature of Greece was, nevertheless, best to be acquired in Greece itself; and the Romans, though they transplanted books, could not transplant the general taste and spirit that produced them. Athens, although considerably shorn of the glory of her original constitution, and dependant upon Rome for protection, had still to boast of her schools, her scholars, and her libraries. Every scene, every edifice, every conversation was a living lecture of taste and elegance. Here was the venerable grove, in which Plato had unfolded his sublime mysteries to enraptured multitudes: here the awful lyceum, in which Aristotle had anatomised the springs of human intellect and ac-

* Pancirol. lib. i.
tion: here the porch of Zeno, still erect and stately as its founder: and here, the learned shades and winding walks, in which Epicurus had delineated the origin and Nature of Things, and inculcated tranquillity and temperance: and here too was the vast and magnificent library that Pisistratus first established, and endowed for the gratuitous use of his countrymen. Here Homer sung, and Apelles painted: here Sophocles had drawn tears of tenderness, and Demosthenes fired the soul to deeds of heroism and patriotic revenge. The monuments of every thing great or glorious, dignified or refined, virtuous or worthy, were still existing at Athens: and she had still philosophers to boast of, who were capable of elucidating the erudition that blazed forth more conspicuously in her earlier ages of independence.

To this celebrated city, therefore, this theatre of universal learning, Lucretius, with a great number of Roman youths of his own age, was sent for education. The system of philosophy determined upon for his pursuit, was that of Epicurus: and the Epicurean school, an edifice erected and endowed by this profound and indefatigable sage himself*, was, at the present period, superintended by Phædrus and Zeno. Till this æra, however, the school of Epicurus had been gradually declining; and, unsupported by public patronage, the neat, but modest mansion which had not been sufficiently provided for by its

* The estate consisted of a convenient house and most pleasant garden, in the walks and shades of which Epicurus delivered his instructions to crowded and delighted audiences: the institution was hence denominated "The School of the Garden," as that of Plato was the Academy, that of Aristotle the Lyceum, that of Zeno the Porch, and that of Antisthenes the Cynosargum. The purchase-money paid for it was eighty mina, which, as the mina may be computed at about five pounds sterling in the present day, makes its sterling value about four hundred pounds. Epicurus entrusted it by his will, which has been preserved by Diogenes Laertius, and is a curious and valuable document, to Hermachus of Mitylene, a beloved and confidential disciple, whom he hereby nominated his successor, and expressly charged with the execution of his different bequests. He provided for its perpetuity, upon the death of Hermachus, and left it enriched with an extensive library, and endowed with a moderate revenue from another estate he possessed at Mitylene: the house upon which he gave also to Hermachus as his place of residence.
philosophic founder, against such a casualty, was falling into a state of dilapidation. But it was not suffered to remain in this humiliating situation long; for it was completely repaired, and even additionally ornamented, by the private munificence of Lucius Memmius, a Roman citizen of high rank and unswerving virtue; between whose family and that of Lucretius the most intimate friendship had subsisted for several centuries: and who were continually assisting each other, as we learn from Livy *, in obtaining elections either to the consulate, the tribuneship, or some provincial prefecture. The son of Lucius Memmius was a fellow-student with young Carus; and it is probable, that even their fathers had preceded them in the same college, and that its restoration was determined upon from the influence of local attachment and juvenile veneration.

In consequence of this well-timed and judicious patronage, the Epicurean school experienced a sudden and brilliant revival; for it is impossible to reflect on the names of the students, whom we know, from the writings of Cicero, to have been contemporary, at the period we are speaking of, without being astonished at the constellation of real learning and genius they exhibited in the aggregate: Cicero himself, and his two brothers, Lucius and Quintus, the latter of whom was a poet, and as signally distinguished in the profession of arms, as Marcus in that of eloquence; Titus Pomponius, from his critical knowledge of the Greek tongue, surnamed Atticus, but who derives this higher praise from Cornelius Nepos, that “he never deviated from the truth, nor would associate with any one who had done so;” our own poet Lucretius Carus, his family and bosom-friend Caius Memmius Gemellus, of whose talents and learning the writings of Cicero offer abundant proofs, and to whom he afterwards paid the honour of dedicating his “Nature of Things:” Lucretius Vespilio,

* Lib. xli, xlii.
his relation, whom Cicero, as I have already remarked, has enumerated among the orators of his day; Marcus Junius Brutus, Caius Cassius, and Caius Velleius, each of whom immortalized himself by preferring the freedom of his country to the friendship of Caesar; and hence engaged in the patriotic conspiracy which only terminated with their lives: these we know to have been contemporary students; and they may fairly be adduced as a specimen of the very flourishing state of the Epicurean school at this period.

The friendships contracted in youth are the most durable, for they are the most honest and disinterested; and it should be remarked to the praise of these illustrious young men, that they never deserted each other in future life; that the warmth of their juvenile attachments increased, rather than diminished, with their years; and that in the midst of the misfortunes to which almost every one of them was exposed in his turn, each was sure of receiving the utmost commiseration and assistance from the rest. This too should be observed, in praise of the principles they had imbibed with their studies, and of the

* Velleius Paterculus gives us the following catalogue of eminent and accomplished scholars who flourished in the present age: "Vidit," says he, "Cicernem, Senenque Crassum, Catonem, Sulpitium, maxque Brutum, Calidium, Calum, Caesium, et proximum Ciceroni Caesarum, curorum velut alumnus Corvinum, ac Pollionem Asinium, amulumque Thucydidis Sallustium, auctoresque carminum Varronem et Lucketium, neque ullo in suscipti operis sui carmine minorem Catullum," lib. ii. To these he might have added Quintus Cicero, who was both a poet and a soldier; Varro Atacinus, who translated into Latin the Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius, and wrote an heroic poem, "de Bello Sequanico," besides Satires, Elegies, and Epigrams, some of which appear to have been serviceable to Virgil: Rabirius, an epic poet, a philosopher, a philologer, and a critic, esteemed the most learned man of his age, and who composed not less than 400 books or treatises on different subjects, enumerated by Cicero or Anius Gellius; Quintus Hortensius, the celebrated orator, who was consul in 684; M. Marcellus, of equal merit and talents, who was consul in 702, and whose son, Caius Marcellus, married Octavia, sister to Augustus; Calpurnius Piso, consul in 655; Quintus Lutatius Catulus, the poet and historian, consul, also, in 651; and Atteius, one of the most distinguished characters of his age, who was likewise consul in 713. In the earlier period of his life he was master to Sallust, and Asinius Pollio, to the latter of whom Virgil dedicated his fourth eulogia, and who recommended Atteius to Maecenas. We have here, therefore, a galaxy of talents and learning, which neither the Augustan, nor any other age in the whole history of the Roman republic, can presume to rival.
tutors who had superintended them. Of these worthy colleagues, indeed, Cicero often speaks in terms of high esteem and veneration, although shortly after his return to Rome he abjured the doctrines of Epicurus, into which he had been so sedulously initiated at Athens. Both Zeno and Phædrus he applauds, for their indefatigable attention to the duties of their office*; but, of the amiable disposition of the latter, he bears the most ample testimony, in more than one of his epistles. "We, formerly," says he, in a letter to Caius Memmius, "when we were boys, knew him as a profound philosopher; but we still recollect him as a most kind and worthy man, ever solicitous about our improvement †.

Cicero, I have said, upon his return to Rome, abjured the philosophic doctrines of Epicurus, which he had so warmly embraced in his youth: the sublimity of Plato's mysteries offered a higher gratification, and seduced him from his first faith. But, in a subsequent visit to Athens, for the benefit of his health, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, he tells us, that both himself and Pomponius Atticus, who accompanied him, were frequent attendants upon their old tutors‡. Except Cicero, however, it does not appear, that any of the fellow-students of Lucretius were enticed, or at least altogether enticed, from the philosophic principles of their juvenile days. With Atticus, and his own brothers, the Roman orator often rallies in his epistles, and with the most elegant and good-humoured wit, for their inflexible adherence to their earlier opinions, notwithstanding his attempts to convert them to his new creed. Cassius, Atticus, Memmius, and

* De Fin. Bon. et Mal. lib. i. p. 1086. Gronov. † Epist. lib. xiii. ‡ Lib. i. de Fin. In a still later period of his life, Cicero seems once more to have fluctuated, though he never altogether deserted the principles of the academy: when his son, however, was old enough to be sent to Athens, he committed him to the care of Cratippus, a teacher of the Peripatetic philosophy.
Lucretius, it is well known, maintained, through the whole of their lives, the entire system they had imbibed at Athens: and, when Brutus was alarmed by the appearance of a ghost, while sitting alone in his tent at midnight, and revolving in his own mind the meditated attack upon Anthony and Octavius, Cassius quickly dispelled his apprehensions, by recalling to him the opinion of Epicurus, upon phantoms of this description; which, like the images that appear to us in our dreams, he assured him were nothing more than mere films, or effluences ejected from surrounding objects, and only presented to the mind in a state of extreme quietude and abstraction *.

It is not to be supposed, that a body of youths, thus richly endowed by nature, and instructed by education, would remain deaf to the voice of ambition, and evince no desire of sharing in those political honours and emoluments, which the situation of the commonwealth afforded them, at this period, so fair a chance of attaining. For the most part, they plunged deeply into the stream; many of them indeed far beyond their depth,—yet to all it proved a boisterous current, and they were frequently in danger of being overwhelmed. Ambition and self-interest appear, on particular occasions, to have seduced several of them from the path of political rectitude and integrity; but, upon the whole, they may be uniformly regarded as the brightest ornaments of their country, and the firmest pillars of her republican constitution. They were a band not easily to be broken; and the instances are but few, in which they separated from each other, and appeared in opposite parties. Memmius was, on more

* Plut. in Brut. See this doctrine elucidated by Lucretius, in b. iv. 33—41 of the ensuing poem. Brutus is stated, by some authors, to have imbibed the entire system of Stoicism; and there can be no doubt that he did so, with respect to its ethical doctrines. But on points of physics and metaphysics, the readiness with which he yielded to these arguments of Cassius, proves obviously, that he was not far from being still an Epicurean at his heart.
occasions than one, indebted to Cicero, Cicero to Atticus, Brutus to Cassius, and Cassius to Velleius.

Into these perversities of political life, however, Lucretius never entered. The high road to the first dignities of the state was open to himself, as well as to his friends; and from the illustrious antiquity of his family, his own mental endowments, and the support of his fellow-students, had ambition been his ruling passion, he could have gratified it to satiety. In this case, from the glowing patriotism, and inextinguishable love of liberty, which are so conspicuous in his poem, and which it was not in the power of the deepest retirement to eradicate, there can be no doubt, that he would have united with Brutus in the conspiracy against Caesar: and it would have been highly gratifying to the virtuous heart, to have beheld, at a distance of more than four hundred years, the immediate descendants of the two families, who had stimulated the people to throw off the tyranny of the Tarquins, once more at the head of a plot concerted to rescue their country from the chains of a tyrant possessed of infinitely more artifice and address. But the life of Lucretius did not extend to this period, nor did his bosom pant for the possession of public honours and renown. He saw, in the history of his own family, abundant instances of the instability of that happiness which depends upon the caprice of the multitude; and how fatal to the preservation of virtue and serenity of mind, are those temptations, to which the candidate for political fame is perpetually exposed. These are evils which he not only saw but felt, for he repeatedly adverts to them, and dwells in the most impressive manner, upon their magnitude and fatality. Temperance and tranquillity, he had been taught in every lecture at Athens, were the only foundations of an unshaken felicity—and Epicurus had more attractions in his eye than the forum or the senate.
In the neighbourhood of Rome, therefore, he fixed his peaceful abode, and devoted himself altogether to the pure pleasures of philosophy and domestic life. His two most intimate friends appear to have been Cassius and Memmius. Cassius, like himself, was a strenuous supporter of the doctrines, as well as defender of the character of Epicurus; and Cicero has expressly noticed the continuance of his attachment to the Lucretii, even after our poet's decease. One of this family, in particular, he still denominates the bosom-friend of Cassius, and proves, that they were in the habit of maintaining a close and intimate correspondence when at a distance from each other. To Memmius our poet dedicated the work that has immortalized him; and accompanied him to Bithynia, in conjunction with Catullus, and the celebrated grammarian Curtius Nicas, upon his appointment to the government of that province. In an early period of life, he married a lady whose name was Lucilia, but with whose family we are not acquainted, though from such name, in conjunction with several other circumstances, it is no improbable conjecture, that she was a sister of Lucius Lucilius, who joined the confederacy against Caesar, and, by personating Brutus in his unfortunate engagement with Marc Anthony, enabled him to escape from the hands of the victorious army. The friendship which, from having commenced in their boyish days, subsisted without interruption, or even diminution, between this extraordinary society of virtuous and accomplished youths, extended in many instances to their families and collateral connexions, and laid the foundation for a variety of intermarriages. It was hence, that Quintus Cicero married Pomponia, the sister of Pomponius Atticus; and Cassius, Julia, the sister of Marcus Brutus. Lucilius was the bosom-friend of Brutus and Cassius; and Cassius the bosom-friend of Lucretius; and it is thus highly probable, that the Lucilia, who was the wife of Lucretius, was a sister of the Lucilius in question.

* Attic. vii. 24, 25

† Sueton.
In the retired and unmolested shades he had chosen, happy in his domestic connexions, occupied by the studies of philosophy, successfully cultivating the muses, and occasionally enlivened by the resort of his early and more ambitious friends, our poet proved how well he was entitled to the surname of Carus, or the Amiable, and composed his unrivalled poem on the Nature of Things: a poem which was read with enthusiasm by the most learned of his own, as well as of the Augustan age, that immediately succeeded, and which will perpetuate his name as long as language of any kind shall live to pronounce it.

The composition of this excellent work seems to have afforded him an uninterrupted source of pleasure; for there is scarcely a book which does not contain many passages testimonial of the delight it produced. Of future fame he was not unambitious,—but it was not the fame of the warrior, whose laurels are crimsoned with blood, or of the rapacious prætor, whose palace was too generally erected, and beautified with the spoils of the province he was appointed to defend. It was the pure and unsullied fame of the poet and the philosopher; of the sage, who glows with satisfaction at the thought of having laboured night and day for the benefit of his race; of the patriot, who weeps over the vices of his country, while he is anxious to instruct the public mind, and correct the public morals. Conscious of being actuated by these honourable motives, he more than once bursts forth into the following exclamation:

---the thirst of fame
Burns all my bosom, and through ev'ry nerve
Darts the proud love of letters and the muse.
I feel th' inspiring pow'r, and roam resolv'd
Through paths Pierian never trod before.
Sweet are the springing founts with nectar new,
The Life of Lucretius.

Sweet the new flow'rs that bloom; but sweeter still
Those flow'rs to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath
The muses yet to mortals ne'er have deign'd.
With joy the subject I pursue—and free
The captiv'd mind from superstition's yoke:
With joy th' obscure illume; in liquid verse
Graceful and clear, depicting all survey'd.*

It is by no means an easy point to ascertain the period in which this poem was written. From the evidence of its introductory address, it was at least commenced, when Memmius was in his zenith of political splendour and influence, and the republic was distracted with internal broils, and foreign wars. Taking this, therefore, as a postulate to compute from, I have no hesitation in referring it to about the year of the city 695. Caius Memmius, who had been praetor in 689, and appointed to the government of Bithynia in 691, had at this time returned from his prefecture; Clodius, by his intrigues, had acquired the control of the forum; and, by the connivance of both Pompey and Cæsar, had succeeded in obtaining a formal decree of banishment against Cicero: the Asiatic war against Mithridates, and his allies, was but just closed, and that with the Helvetii was in its midmost violence. Lucretius, at this period, must have been in his thirty-eighth year. It is some proof of the popular influence which was now possessed by Caius Memmius, that Cæsar, notwithstanding the glory he had already attained, and was still in the act of attaining by his martial exploits, found himself compelled to drop a public accusation, he had at one time determined to bring forwards against him. The origin of this dispute we know not; but there is little doubt of its having proceeded from the warmth, with which Memmius had espoused the cause of Cicero, and it hence becomes highly creditable to his virtue: through life there was the closest attachment between them, and

* Book I. v. 984, and Book IV. v. i.
the former, a short time anterior to his decease, adopted a young and particular friend of the latter as his heir. That this was the real ground of dispute, is rendered still more probable by the fact, that on the recal of Cicero to Rome, which was chiefly brought about by the interposition of Caesar himself, the two disputants were not only reconciled, but, from that time, united in the support of each other's interest.

The difficulties with which Lucretius had to struggle, in the composition of his poem, were great and numerous; and we cannot wonder at his frequently feeling their embarassing effects, and occasionally alluding to them in his progress. The subject he had selected, though the noblest, was the most profound, as well as the most comprehensive, that can ever engage the attention of the human mind; nor is there any title by which it could be designated so pertinently as that selected by himself, The Nature of Things. It embraces the whole scope of natural, metaphysical, and moral philosophy; and to execute it with any great degree of success, required a knowledge almost, if not altogether, universal.

The first difficulty Lucretius had to surmount, was produced by the Latin language itself. To philosophy it was a total stranger; and though rich and nervous with respect to subjects introduced into the senate, or at the forum, it displayed a dreadful poverty and imbecility in matters of metaphysical science. The only poets, indeed, of any kind, who had ever preceded him in hexameter verse, were Livius Andronicus, Ennius, and Nævius; and of these three, the second alone was worthy of any degree of notice; who, on this account, though he wrote after Andronicus *, has been justly regarded as the father of Ro-

* Horace, in speaking of Livius Andronicus, does not wish for the destruction of his poems, but is surprised that they should ever have been esteemed:

Non equidem insector, delendave carmina Livi
Effec reor, memini que plagosum mihi parvo
man poetry; and to whom Lucretius, with that native politeness and suavity of disposition, for which he was so eminently distinguished, pays a high compliment, and proves at the same time how far he was exalted above every low and invidious feeling*. But it does not appear from the testimony, either of Virgil, Ovid, or Statius, that the compositions of Ennius had ever enriched the Latin tongue. Virgil thus expresses himself, upon his merits as a writer:

He from the \textit{mire} of Ennius gather'd gold†.

Nor widely different Ovid, who alludes to him under the following description:

Ennius in sense acute, but \textit{rude in art}‡.

While Statius, in the ensuing couplet, draws, perhaps, a fair comparison between Ennius and our own poet:

Here his \textit{rude muse} let \textit{barbarous Ennius} yield,
Here learn'd Lucretius drop his rapturous rage||.

The subject, moreover, which Ennius had adopted for his poem, that, I mean, of the second Punic war, was not calculated to augment the language with many phrases that would have been useful to Lucretius, even if he had been more select in his terms, and more profuse of rhetorical imagery. He appears, however, to have been a man of an enlarged understanding, and deeply versed in the philosophy of the

\begin{quote}
Orbillum dictare \textit{; sed emendata} videri,
\textit{Pulchraque, et exactis minimum, diastantia, miror.}
\end{quote}

\textit{I hate not Livy, nor would e'er destroy}
Those lines Orbilius taught me when a boy;
But that such lines with numbers e'er could range,
Exact and polish'd, this I own is strange.

- Book I. 130. † Aurum \textit{ex Enni stercore} collegit. Cul.
‡ Ennius \textit{ingenio maximus, arte rudis.} Trist.
|| Cedet \textit{musa rudis ferocis Enni},
\textit{Et docti} furor \textit{arduus Lucreti.} Silv.
Greeks. The doctrines he had imbibed were those of Pythagoras. He was highly beloved both by Cato and Scipio Africanus, who were his pupils; and the latter of whom, in gratitude for his poem on his own exploits, erected a statue to his memory.

Lucretius, therefore, might well assert, as he does in the passage just quoted, and with the strictest degree of veracity, that in writing this poem he was exploring his way

Through paths Pierian never trod before.

He had, in consequence, to introduce doctrines and ideas into poetry, with which poetry was as yet totally unacquainted; and to bend and modify the language, in which he wrote, to a perspicuous conveyance of them. Of this difficulty he was fully sensible; and he thus openly expresses himself upon the subject, to his friend Caius Memmius:

Yet not unknown to me how hard the task
Such deep obscurities of GREECE t' unfold
In LATIN numbers; to combine new terms,
And strive with all our poverty of tongue.
But such thy virtue, and the friendship pure
My bosom bears, that arduous task I dare,
And yield the sleepless night: in hope to cull
Some happy phrase, some well selected verse,
Meet for the subject; to dispel each shade,
And bid the mystic doctrine hail the day.*

Lucretius, however, has not only occasionally introduced new and appropriate terms, but on particular occasions revived, or given a new sense to antiquated words, which ought never to have sunk into oblivion. Vocabularies, like all other things of human invention, are subject to dilapidations; and nothing, perhaps, requires a more delicate taste than to restore the falling edifice, so as to assimilate it to

* Book I. v. 153.
the fashion of the day, without destroying its genuine order of architecture: to introduce the hoary stranger into company with his juniors, and to obtain for him that attention to which, by his years, he is entitled. No poet has ever expressed himself upon this subject with more felicity than Horace, in a passage which I shall take the liberty of translating:

Stamp'd is thy taste if, dextrous, thou discern
For hackney'd terms some new unhackney'd turn.
If themes abstruse, to modern numbers strange,
Perplex thy pow'rs, assume an ampler range:
Call back to life sounds obsolete and old,
The cause demands it, and thou may'st be bold;
Or the fresh stores the Grecian fount supplies,
Bent but a little, frequent may suffice.
These fearless take: for why should Rome concede
A claim to bards, whom now we seldom read,
Cecilius, Plautus, that the classic strain
Of Virgil asks, or Varius, but in vain?
Why should myself not glean, if glean I may,
In the same fields, unlimited as they,
Where Ennius, Cato, cull'd unfading flow'rs,
Trimm'd the new growth, and made th' exotics ours?
Yet less approv'd it must be to purloin
From foreign mints, than use a native coin.
As falls the foliage with the falling year,
Yet with the spring new foliage pants t' appear,
So perish phrases—so a junior race
Spring into birth and fill their parents' place.
Man dies himself, and all that man can boast:
E'en the vast basin o'er the Roman coast,
Imperial plan! that bids our navy ride
In conscious triumph, and defy the tide;
E'en the broad plain that, late, a drear morass,
Now springs productive o'er the wat'ry mass,
Bears the stern plough-share, and to cities round
Spreads its gay scene, with russet harvests crown'd;
E'en the canal, that erst our fields o'erflow'd
With useless ooze, till taught a happier road—
These all shall perish, as from man they thrive;
Nor shall the pomp, the grace of words survive.
Yet much that dies shall live, while many a term
Now most esteem'd, most durable and firm,
Shall sink forgot, if tyrant custom teach:
Whence draw we sole the rules, the rights of speech.

No poet, perhaps, has more completely exemplified the true taste
and solid judgment of such precepts, than Lucretius; for no poet has
been more delicately or forcibly select, whether in the adoption of his
words, or his idioms. Some degree of obscurity may, indeed, be discov-
ered occasionally, but it is in every instance chargeable upon the subject,
rather than upon the poet; for I hesitate not to assert, that throughout the whole it is impossible for order to be more luminous, for language to be more perspicacious, or for the greater part of the deductions introduced to be more consequent and legitimate. There are few prose writers upon mathematical and metaphysical subjects so felicitous in the conveyance of their ideas:—and, as to most of the translators and commentators upon the Latin text, I have often been compelled to turn to the original to discover what they were endeavouring to interpret. Added to which, the occasional digressions, in which the poet has indulged himself, flow freely, and to the point; and his episodes are altogether unrivalled. I am not surprised, therefore, at the enthusiasm which Quintus Cicero, who through life adhered to the system of Epicurus, evinced for this elaborate poem. It was his travelling companion amidst his wars; and, like Alexander, with respect to the Iliad, or, as is reported, Bonaparte, with respect to the poems of Ossian—he slept with it under his pillow, and feasted on it whenever he had leisure. Nor did he estimate its merits too highly: for Marcus Cicero himself, long after he had abjured the doctrines it is designed to elucidate, accedes, in one of his letters to his brother, to his own exalted opinion of it: “I agree with you,” says he, “that this poem displays a large and luminous mind, and many masterly touches of the poetic art.” This, however, is not the only instance in which Marcus Cicero testified his high sense of Lucretius as a poet. We shall find, in the prosecution of this narrative, that we are indebted to him for its publication. And when, several years afterwards, Cytheris recited the Silenus of Virgil before a full audience, Cicero, who was present on the occasion, enraptured with its beautiful epitome of the Epicurean philosophy, burst suddenly into an extatic exclamation, that its author was “a second hope of mighty

* Lucretii poemata, ut scribis, ita sunt multis luminibus ingenii; multa tamen artis. Ep. ad Quint. ii. 11.
THE LIFE OF Lucretius.

Rome*,” esteeming Lucretius the first: as if he had said, “Behold another
great genius rising up amongst us, who will prove a second Lucretius.”

The opinion of Cicero was manifestly that of Virgil, as is obvious
from his numerous attempts to copy or imitate him through the whole
of his various poems: but the delicate compliment before us, he ap-
ppears to have treasured up with peculiar pleasure, and to have waited
with an eager desire to introduce the terms in which it was conveyed
with a dexterous felicity of application; and we at length find, that
he has reserved it for the last book of his Æneid, where it is elegantly
and successfully employed in a description of the young Ascanius.
But Virgil has given a still more pointed instance than the present, of
his high opinion of the poetic talents of Lucretius, in the second book
of his Georgics. No classical reader can be ignorant of the admirable
digression on the pleasures of rural retirement, in conjunction with the
study of philosophy, with which this book concludes. Such was the
life, and such the pursuits of our poet;—the thought seems suddenly
to have entered the mind of Virgil as he was writing—he instantly
drops his general description for an individual portrait; and, imitating
the very language of the character he meant to delineate, thus
abruptly bursts forth in his praise:

Felix! qui potuit rerum cognoscere caussas,
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acheronis avari†.

* Magna spes altera Rome. It has been generally understood, till of late, that this exclamation of
Cicero, instead of referring to Lucretius, referred to himself. For this new interpretation, I am indebted
to the critical acumen of Dr. Warton; and it is at once so ingenious and plausible, and so infinitely supe-
rior to the former, that, I apprehend, it will be admitted by every scholar for the future. It equally takes
away the vanity, which cannot but attach to Cicero upon the old explanation, and the incongruity neces-
sarily resulting from confounding an eminent poet with an eminent orator. I am indebted, also, to the same
able expositor for the happy idea of applying to Lucretius the verses in a subsequent passage from the se-

† How blest the sage! whose soul could pierce each cause
Of changeful Nature, and her wondrous laws;
In addition to these illustrious testimonies of the merit of Lucretius, Ovid has boldly declared, that his poem shall only perish with the destruction of the world *. Gellius † and Cornelius Nepos ‡ affirm, that he was "most excellently endowed with wisdom and eloquence, and ought to be ranked among the most elegant poets that have ever written;" while Casaubon has, without qualification, asserted, in more modern times, that "he is the best author of the Latin tongue §." And yet, notwithstanding these decisive sentiments of such very competent judges, there have been persons, who, because they were too ignorant to understand him, or too dull to be animated by the fire of his genius, have rashly taken upon them to deny him every kind of merit. To those of a false and turgid taste he has appeared too simple; to those of a superficial mind, too deep and obscure.

Perhaps no critic of modern times has more justly appreciated the style and talents of Lucretius than Mr. Hume, in the following passage: "Pope and Lucretius seem to lie in the two greatest extremes of refinement and simplicity, in which a poet can indulge himself, without being guilty of any blameable excess. All this interval may be filled with poets, who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar style and manner. Corneille and Congreve, who carry their wit and refinement somewhat farther than Mr. Pope, (if poets of so different a kind can be compared together,) and Sophocles and Terence, who are more simple than Lucretius, seem

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* Carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucretii,
  Exitio terras cum dabit una dies.

† Poetam ingenio et facundia praecellentem.
‡ Inter elegantissimos poetas.
§ Lucretius Latinitatis author optimus. Not. in Johan. c. 5.
to have gone out of that medium in which the most perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of some excess in these opposite characters. Of all the great poets, Virgil and Racine, in my opinion, lie nearest the centre, and are the farthest removed from both the extremities *.

To this honourable testimony of Mr. Hume, the reader must excuse my recurring to the equally advantageous opinion of Dr. Warton; than whom no scholar was ever better acquainted with Lucretius, and no critic more competent to decide upon his merits. "I am next," says he, "to speak of Lucretius, whose merit, as a poet, has never yet been sufficiently displayed, and who seems to have had more fire, spirit, and energy, more of the vivida vis animi, than any of the Roman poets, not excepting Virgil himself. Whoever imagines, with Tully †, that Lucretius had not a great genius, is desired to cast his eye on two pictures he has given us at the beginning of his poem: the first of Venus with her lover Mars, beautiful to the last degree, and more glowing than any picture painted by Titian; the second §, of that terrible and gigantic figure, the daemon of superstition, worthy the energetic pencil of Michael Angelo. Neither do I think, that the description that immediately follows, of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, was excelled by the famous picture of Timanthes on the same subject, of which Pliny speaks so highly, in the thirty-fifth book of his Natural History: especially the minute and moving circumstance of her perceiving the grief of her father Agamemnon, and of the priest's concealing his sacrificing knife, and of the spectators bursting into tears, and her falling on her knees. Few passages, even in Virgil himself;

† This was not, in reality, as I have just pointed out, the opinion of Tully, but quite the contrary. Dr. Warton refers to the common, but erroneous reading, and a reading which is now, I believe, universally relinquished for that I have given in p. xliv.
‡ Lib. i. 33
§ Lib. i. 63.
are so highly finished, contain such lively descriptions, or are so
harmonious in their versification, as where our poet speaks of the
fruitfulness occasioned throughout all nature, by vernal flowers*; of
the ravages committed by tempestuous winds; of the difficulty of his
undertaking, where, after mentioning the great obscurity of his subject,
he breaks out into that enthusiastic rapture†:

Obscure the subject: but the thirst of fame
Burns all my bosom; and through ev’ry nerve
Darts the proud love of letters, and the muse.
I feel th’ inspiring power; and roam resolv’d
Through paths PÆRIAN never trod before.
Sweet are the springing founts with nectar new;
Sweet the new flowers that bloom: but sweeter still
Those flowers to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath,
The muses yet to mortals ne’er have deign’d.

"The second book opens with a sublime description of a true philo-
sopher, standing on the top of the temple of wisdom, and looking
down with pity and contempt on the busy hum of men. This is followed
by a forcible exhortation to temperance of each kind, and by that
account of the pleasures of a country life‡, which Virgil has exactly
copied at the end of his second book of the Georgics. The fears and
the cares that infest human life are afterwards personified in the fol-
lowing manner §:

But if all this be idle, if the cares,
The TERRORS still that haunt, and harass man,
Dread not the din of arms,—o’er kings and chiefs,
Press unabash’d, unaw’d by glittering pomp,
The purple robe unheeding—

"These images are surely far superior to those admired ones of

* Lib. i. 251. † Ver. 921. Dr. Warton quotes the original: I have exchanged it for the en-
suing version, for the benefit of the English reader. ‡ Lib. ii. 24. § Lib. ii. 46, 50.
THE LIFE OF LUCRETIUS.

---Nec Curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes---
Scandit aeratas vitiosa naves
CurA.

"I know not how to resist the temptation of giving the reader the landscape of a distant mountain, with the flocks feeding on the side of it*; and I could wish to have set down the description that immediately follows, of a field of battle†, or the subsequent one of a cow's lamenting her calf that was sacrificed‡.—

"In the beginning of the third book, which opens with the praises of Epicurus, is a passage, that of itself, without alleging other instances, is sufficient to shew the strength and sublimity of the author's imagination§.

"This image always put me mind of that exalted one in Milton, which is so strongly conceived:

On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss,
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains to assault
Heav'n's height, and with the centre mix the pole||.

"Our poet adds, in lines as finished and as smooth as Virgil’s, that he then saw the happy and undisturbed state of the gods.

"On a perusal of this passage, can one forbear crying out¶ with the author?

* Lib. ii. 317. This, and all the ensuing passages referred to, are quoted at large, in Dr. Warton’s Dissertation. The reference alone is here given, for the sake of brevity: the reader may easily turn to them at his option. † Lib. ii. 323. ‡ Lib. ii. 355. § Lib. iii. 14. ||Par.
||Lib. iii. 228. ¶ Lib. iii. 228.
THE LIFE OF LUCRETIUS.

—On these vast themes
As deep I ponder, a sublime delight,
A sacred horror sways me—Nature thus
By thy keen skill through all her depths unveil'd.

"The description of a person in a deep lethargy *; of the effects of drunkenness †; of the falling-sickness ‡; and the noble prosopopeia||, where Nature is introduced, chiding her ungrateful sons, for their folly and discontent, are equal to any thing in the Roman poesy: as is likewise the conclusion of this book, where the poet allegorizes all the punishments of hell §.

"In the fourth book, our author has painted the evils and inconveniences attending the passion of love, in the liveliest terms. No poet seems to have felt more strongly than Lucretius.—

"I know not what apology to make to the reader for such a number of quotations; but I have always thought, that general criticism, without producing particular passages, was both useless and unentertaining. Besides, I look upon the giving him these descriptions, to be like leading him through a gallery, adorned with the most exquisite paintings. I am sure there is no piece by the hand of Guido or the Carracci, that exceeds the following group of allegorical personages ¶:

Spring comes and Venus, and, with foot advanc'd,
The light-wing'd Zephyr, harbinger belov'd;
Maternal Flora strewing, ere she treads,
O'er ev'ry footstep flowers of choicest hue,
And the glad ether loading with perfumes.
Then Heat succeeds, the parch'd Etesian breeze,
And dust-discolour'd Ceres; Autumn, then,
Follows, and tipsy Bacchus, arm in arm,
And Storms, and Tempests; Eurus roars amain,

* Lib. iii. 465. † Lib. iii. 475. ‡ Lib. iii. 486. || Lib. iii. 944. § Lib. iii. 991.
¶ Lib. v. 736.
And the red SOUTH brews thunders: till, at length,
COLD shuts the scene, and WINTER's train prevails,
SNOWS, hoary Sleet, and FROST, with chattering teeth.

"The fifth book concludes with a description of the uncivilized state* of man, together with the origin and progress of government, arts, and sciences. The poetical beauties it contains are so many, and so various, that, intending to publish a translation of this part of Lucretius, with critical observations, I wave all farther mention of it at present.†:

"The sixth book is the least obscure and abstruse of any, being wholly taken up with describing the appearances of nature, and accounting for some seeming prodigies. The plague, with which the whole poem concludes, being more known, and perhaps more read than any other part of it, I shall not point out any particular passages."

The poverty of the Latin language was not the only evil Lucretius had to struggle with. The foreign and domestic contests in which the republic was involved, rendered the times unfavourable to literary publications of every kind;—and the philosophy he was about to disseminate, struck strongly at the root of every popular prejudice, and even of the established religion itself. The former, however, was an evil of lighter consideration; for the man who writes for immortality, and feels a triumphant pre-sentiment that his works will for ever survive him, can readily forego the applause of the fleeting hour in which he personally exists: he looks forward to future ages, and expects from posterity that garland of unfading flowers which his misjudging co-evals refuse to his labours on their first appearance. The latter, however, was an evil of more considerable moment; for, notwithstanding

* Lib. v. 736.
† Why this intention was not complied with, I know not. Every true lover of poetic excellence must regret the cause, be it what it may; but none more than the present translator.
the consciousness a man may have of the rectitude of his own intention, and the truth of his own tenets, nothing is so difficult as to eradicate ancient and national prejudices, and, more especially, prejudices that relate to an established religion which necessarily creates many of the first offices of the government that establishes it. This was precisely the situation of Lucretius, when he first ventured upon his poem. The popular religion was the grossest and most iniquitous that can be conceived; and every unbiassed mind must agree with him that it would have been better for the people to have had no religion whatever, than to have been in the belief and profession of one that subserved almost every species of vice, and could be accommodated to the purposes of every party, and every plot. This popular religion, moreover, as I have just observed, formed an essential part of the constitution of the republic, as well as proved a source of its most lucrative offices and employments. During the monarchy of Rome, the king himself, in this respect resembling the monarch of our own country, was the pontifex maximus, or supreme head of the church*: and when, upon the expulsion of the Tarquins, this office existed no longer, the people, at the instigation of Junius Brutus, appointed a Rex Sacrorum†, or lord of religious ceremonies, to be for ever elected from the Patrician order, and to have a supreme control over all the countless ranks of curiones, flamines, flaminicae, vestal virgins, augurs, celeres, salii, and whatever classifications besides were included in the sacred system of Numa. It should be noticed, however, that this economy of the church was at all times kept totally distinct from the civil department of the state; and that neither the chief pontiff himself, nor the augurs, nor any person possessed of any religious office whatever, was suffered to interfere in the concerns of the latter; but that each was compelled to devote himself solely to the care of the public worship, and his own peculiar function‡.

Yet, notwithstanding this wise and salutary restriction, it is impossible to conceive, that any man could, without personal danger, encounter the animosity of so numerous and powerful a body as those religious orders must have formed, by the propagation of doctrines, avowedly subversive of their entire constitution. The most violent demagogue never dared attempt it: and consuls, tribunes, prætors, and quæstors, found it equally for their interest, whatever may have been the infidelity of their hearts, to reverence the established system. Lucretius, however, like an honest man, and one who could not look, without contempt, upon the absurd superstitions of his country, hazarded the danger, and was determined to employ, both the force of argument, and the charms of poetic imagery, to convince the republic of its errors. He tells his countrymen, that they need never be afraid of sound and genuine philosophy: that philosophy can by no means introduce vice and immorality into the world; but that their own absurd and abominable superstitions might do, and often had done so. And, in proof of this latter assertion, he adverts to, and relates, in a masterly manner, the story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, in consequence of the demand of such an oblation, by the pretended goddess Diana*. He informs them, that they need not be afraid of forsaking the altars of their gods, from any idea that these imaginary beings could punish them for apostacy; for that Epicurus himself, the most undaunted of all the philosophers, and upon whom, had they possessed any power whatever, they would doubtless have wrecked their utmost vengeance, had never sustained any detriment in consequence of his religious opinions.

No thunder him, no fell revenge pursu’d
Of heav’n incens’d, or deities in arms.
Urg’d, rather, by such bugbear threats, to press,
With firmer spirit, forward through the bounds
Of nature, close conceal’d; the flaming walls

* Book I. v. 69.
Of heaven to scale, and dart his dauntless eye,
Till the vast whole beneath him stood display'd *

And he frequently observes that, however novel and alarming his tenets may appear, and, however unpropounded, in any popular way prior to his own attempt, nothing can be so absurd, as to reject them solely on this account; that it is the duty of every wise man to investigate the proofs to which any important doctrine appeals, and fairly to abide by the legitimate consequences of such investigation.

Cease, then, alarm'd by aught profound or strange,
Right reason to reject: weigh well the proofs
Each scheme advances; if, by truth upheld,
Embrace the doctrine; but if false, abjure †.

It is but just to observe, however, that neither Lucretius himself, nor any of his followers or admirers, were harassed by the Roman government for their attachment to the sentiments of Epicurus: Notwithstanding the prejudices of the people, and the power of the priesthood, the right of private judgment was, at this period, never interfered with. Philosophers tolerated philosophers; the religion of Numa tolerated them all; and, in the mystery of divine providence, the tremendous plague of persecution was reserved for future and more enlightened generations.

Thus pleasantly and profitably glided away the tranquil life of Lucretius. Yet it was not against the superstitions of his countrymen alone, that he directed his poetic pen; but against their ambition, against their rapacity, against their avarice, against the general strife and anxiety that prevailed for public honours, and popular applause: and the unworthy means that were incessantly employed to obtain them. The latter part of his third book is filled with the most just and beautiful reflexions upon these various deviations from morality, and all

* Book II. v. 1049. † Book I.
virtue: the indignity of the pursuit, and the fallacy of the enjoyment.

From "the cool, sequestered vale" of his own retirement he frequently took a pleasure in looking at the busy, bustling world, at a distance: not, as he expressly observes, that the dangers to which the distracted multitude is exposed, afford us any delight, but that it is highly gratifying to feel secure from such dangers and toils ourselves: to mount, as it were, some firm and elevated cliff that commands the prospect, and survey the restless scene beneath:

To watch the giddy crowd that, deep below,
For ever wander in pursuit of bliss;
To mark the strife for honours, and renown,
For wit, and wealth insatiate, ceaseless urg'd,
Day after day, with labour unrestrain'd.

The whole passage is so strikingly beautiful, that I am not surprised at its having been copied and imitated by poets in every age, and, nearly, in every nation.

O! wretched mortals! race perverse, and blind!
Through what dread dark, what perilous pursuits
Pass ye this round of being! know ye not
Of all ye toil for, Nature nothing asks
But, for the body, freedom from disease,
And sweet, unanxious quiet for the mind?
And little claims the body to be sound:
But little serves to strew the paths we tread
With joys beyond e'en nature's utmost wish.
What though the dome be wanting, whose proud walls
A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime
By frolic forms of youths in massy gold,
Flinging their splendours o'er the midnight feast?
Though gold and silver blaze not o'er the board,

* Book II. v. 3.        † Book II. v. 9.
Nor music echo round the gaudy roof?  
Yet listless laid the velvet grass along,  
Near gliding streams; by shadowy trees o'er-arch'd,  
Such pomps we need not; such still less when Spring  
Leads forth her laughing train, and the warm year  
Paints the green meads with roseat flowers profuse.  
On down reclin'd, or wrapt in purple robe,  
The thirsty fever burns with heat as fierce  
As when its victim on a pallet pants *.

Such was the life of wisdom, of simplicity and temperance, that was taught and practised both by Epicurus and Lucretius; a life that, it might have been expected, would have secured them from all misrepresentation, or aspersion of character. And yet, strange to relate, or rather, strange it would be, if we did not observe the same thing occur every day in our own age, these very moralists have been accused of excess and gluttony; and the pure system they equally recommended and practised, has been esteemed the high road to debauchery and the gratification of every illicit passion. I am not surprised, indeed, that such infamous and idle reports should be often believed in the present day, or should, occasionally, have been accredited even among the Christian fathers; because I know that the writings of many of the Platonic, as well as Peripatetic philosophers, who successively governed the physics and metaphysics of the Christian church in its earlier ages, may be adduced in corroboration of such reports. But I am truly surprised at the envy and wilful perversion of all fact that could alone have engendered such reports at the first, and the readiness with which Plutarch, Seneca, and even Cicero himself, after he had abjured his primal faith, countenanced the libels by which the character of Epicurus was unjustly defamed. Intimately acquainted with the tranquil and temperate life of Lucretius, Cicero, at least, must have

* Book II. v. 14.
known, that both in his diet and his morality, as well as in his philosophic doctrines, he was a close and undeviating disciple of the Grecian sage. Yes, they were lovers of Pleasure—and luxurious at their meals: they both confess the charge. But what was the pleasure of which they were lovers, and the meals in which they indulged so luxuriously? Cassius himself, and in the very words of Epicurus, shall tell us, as he told Cicero in an expostulatory letter he wrote to him, after having heard that Cicero had favoured the circulation of such aspersions. The declaration of Cassius, moreover, is entitled to the utmost credit, from his having intimately studied the life and doctrines of Epicurus; and, as I have already related, been first a fellow-student with both Cicero and Lucretius, and afterwards an intimate and confidential friend. "Those," says he, "whom we call lovers of Pleasure, are real lovers of Goodness and Justice: they are men, who practise and cultivate every virtue: for no true pleasure can exist, without a good and virtuous life.* When we assert then, that Pleasure is the chief good, the prime felicity of man, we do not mean the pleasures of the luxurious and the libidinous: the pleasures of the taste, the touch, or any of the grosser senses, as the ignorant, or those who wilfully mistake our opinions, maliciously assert: but what constitutes pleasure with us is the possession of a body exempt from pain, and a mind devoid of perturbation. It is not the company of the lascivious, nor the luxurious tables of the wealthy, nor an indulgence in any sensual delights, that can make life happy; but it is a sound and unerring

* Il qui a nobis φοιτητοί vocantur, sunt φιλοκαλοί καὶ φιλολογοί, omnésque virtutes et colunt, et retinent: eu γαρ εστιν ήδας απο του καλου καὶ δίκαιου ζηω, &c. Malbranche asserted the very same proposition, and was misunderstood in the same manner. "Tout plaisir," said he, "est un bien, et rend actuellement heureux celui qui le goute." Nouveau Systeme de la Nature et de la Grace. This declaration was conceived to be impious and immoral; and it was soon vehemently attacked, in a publication entitled, "Réflexions Philosophiques, et Theologiques sur le nouveau Systeme," &c. It was necessary, therefore, to explain the meaning of Malbranche; and we hence find it developed, in almost the words of Cassius, in a periodical publication of much repute in his own day. "Tout plaisir est un bien: mais qui est ce que c'est le plaisir?—c'est la vertu, c'est la grace, c'est l'amour de Dieu, ou plutôt, c'est Dieu seul qui est notre bêtitude." Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres. Mois de Decembre, 1685.
judgment, that investigates and develops causes, that informs us what ought reasonably to be desired, and what to be avoided, and which banishes those opinions that disturb the soul with perpetual anxiety and tumult."

With respect to Plutarch and Cicero, it must be confess, however, that they not only knew that the popular prejudice against Epicurus was without foundation, but occasionally acknowledged it to be so *

Let him, then, who accuses Epicurus of illicit pleasures, examine the delights in which he indulged; let him who defames him as a glutton, produce his dishes. Let him enter into his garden, let him sit down at the sumptuous table it exhibits, and when convinced by the banquet itself, let him rise up and pronounce his condemnation †. The epistles which Epicurus occasionally addressed to his friends, and which were afterwards collected into one volume, contained a statement of his daily regimen. These unfortunately are now no longer ‡.

* Thus, Plutarch, after asserting as follows, *Amicus carere, actioni privari; Dum numul putare, voluptati indulgere, res omnes neglige, ista sunt quas boniores omnes, ipsi exceptis, buic sectae attribuant*: immediately subjoins, *ad quares quod accipis aula, hoc te* ἀλλιμαί σκετομυία. "Every one knows that this opinion was never deserved by Epicurus: but we give it as an opinion, and not as a truth." Plut. lib. ii. c. 9.

In like manner, Cicero declares of the same philosopher, "Negat quemquam jucunde posse vivere, nisi idem honeste, sapienter, justaque vivat. Nihil gravius, nihil philosophià dignius: nisi idem hoc ipsum honeste, sapienter, juste, ad voluptatem referret. Quid melius quam fortunam exigam intervenire sapienti? sed hoc est ne dicet, qui, cum dolore non modo maximum malum, sed solum malum etiam dixerit, tota corpore opprimitur doloribus acerminis, tum cum maxime contra fortunam glorietur? quod idem melioribus etiam verbis Metrodorus, occupavi inquit, &c." Tusc. Quest. l. v.

† I am indebted, for this passage, to Creech. It is a part of his Latin, and learned address to his friend Coddrington, to whom he dedicated his edition of Lucretius. Qui libidinem Epicuro obiectit, demonstrat illius furta et delicias: qui gulam, fercula, &c.

‡ The destruction which has thus attended the works of Epicurus, compel us, in quoting from him, to have recourse to subsequent authors, who, like Diocles and Diogenes Laertius, have preserved certain parts of his writings in their own compositions. These, indeed, are but few, yet sufficiently numerous to prove to us, that Lucretius has been a most faithful expositor of his entire system. It is said, that a complete and original treatise of Epicurus upon his own philosophy has been lately discovered in the ruins of Herculaneum, and that we may soon expect a printed edition of it. This, as a curiosity, will be truly valuable, and I am sorry that I cannot avail myself of it at present. Yet, after the very ample
in existence; but Diogenes Laertius, who, in his age, had an opportunity of perusing them, and has preserved several in the course of his biography, tells us, from what he had read, that his diet was the most temperate imaginable: that he satisfied himself with the herbs of his garden intermixed with fruits, and the plainest pottage. "I am perfectly contented," said Epicurus, in one of these epistles, "with bread and water alone; but send me a piece of your Cyprian cheese, that I may indulge myself whenever I feel disposed for a luxurious feast." Such, adds Diogenes, who has preserved the anecdote, was the life of him who declared that his pursuit was pleasure *. And it is observed by Diocles, that his disciples followed the example of their preceptor: that water was their common beverage, and that they never drank more than a small cup of wine. When Demetrius, therefore, besieged the city of Athens, and the inhabitants were reduced to the utmost extremity, the scholars of Epicurus sustained the common calamity, with less inconvenience than any other citizens: the philosopher supported them at his own expense, sharing with them daily a small ration of his beans.—

"I readily," says Seneca himself, in one of his epistles, "quote the excellent maxims of Epicurus, that I may convince those, who deceive themselves as to their object, and expect to find in such maxims a screen for their vices, that, to whatever sect they attach themselves, they must live virtuously. This is the inscription over the garden-gate:

"Here, stranger, mayest thou happily take up thine abode; here plea-

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manner in which every part of it has been unfolded by Lucretius, it is rather to be welcomed as a curiosity alone, than as containing any new matter of essential importance.

* Διοικής δὲ εἰ Ἡ ΤΡΙΤΗ ης τελόμενης φιλίν εὐελπίστη τὰ καὶ λιπτότα ἄπαντα κυττάρις γαλι (φασι) αὐτὸν προκειμένον τὸ ὅτι πῶν ὑπὸς ἄντοι ποτόν.—Ἄριστος τε φιλόν εἰ ταῖς εἰσπολευίσκει, ἑδείκτεν μονος αρχηγὸς, καὶ ἐντὸς λίτρας καὶ τιμὸς μοι τυρα (ἐπτο) Κυβέρνον εἰς ἄλλων πολυμεσθήσεις, δυνάμει. Τοιοῦτο: τοῦ ὅτι τῆς ὑδάτων εἰναὶ σιλας δογματικῶν. Diog. Laert. x. 11.

† Plut. in Vit. Demet.
sure is the supreme good: the kind and hospitable owner of this mansion, will readily receive you, and set before you barley-cakes, and large draughts of water from the spring;” adding, at the same time, “Is not this fare delicious?” Nor was the death-bed of Epicurus at variance with the uniform temperance and tranquillity of his life. The disorder to which he fell a victim, was a stone in the bladder: it had, for a long time, been occasionally attended with excruciating pain; but for fourteen days previous to his death, the pain was uninterrupted. Yet he bore it with admirable composure and patience, propounding the most important and sublime precepts to his students, who tenderly surrounded him, and exhorting them, with his last breath, to lead a life of sobriety and virtue.

With respect to illicit amours, they are crimes which both Epicurus* and Lucretius† were incessantly declaiming against; and even Cicero, notwithstanding all his enmity to their doctrines, acknowledges, in many places, that the Epicureans were uniformly worthy men: and that no philosophers were so little addicted to vices of any kind‡.

“Wisdom,” says Epicurus himself, in his epistle to Menæceus, “is the chief blessing of philosophy, since she gives birth to all other virtues, which unite in teaching us that no man can live happily who does not live wisely, conscientiously, and justly; nor, on the other hand, can he live wisely, conscientiously, and justly, without living happily: for virtue is inseparable from a life of happiness, and a life of happiness is equally inseparable from virtue. Be these, then, and similar precepts, the subjects of thy meditation by night and by day, both when alone, and with the friend of thy bosom; and never, whe-

* Galen in Art. Med.  † See, especially, the latter part of Book IV. of the Nature of Things.  ‡ Quæst. Tusc. I. iii. Epist ad Famil. passim.
ther asleep or awake, shalt thou be oppressed with anxiety, but live as a God among mankind *.

If then, it be inquired, whence such unjust accusations could have arisen against a sect, that so little deserved them, Du Rondelle, who has investigated this matter with much critical penetration, shall inform us. "To hear such a man as Epicurus," says he, "was a pleasure, not often to be met with. For, instructed in the opinions of all the philosophers, endowed with a quick conception, possessed of great eloquence, nor ever opening his lips without dignity, in a most delightful garden, decorated with a variety of fragrant flowers that perfumed the air with their odours, he arrested the attention of every one with more than Herculean chains; whence Laertius compares him to the Sirens; nor was it possible for an auditor to quit this delightful spot, without feeling the bonds of friendship for a host who was equally successful in his researches, and enchanting in his diction. The mode of philosophizing which he adopted, was highly approved of. Its report spread over all Athens, and was in the mouth of every one: from every quarter visitors thronged to our philosopher, and were anxious to intermix in his audience; while the professors of other systems were deserted, and themselves left alone in their schools.

"This displeased the philosophers, but more especially the Stoics: and as Diotinus, one of the latter sect, had already discovered impudence enough to defame whomsoever he chose, he was applied to, to write against Epicurus. They now burst forth, therefore, with fifty lascivious epistles, pretended to have been written by the philosopher

* Διο καὶ πρὸς τοῦ τιμωτέρου ύπερτηρεῖν ης φρονους, εξ ὡς αἱ λοιπαὶ παῖευ τιπικασιν αριται; διδασκαυητα ὡς ὸυκ ἦν τοῦ ἑδείς ἐστιν, αὐτὸ τοῦ φρονομένς, καὶ καλος, καὶ ἀκαίρως υπὸ τοῦ φρονομένης καὶ καλος, καὶ ἄκατς, ἀνυ τοῦ ἑδείς. Συμπε- ρικασι γερ αἱ αριται τοῦ ἑδείς καὶ τοῦ ἑδείς τοῦτου εντασειοι.—Ταύτα οὐ καὶ τα τουτω συγγεγυφεί μελητα διαπαγνον, ἡμιρας καὶ εκποτης προς σιαυνη, καὶ ευδιστετε τοῦ ὑπαρ διαταγχησι, ἐστι δὲ ᾖ τοιού ἀνθιοτος. Diog. Laert. x. 132. 135.
himself. The tale runs that Epicurus, both in the porticos, and public walks of Athens, at one time indulges himself with Leontius, at another time with Themista: that he wears out the day in sleep, and the night in gambling, drunkenness, or public riots: that he is now guilty of some crime, and now of some impiety: but that, at all times, he is sottish, and unworthy of attention.

"To these calumnies Epicurus made no reply. He regarded them as belonging to the class of ephemeral rumours that die away of their own accord as soon as they are found incompetent to their end. The consciousness of his own innocence was sufficient for himself; and the fortitude and tranquillity he discovered in the midst of such infamous aspersions are stronger proofs of the integrity of his life than the testimony of a thousand witnesses. To despise the evil reports that are raised against us, and to confide in the just judgment of unbiased posterity, is to be revenged upon our enemies in the most splendid manner possible. As to Diotimus, therefore, Epicurus neither hated, nor was incensed against him: but he pitied, and was sorry for him. He left him quietly, however, to that fate, which was certainly well deserved, but unexpected on his own part; for the writings of this calumniator were so full of ribaldry, and mere attempts at wit, that Aristophanes, with all his comic powers, could never have excited half so much of the public laughter against any one, as Diotimus at last excited against himself*."

Those, who wish to see a further account of these unjust and iniquitous reports, may consult Gassendi's Life of this celebrated philoso-

* Rondellius de Vit. et Mor. Epicuri, p. 15. The infamous letters which Diotimus endeavoured to circulate as the writings of Epicurus, and on which he founded his defamations, were proved, in a public court, to be forgeries of his own, and the author was punished accordingly. Laert. x. 3. Athen. xiii. 611. Nothing, indeed, can give us a higher opinion of the innocence and integrity of Epicurus than the fact that his most prying and inveterate adversaries could only attack him by forgeries and fraudulent impositions.
pher, where the whole is detailed at a still greater length; and with much critical research: with more, indeed, than Du Rondelle thinks necessary towards establishing his innocence. Brucker has also successfully engaged in the same benevolent cause; and his vindication is, in every respect, complete and satisfactory.

The virtues and morality of Epicurus were those of Lucretius, his disciple, and ardent admirer, and, for the most part, those of the whole school.

We are acquainted with the names of a variety of young Romans who were fellow-students with Cicero and Lucretius; and to several of whom I have already had occasion to advert. Of these there is scarcely one to be found, who did not prove, in future life, an honour and ornament to his country. The examples, indeed, they so uniformly afford us of private friendship and patriotic virtue, in practising the former of which Cicero himself allows them to have been unequalled in the history of mankind *, as well as of clear and cultivated understanding, are truly astonishing, if not altogether unrivalled. From what then, but the merest malevolence, or the grossest and most unpardonable ignorance, can the heavy charge of gluttony, voluptuousness, and immorality have been raised against a sect, whose doctrines and discipline were the purest of their age? and who in themselves, whether regarded collectively or individually, were perpetually exhibiting the most convincing proofs of wisdom, simplicity, and virtue?

Of all the enemies of Epicurus, the Stoics were the most inveterate; and I have already observed, that neither falsehoods nor forgeries were neglected by this sect, in order to vilify his character in the opinion of the people. Nor was this to be wondered at, for the doctrines and

* De Fin. I. i. 2o.
morality of Epicurus were levelled more immediately against the Stoics, than against any other philosophers. Zeno had opened his school but a short time anterior to the arrival of Epicurus at Athens. There was, in reality, but little new in what he taught; it was rather a system of eclectism, of general pillage and plunder from existing theories, than the invention of an original philosophy. Yet his dogmas were announced in new and affected terms; they were intermixed with abstruse and unintelligible paradoxes, which is too generally conceived in every age to be an unquestionable mark of wisdom and profound research; and these, by the external aid of gravity in speech, in dress and demeanour, obtained, for the inventor, a popularity so considerable, that the Academy, and almost every other school, was deserted for the Porch. The plan proposed by Epicurus, and his own natural disposition, were directly the reverse of such mummery. Affable and cheerful in himself, he saw no reason why man should become morose, in order to become wise; the paths of wisdom, in his estimation, ought to be paths of pleasantness, and virtue and happiness to walk arm in arm. In opposition, therefore, to the Porch, he opened an elegant and delightful Garden, and, instead of the grimace of external austerity, exhibited the most captivating urbanity of manners, and facility of address. He denied the absurd doctrine of fatality, the very pivot of the Stoic machinery, and boldly contended for the free agency of man. The school of Zeno had much, therefore, to dread, from such an adversary; its adherents beheld the Porch deserted in its turn for the Garden, and, with malicious invention, endeavoured to destroy the fair fame of their adversary by the base means I have already exposed.

But it was not with the philosophy of the Porch alone that the new school of the Garden interfered. The dialectics of the Academy and of the Lyceum, and especially those of the former, were daily becoming more perplexed and mazy, and the search after truth was dwindling
into a mere display of subtle and logomachic disputation. The simplicity adopted by Epicurus in the selection of terms, and his caution in the assumption of principles, were an indirect attack, as well as a severe reproof, upon this idle and growing fashion. The Academics were sensible of it from their diminished numbers, and almost empty walls: and they readily conspired, with the Stoics, in their unworthy attempt to overthrow so formidable a battery. The animosity which was thus early excited, continued to operate almost as long as Stoicism and Platonism continued to exist; and the disingenuous plan pursued by their first votaries at Athens was, as I have already observed, too generally had recourse to at Rome even by Cicero and Seneca themselves.

But the Epicureans, it may be said, were atheists: they denied the existence of a God, and of a future state; and some parts of the poem of Lucretius are expressly written to establish such denial.—Let us examine these assertions separately.

If, in the first place, it be atheism to deny the existence of those absurd and vicious deities, who were the sole objects of adoration with the multitude, the Epicureans were certainly guilty of atheism; for such they did deny. But it is so far from being proveable that they uniformly disbelieved the existence of an eternal First Cause of all things; that it is, perhaps, impossible to produce an Epicurean philosopher of any age against whom such a charge can be legitimately substantiated. The philosophers of this school, on the contrary, have, at all times, as openly avowed the existence of such a deity, and, in many instances, as strenuously contended for the truth of such an avowal, as the disciples of any system whatsoever. Such, in the seventeenth century, were Gassendi, and Cudworth, whose physics are altogether founded upon the atomic hypothesis; such was Abelard in the twelfth, Alexander, who was a contemporary with Plutarch, in the first century, and
such was Epicurus himself. Thus, in the opening of a letter addressed to a favourite disciple: "Believe, before all things, that God is an immortal and blessed being; as, indeed, common sense should teach us concerning God. Conceive nothing of him that is repugnant to blessedness and immortality, and admit every thing that is consistent with these perfections." This belief of Epicurus is, indeed, acknowledged by ancient writers in general: Cicero expressly tells us, that he was punctilious in the discharge of his religious duties; and Seneca, that he worshiped God on account of his most excellent majesty and supreme nature alone, without any idea either of future reward or punishment.

He admitted, moreover, the existence of orders of intelligences, possessed of superior powers to the human race, whom, like the angels and archangels of the Christian system, he conceived to be immortal from their nature; to have been created anterior to the formation of the world, to be endowed with far ampler faculties of enjoyment than mankind, to be formed of far purer materials, and to exist in far happier abodes. The chief difference which I have been able to discern between the immortal spirits of the Epicurean system, and of the Christian theologian, is, that while the latter are supposed to take an active part in the divine government of the world, the former are represented as having no kind of connexion with it: since it was conceived by Epicurus that such an interference is absolutely beyond their power, and would be totally subversive of their beatitude.

In the passage immediately subsequent to that I have just quoted, he purposely and obviously discriminates them from the Supreme Being, whom he speaks of in the singular number, and consequently re-

See the passage quoted at length in p. lxvii.
† De Fin. iii. 6.
‡ De Benef. iv. 19.
§ Ου γαρ συμφωνει πραγματων, και φρονιδες, και οργαι, και χαρτες μακαρων; αλλα αθυτως, και φως, και προσωπω των πλουτω ταυτα γνωται. Diog. Laert. x. 77.
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presents as One, and undivided. "There are also deities," says he, "and our knowledge of them is certain; yet not such deities as the vulgar apprehend, who cannot possibly trace the qualities they ascribe to them: hence, he is not impious who would take away the gods of the people, but he who attributes to them the opinions of the people: for it is the opinions, and not the presentiments of the people concerning these divinities, that are false*.

In deep abstraction from the world, and profound meditation on the mysteries of creation and providence, the venerable founder of the Epicurean sect maintained, that some knowledge might be acquired of the glorious figures, and the happiness of these immortal essences; and that, in proportion as we acquire this knowledge, and are consequently induced to imitate the purity and tranquillity of life in which their happiness was conceived to consist, our own felicity would be increased and exalted. To such abstractions from the world Epicurus therefore habitually resigned himself, and in such kind of quietism consisted the whole of his religion. Incapable of developing the essence of the supreme Godhead, he here contemplated the most perfect proofs of his wisdom, his power and his goodness, and fortified himself in the most unqualified resignation to his will. On the advantages of this disinterested piety, and subjects connected with it, he wrote several treatises †: and Lucretius, in a variety of passages of the ensuing poem, is as urgent as Epicurus could possibly have been, in

* The entire passage occurs thus: ΠΡΩΤΟΝ μὴν τὸν ΘΕΟΝ, ζων αἰθαμαίνει καὶ μακαρὸς ημῖν, ὡς ἡ κοίτη τοῦ Θεοῦ νοεῖ: ὑπόγεγρα, μὲν εἰς τὰ μακαριστὰ αἰσχρὰν αὐτῷ προστάτην παν ἔτοι μετὰ φιλαθείν αὐτῶν τινὰς φιλαθείν τοὺς τίτα τοῖς αἰθαμαίνει: ΘΕΟΙ μὴ γὰρ εἰσί, ἐκαρπαίει μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν αὐτῶν ἡ γνωσίς· ἐνώς ὅ ταῦτα ἔσταιμαι καὶ πολλὰ νομιζοῦσι, οὐκ ἔσται οὐ γὰρ φιλαθείν αὐτῶν ἕως νομιζεῖν. Λύσθε δὲ, εἰ μή τοὺς τοῦ πολλὸν βίους αἰθαμαίνει, αλλ' ὅ τις τῶν πολλῶν βίων ὑπὲρ προστάτην οὐ γὰρ προστάτην εἰσίν, αλλ' ὑπὸ δικαιωμάτων τίτα ταῦτα ἐστὶν. Πρῶτον ἐπιτίθεται Επικοϊς. Vide Diog. Laert. x. 123.

† Those enumerated by Diogenes Laertius, who is supposed to have omitted one or two, are as follows: Χαρίσματα, Περὶ τῶν Θεῶν: Χαρέδημος, or, On the Gods. Ἑγεσιάσας, Περὶ Θεοτοκίων: Hegesianus, or, On Piety. Περὶ Δικαιωμάτων: On Just Dealings. Περὶ Δικαιωμάτων, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ἀρίτα: On Justice, and other Virtues. Περὶ Δικαιωμάτων καὶ Χαρίσματος: On Gifts and Graces.

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recommending the same. With respect to the popular religion, he asserts:

No—it can ne’er be piety, to turn
To stocks and stones with deep-veil’d visage; light
O’er every altar incense; o’er the dust
Fall prostrate, and with outstretch’d arms invoke
Through every temple every god that reigns;
Soothe them with blood, and lavish vows on vows.
This rather thou term piety, to mark
With calm untroubled soul each scene ordain’d *.

Without this calmness of the soul, this sacred freedom from every gross and ungovernable passion, it is in vain, he asserts, in another place, to expect any benefit from these hallowed and religious seclusions, this spiritual quietism and devotion offered up, not at the shrines of the fabulous gods of the people, but in the great temple of “the immense concave of heaven,” the pure abode of superior intelligences, who are well entitled to the appellation of divinities—being, themselves, the fairest resemblance of the supreme Creator. On this sublime subject, he thus expresses himself:

For O ye Powers Divine! whose tranquil lives
Flow free from care, with ceaseless sun-shine blest,—
Who the vast whole could guide, midst all your ranks?
Who grasp the reins that curb th’ entire of Things,
Turn the broad heavens, and pour through countless worlds
Th’ ethereal fire that feeds their vital throngs—
Felt every moment, felt in every place?
Who form the louring clouds, the lightning dart,
And roll the clamorous thunder, oft in twain
Rending the concave? or, full-deep retir’d,
Who point in secret the mysterious shaft
That, whilst the guilty triumphs, prostrates stern
The fairest forms of innocence and worth †?

* Book V. v. 1222. † Book II. v. 1103.
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This magnificent and tremendous Being he no where attempts to describe: but, to prove his existence, he adverts, in a variety of places, to those arbitrary and mysterious events which are perpetually recurring through all nature, baffling the expectations of the most prudent, and elevating us to the contemplation of a Divinity, supreme, individual, and omnipotent:

So, from his awful shades, some Power unseen
O'erturns all human greatness; treads to dust
Rods, ensigns, crowns, the proudest pomp's of state,
And laughs at all the mockery of man.*

The unseen, incomprehensible, or mysterious Power, is a phrase not unfrequently applied to the Divinity in most languages, but in none, perhaps, with so much appropriation as the Latin, in which the term Vis, or Power, even without an adjunct, is put in apposition with Numen, Mens Divina, or the present God, and often used synonymously for these appellations. Thus the author of the Panegyric to Constantine Augustus: "O supreme Creator! whose names are as numerous as thou hast willed there should be languages among the nations; whom, for thou authorisest it to be so said, it is impossible for us to know—dwell not in thee that certain Power, and divine Mind, which is diffused through the whole world?" The writer has selected the very words of Lucretius, Vis quædam, but has, at the same time, omitted his truly elegant and appropriate epithet of abdita, unseen, inscrutable, or mysterious:—Vis abdita quædam. Cicero, in his Milonian oration, has a passage still more to the point: "Nor can any one," says he, "think otherwise, unless he disbelieve that there exists a Power or divine Energy. But there does, there does exist this Power; nor is it possible that a something,

* Book V. v. 1262.
† Summe Sator! cujus tot nomina sunt, quot gentium lingus esse voluit: quem (enim te ipse dici velis) seire non possumus: sive in te quædam Vis, Mensque divina est, quia toti infusus mundo, &c.
which perceives and actuates, should be present in these bodies, even in the midst of their infirmities, and not be present in so grand, so excellent a movement of nature: unless, indeed, such a Power be to be denied for the sole reason that it is not seen, or perceived; as though we were able to behold this mind of ours by which we determine, by which we foresee, by which, at this moment, I myself act, and speak, or could plainly ascertain of what it consists, or where it resides. This, this, then, is the Power that has so often favoured this city with an incredible prosperity and happiness *. Let not, therefore, the theism of Lucretius be suspected, because, in conjunction with his countrymen in general, he represents the great author and arbiter of all things as an unseen or inscrutable Power. Even in the present age of the world, we only know him from his attributes,—from his word and from his works, for no man hath hitherto seen God, or can see him. The sacred scriptures are full of the same representation. Thus, Moses, in the very midst of an intercourse with which he was favoured by the Almighty, inquires what is his name, that he might inform the Israelites of it †. To the same effect, Zophar, in his interview with Job:

Canst thou by searching find out God?
Canst thou completely find out the Almighty ‡?

With which, the following sublime apostrophe of Job himself is in perfect unison:

* Nec vero quisquam aliter arbitrari potest, nisi qui nullam Vis esse ducit, Numenve Divinum.—Est, est profecto illa Vis; neque in his corporibus, atque in hac imbecillitate nostra, inest quidam, quod vigeat et sentiat, et non inest in hoc tanto naturæ tam praecario motu; nisi forte idcirco esse non putant quia non apparent, nec cernitur; proinde quasi nostram ipsum mentem, quâ sapimus, quâ providemus, quâ hæc ipsa agimus, ac dicimus, videre, aut plane, qualis, aut ubi sit, sentire possumus. Ea Vis, ea igitur ipsa, quæ sepe incredibilen huic urbi felicitates atque opes attulit. Sect. xxx. xxxi. p. 630. Edit. Gronov.

† Exod. iii. 13.

‡ Job, vi. 7:
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O that I knew where I might find him:—
Behold! I go forwards, but he is not there;
And backwards, but I cannot perceive him:
On the left hand I feel for him, but trace him not,
He enshroudeth the right hand, and I cannot see him •.

So, the devout Asaph:

In the sea is thy way,
And thy path in the deep waters,
And thy footsteps are not known †.

And hence the Athenians, in future ages, erected an altar to this same inscrutable and mysterious Power, and inscribed it ΑΓΝΩΣΤΟ ΘΕΟ, “To the unknown God.” St. Paul remarked the inscription in his visit to this city, and particularly alludes to it in his address to the

* Job, xxiii. 3, 8, 9.

Our common version of ver. 9, of this passage, is incorrectly rendered “on the left hand where he doth work.” The verb obviously refers to the speaker, and not to the Creator; and hence the Septuagint, more accurately, ἀγνωστος ποιησατος αυτη. Yet, ποιησατος does not give the full meaning of בְּניִשְׁנָה or rather, בְּנוֹ יִשְׁנָה which more precisely implies הָנָּה בְּנָה, הָנָּה יִשְׁנָה; and supposes a person to be feeling for an object in total darkness, or with a bandage before his eyes. Ritske is the only commentator I have met with, who enters into the complete spirit of the passage, and he renders it, as I have myself given it above, “Ich hasche ihm, oder, ich grüße, nach ihm.” The Arabians still preserve the Hebrew term in the same sense: ١٤١ ١٤١. It is to this passage, and in this explanation of it, St. Paul seems to refer, Acts, xvii. 27. “That they should seek after the Lord, if haply, while feeling after him, they might find him.” Ειπερ γελάνας σάλιον αντοι και εἶπεν.

The latter period of the verse is more emphatically rendered, “he enshroudeth the right hand,” or, “he wrappeth it up in darkness,” than “he hideth himself,” and is a happy continuation of the figure just introduced. The Hebrew term אַבַּעַי, in its primary signification, refers to the garments by which our limbs are covered or concealed,—and hence, secondarily, implies to cloak, muffle, or enshroud. In this instance, the Spanish exposition of Luis de Leon gives us the true sense, though it fails in interpreting the former member of the verse. “Si a la izquierda, que hares? no le aisre: si a la derecha vuelvo, o le veré a él. O como el original a la letra: Izquierda en obrar suyo, y no le oteraré; en cubrir derecha, y no le veré.”

† Ps. lxvii. 19.
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Athenians: "whom, therefore," says he, "ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you*. It was about a century before St. Paul's visit to Athens, that Lucretius was studying in the same seat of philosophy and superstition; and, as there can be little doubt that this altar was at that time in existence, it is no extravagant conjecture that our poet himself had repeatedly noticed it, and had its inscription in his recollection when composing the passage before us.

It is absurd, therefore, to contend, that either Epicurus or his disciples were systematic atheists, since their precepts and practice, the writings both of themselves and their antagonists, establish a contrary position. It has again been said that whatever may have been their opinion respecting a Supreme Intelligence, they never believed him to have been concerned in the creation of the universe, which they expressly declared to have sprung from the fortuitous concurrence of insensible atoms, and hence to have been the mere result of blind and brutal chance.

Old as is the date of such an assertion, and widely as it has been circulated in every age, it appears to me to wander as remotely from the truth as the defamation I have just examined. I doubt much whether, if minutely analyzed, this ever were, or ever could be, the opinion of any philosopher, or of any philosophic school in the world. Of all the atomic teachers, Democritus appears to have approached nearest to such a position: yet, even Democritus himself did not contend that all atoms were insensible, and, consequently, that there was no intelligence whatever manifested in the creation of the world. His elementary corpuscles were divided into two classes, the intelligent and the non-intelligent, the power governing, and the power governed; and he contended, that it was by the common consultation and re-

* Acts, xvii, 23.
sult of the former, and the necessary submission of the latter, and not by the contingent effect of chance or fortune, that the universe sprang into existence. The absurdity of thus dividing the intelligent and creative power into parts, is too obvious to be dwelt upon; yet Democritos is not the only philosopher who is chargeable with this extravagant incongruity; for Aristotle and Plato are both guilty of the same error; since they both conceived the world, although manifestly a compound and divisible substance, to be eternal and intelligent as a whole. Far from coinciding, however, in any of these principles, Epicurus, and consequently Lucretius, opposed them with the utmost strength of their reasoning; and while they attempted to prove that matter, taken collectively, had no pretensions to sensation or consciousness, they asserted, at the same time, that it was no more capable of sense in its elementary, than in its collective state, and that every monad or primordial atom was alike intrinsically unintelligent and insensate. But this was not all: they expressly denied the existence of Chance or Fortune, either as a deity or a cause of action; and as positively asserted, that all the phenomena of the heavens, the alternation of the seasons, the eclipses of the planets, the return of day and night, are the effects of eternal and immutable laws established at the beginning, in the very origin and creation of all things. "Whom," says Epicurus, in a letter to Menæceus that has yet survived the ruthless hand of time, "do you believe to be more excellent than he who piously revere the gods, who feels no dread of death, and rightly estimates the design of nature? Such a man does not, with the multitude, regard Chance as a God, for he knows that God can never act at random; nor as a contingent cause of events; nor does he conceive that from any such power flows the good, or the evil, that attempers the real happiness of human life." And in another place, "think not that the different motions

* Τινὰ νομίζεις εἰπεί κρίττοι τοῦ, και εἰς ἄτομον ταύτα μέχρι τοῦτο, καὶ περὶ ἔκθεσιν διαπέτας ἁρμονίας ἐκατον, καὶ τοὺς φύσεως ἐπιλεκτικούς τελείας.— Τίνα δὲ ΤΥΧΗΝ, οὐτὶ δεινός, ὡς ὢν πάλαι νομίζουσιν, ὑπολειμματικόν, ωδίν γαρ αὐτὸν.
and revolutions of the heavens, the rising, setting, eclipses, and other phænomena of the planets, are produced by the immediate control, superintendance, or ministration of him who possesses all immortality and beatitude; it is from immutable laws which they received at the beginning, in the creation of the universe, that they inflexibly fulfil their various circuits.* "Fortune, chance, accident, are terms, indeed, which occur in the writings of Epicurean philosophers; but they occur also in writings the most sacred and unimpeachable; our established liturgy, the scriptures themselves, are not free from such expressions. We well know, that in these latter they are to be taken in their popular sense alone; Epicurus expressly tells us, that they are thus only to be understood under his own system; and in common justice, as well as common sense, we ought not therefore to understand them otherwise.

But it may be said, that Epicurus contended for the eternity of matter. He did so; yet this is a doctrine which by no means exclusively attaches itself to the Epicurean school. Perhaps, if closely investigated, there is not an individual sect of ancient philosophers, against whom the same charge cannot be substantiated. The Tuscans, indeed, are reported to have formed an exception to this universality of opinion; but we know so little of their cosmological tenets, and the

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It is probable that Piscator had his eye directed to this passage of Epicurus when he wrote the following, which is perfectly in unison with it. "In consideratione meteorum, ut tonitruis, fulguris, pluviae, nivist, ventorum, non debemus subsistere in investigatione causarum secundarum, et naturalium, sed mentes attollere ad Deum, ut qui illa potentissime sapientiasimeque et creat et gubernat, ut inde majestatem ejus itemque justitiam et bonitatem cognoscamus. In Job. cap. xxxvii.
little we do know, appears to be so loose and indefinite, that we have no satisfactory datum from which to draw a conclusion. The present day itself, and even the Christian church, is not without espousers of the same doctrine; nor were the Hebrew theologians uniformly free from attachment to it. The short narrative of the creation given by Moses seems to leave the question undecided, as he evidently speaks proleptically, and intimates the existence of matter in a chaotic state anterior to the formation of the world; consistently with which, the author of the Book of Wisdom asserts, in the most express manner possible, that "the almighty hand of the Lord created the world out of un- fashioned matter." I ought, nevertheless, to observe that Maimonides contended that the Hebrew term נָּֽא (created) as employed by Moses, in Genesis i. 1, implies, of itself, an absolute creation out of nothing; and that Origen, who followed the same opinion, objected to the above proposition contained in the Wisdom of Solomon, as issuing from a book which is not universally admitted to form a part of canonical scripture. Philo, however, as well as the greater part of the Christian fathers, are well known to have coincided in the sentiment expressed in the latter book; and Justin Martyr directly affirms it to have been the common belief of his own æra, that the Creator of the world formed it out of unfashioned matter; in which respect, says he, Moses, the Platonists, and ourselves, are all agreed, "that the whole world was created, by the word of God, out of plastic matter, (as asserted by Moses,) Plato and his adherents affirm, and ourselves have been taught to believe." The grand motive for such a dogma appears to have been a supposed absurdity in conceiving that any

* H πατοδιαμα; σου χρι, και υποσα τον κοσμον εξ αμφοτερων υλων. Cap. xi. 17.
† Cosmog. vol. i. p. 5. Nov. Ed.
‡ Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen.
§ Παντα, του αρχην, αγαθον οντα δημιουργκας αυτον εξ αμφοτερων υλων, δ. ανδρων, διδασκαλια. Apol. i. 10.
|| οτε λογον Θεου ει τον ιουκαμινα, και πρεσβευσαν τοι Μωσης γεγονοντι τον παντα κοσμον και Παλατην και

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thing could be created out of nothing. The Epicureans, and many other schools of philosophers, who borrowed it from them, perpetually appeal to this position. It originated, perhaps, with Democritus, who expressly asserted, according to Diogenes Laertius, "that nothing could spring from nothing, or could ever return to nothing." Epicurus echoed the tenet in the following terms: "Know first of all, that nothing can spring from non-entity." It was thus given by Aristotle: "To suppose what is created to have been created from nothing, is to divest it of all power; for it is a dogma of those who thus pretend to think that every thing must still possess its own nature." From the Greeks it passed to the Romans, and appears as follows, in Lucretius:

Admit this truth that nought from nothing springs,  
And all is clear §.

And it was thus, long afterwards, recorded by Persius:

Nought springs from nought, and can to nought return ||.

It is singular, that the very same reason is advanced among the Bramins, and is thus urged, in identic terms, in an Upanishad, from the Yajur Veda, in the course of an address to Brehra, or the Supreme Being: "the ignorant assert, that the universe, in the beginning, did not exist in its author, and that it was created out of nothing. O ye whose hearts are pure, how could something arise out of nothing?"

§ Diog. Laert. x. 38.  
|| ubi viderimus nihil posse cracari  
De nihil, tum, quod sequimur, jam rectius inde  
Perspiciemus. L. i. 157.

Let it not be conceived, however, that I hereby enter into the justification of this tenet. In shewing the degree of its universality, I only mean to contend, that whatever be its opprobrium with respect to religion, or its inconsequence with respect to ratiocination, the Epicureans are not more guilty than the greater part of ancient, and several modern, philosophers. There are three systems which have been alternately advanced to avoid the supposed absurdity of the proposition thus universally appealed to, “that nothing can proceed from nothing,” or, in other words, that the world was produced by an eternal and intelligent power from non-entity: yet they all, if I mistake not, plunge us into an absurdity ten times more deep and inextricable. The first is that contended for by all the old atomic schools, that matter is, in itself, necessarily and essentially eternal. But by such a dogma we are put into possession of two co-eternal, co-existent, and independent principles, destitute of all relative connexion, and common medium of action. The second, which has had even more espousers than the first, asserts, that the universe is an expansion of the essence of the Supreme Creator. But under this belief, the Creator himself becomes material, or in other words, matter itself becomes the Creator, a doctrine not only very generally advanced by former philosophers, but lately revived and re-accredited on the continent*, although far more irrational than the atomic creed. The third hypothesis is that of the idealists; to wit, that there is no such thing as a material or external world: that the existence of man consists of nothing more than impressions and ideas, or of pure incorporeal spirit which surveys every thing in the same insubstantial manner as the visions of a dream. Germany has still some advocates for this tenet; the Kantian philosophy, or as the professor at Königsburg prefers it should be called, the Criticism of Pure Reason, has an obvious inclina-

* See note on Book I. v. 168. of the ensuing poem.
tion to it*; but its boldest advocates, at least in modern days, were our own countrymen, Berkeley and Hume.

But, after all, why is it an absurdity to suppose that something may spring from nothing, when the proposition is applied to omnipotence? I may be answered, perhaps, because it is a self-contradiction. But this is only to argue in circulo, for why is it a self-contradiction? “It is impossible,” said M. Leibnitz, “for a thing to be, and not to be, at the same time.” This position I admit, because the contrary would imply a self-contradiction absolute and universal, founded upon the very nature of things, and consequently impossible to be performed by Omnipotence itself. But the position that “nothing can spring from nothing,” is of a very different character:—it is true when applied to man, but it does not follow that it is true when applied to God. Instead of being absolute and universal, it is relative and limited; the nature of things does not allow us to reason from it when its reference is to the latter; and hence, we have no authority to say that it is impossible to the Deity, or to maintain that an absolute creation out of nothing is an absurdity and self-contradiction. It is absurd to suppose that matter does not exist; it is absurd to suppose that it does exist eternally and independently of the Creator; it is absurd to suppose that it constitutes the Creator himself: but as it is not absurd to suppose its absolute formation out of nothing by the exercise of almighty power, and as one of these four propositions must necessarily be true, reason should induce us to embrace the last with the same promptitude with which we reject the other three.

So far, indeed, from intimating any absurdity in the idea, that matter may be created out of nothing by the interposition of an almighty

* Critique de la Raison Pure, p. 9. See also, M. Kiesweter’s Versuch einer fasslichen Darstellung der Wahrheiten der neueren Philosophie, für Uneingeweyte. Berlin, 1798.
intelligence, reason seems, on the contrary, rather to point out to us the possibility of an equal creation out of nothing of ten thousand other substances, of which each may be the medium of life and happiness to infinite orders of beings, while *every one* may, at the same time, be as distinct from *every one*, as the whole may be from matter, or as matter is from what, without knowing any thing farther of, we commonly denominate spirit. Spirit, as generally used among modern metaphysicians, is, to say the most of it, but a mere negative term, employed to express something that is not matter; but there may be ten thousand somethings, and substrata of being, and moral excellence and felicity, which are not matter, none of which, however, we can otherwise characterise. Yet why, between all, or any one of these, and matter itself, there should be such an utter opposition and discrepancy as was contended for by Des Cartes, and has since been maintained by most metaphysicians, I cannot possibly conjecture; nor conceive why it should be so universally thought necessary, as it still appears to be thought, that the essence of the eternal Creator himself must indispensably consist of the essence of some one of the orders of beings whom he has created. Why may it not be as distinct from that of an archangel, as from that of a mortal? from the whole of those various substances, which I have just supposed, and which we cannot otherwise contemplate, or characterise, than by the negative term spirit, as it is from matter which is more immediately submitted to our eyes, and constitutes the substratum of our own being and sensations?

But I return to the subject before me: and repeat it, that my intention, instead of defending the erroneous doctrine of Epicurus respecting the eternity of matter, has been merely to prove that, in erring, he only erred with the greater part of the world at large, and upon a point which it would be absurd and dogmatic to affirm is pos-
sessed of no difficulties whatever. In other respects, the doctrine he in-
culcated was perfectly coincident with the creed of almost every mo-
dern geologist, whether Plutonic or Neptunian*, and which has been
gradually gaining ground from the age of Des Cartes; I mean, that
matter which was originally possessed of the mere qualities of extent and
solidity, was endowed, by the Supreme Creator, with such additional
properties of motion and gravitation, as enabled it, in process of time.
after a long lapse of intervening ages, and an infinite reiteration of
collisions, repulsions, and re-combinations, to produce, by the mere
effect of such superadded powers alone, from a rude and undigested
chaos, a vital and harmonious world.

An examination into the internal structure of the earth demon-
strates, that such must have been the fact; and the Neptunian philoso-
pher, or he who traces the origin of things from an aqueous, instead
of an igneous, or Plutonic chaos, perceives, from the very lineaments of
nature herself, the truth of the Mosaic narrative; he perceives, that the
present arrangement and phenomena of the chaotic mass were not
duced instantaneously, but by a series of separate and creative opera-
tions; that the different fluids of vapour and water were secered in
the first instance; that the water, for a considerable portion of time,
must have covered the entire surface of the globe; that it at length
gradually subsided, and disclosed the summits of our primary, or gra-
nitic mountains, which contain no organic remains, and, of course,
must have existed anterior to all animal, or even vegetable life. He
perceives, from the book of nature, that the waters were first animated
with living creatures, the shells and exuviae of marine animals being
traced in immense quantities, even to the present moment, on the
summits of the loftiest and most inland primary mountains, whence
it is certain that they existed, and in prodigious shoals, even prior to

* Werner, La Metheric, Des Saussures, Hutton, Whitehurst, Kirwan, Playfair.
the subsidence of the waters, and the disclosure of the dry land. He, without difficulty, can conceive, still pursuing the order of the sacred historian, which is in every respect analogous with that of the Epicurean system *, and he is supported in such conception by the best principles of ornithology,—that, the summits of the primary mountains being covered with the verdure of the grassy herb, as the waters progressively retreated the atmosphere was next inhabited; and that the different genera of birds—many of which have long since become extinct, and perhaps existed but for a short period from the date of the general creation, but whose skeletons are still occasionally detected on the surface, or but a little below the surface of our loftiest hills—drew their nutriment from the summits of these primary mountains, as soon as they began to be disclosed, and to be furnished with herbaceous food, being the only animals, excepting fishes, which hitherto possessed a habitation. It follows of necessity, therefore, as stated in the sacred writings, and as is expressly affirmed in the poem before us †, that terrestrial animals must have had a posterior creation, the surface of the earth now gradually assuming a more solid and extensive appearance, and accommodating them with an augmenting theatre of existence. The Mosaic account, indeed, limits this process to a period in which, if the terms be understood in their strict and literal sense, the existing phenomena of nature seem to evince they could not possibly have occurred; for it confines the entire work of creation within the compass of six days. In other parts of the scriptures, however, we have undeniable proofs, that the term day, instead of being restrained to a single revolution of the earth around its axis, is used, in a looser and more general sense, for a definite, indeed, but a much more extensive period; and we have as ample a proof from the book of nature, the existing face of the earth, that the six days or periods of creation referred to, in the Mosaic cosmology, imply epochs of much greater duration than so many diurnal revolutions, as we have, in the

* See Nature of Things, Book V. 518.
† Ibid. 822.
page of human history, that the same terms were employed with the same laxity of meaning by the prophet Daniel. Thus interpreted, scepticism is driven from her last and inmost fortress; every subterfuge is annihilated, and the word and work of the Deity are in perfect unison with each other. That the Creator might have produced the whole by a single and instantaneous effort, is not to be denied; but, as both revelation and nature concur in asserting that such was not the fact, it is no more derogatory to him, with whom a thousand years are but as one day, and one day as a thousand years, to suppose that he allotted six thousand years to the completion of his design than that he executed it in six days. And, surely, there is something far more magnificent in conceiving the world to have progressively attained form, order, and vitality, from the mere operation of powers communicated to it in a state of chaos, or unfashioned matter, than in supposing the actual and persevering exertions of the Almighty for a definite, although a shorter period of time.

That Epicurus and his disciples disbelieved a future state, is a fact that I pretend not to deny. Whence were they to acquire a knowledge of this important doctrine? The evidences offered in its favour by nature, and the reflection of our own minds when directed to moral considerations, are, at best, but feeble and inconclusive; and if the Jews themselves, the only people at this period who were favoured with a revelation of any kind, hesitated upon this mysterious subject, and the Sadducees, a large and considerable body of them openly rejected it; if Solomon himself, renowned through every æra as the profoundest sage of his nation, believed that the wise or righteous man died even as the fool or the wicked; that “that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they have all one spirit; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast, for all is vanity: all go unto one place;

* See Note on Book I., ver. 168, of the Nature of Things.  
† Eccles. ii. 16.
all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again *;" it surely can be no impeach-ment of the wisdom or virtue of a sect of heathen philosophers, that, after a full and critical examination of this momentous point, they could not bring themselves to accredit what was professedly denied by men who were in possession of an express revelation from heaven.

The belief of a future existence can only result from that of a resurrection of the body after its dissolution, or of the survival of the soul as a separate and independent principle. With respect to the former, although intermixed with a multitude of the grossest conceits imaginable, it became an early tenet among the Egyptians, and was strenuously contended for by the Pharisaic Jews, it made little or no progress in either Greece or Rome at any time; and hence, when St. Paul, with inimitable eloquence, asserted this sublime doctrine at the bar of Agrippa's court, Festus accused him of being mad from excess of learning †. "That the dead shall rise, and live again," observes Mr. Locke, "is beyond the discovery of reason, and is purely a matter of faith ‡:" the knowledge of immortality is alone brought to light by the gospel; and nothing but the irrefragable proofs we possess of our Saviour's resurrection can afford us, at the present moment, any full or decisive evidence upon the subject.

Of the separate survival of the soul, we know as little from any intimations afforded by the light of nature, as we do concerning the resurrection of the body. And hence, though the former was a tenet far more widely acceded to than the latter, it appears to have been

* Eccles. iii. 19, 20. The belief of a future state among the Hebrews does not, indeed, appear to have been general even in the days of Hezekiah, whose reign commenced, at least, three centuries after that of Solomon; for, in his prayer to the Almighty for a prolongation of life, Isai. xxxviii. 18, 19. he expressly asserts, that death cannot celebrate Jehovah—that those who go down to the grave, are without hope—and that the living alone can praise him.
† Acts, xxvi. 23, 24. ‡ Human Understand. iv. 2.
THE LIFE OF LUCRETIUS.

derived from no common foundation, nor possessed of any uniformity of conception. Generally speaking, moreover, the tenet itself was destroyed by the mode in which it was explained. What was the nature of the soul, in the opinion of those who contended for its incorruptibility? An emanation from the divine and universal mind*—a particle of the divine aura†, an idea‡, an æon§. How was it disposed of, upon its separation from the body? It transmigrated into some other body; it remigrated to the soul of the world||; it was resorbed by the divine universal Mind. But in either case, the soul is possessed of no separate entity, and as much ceases to exist per se, or to be what it was before, as if it perished with the body, and returned to the common mass of the material world. We cannot wonder, therefore, that, even among the Stoics and Platonists, the doctrine of a post-existence of the soul appeared to be frequently doubtful and undecided. They believed, and they disbelieved; they hoped, and they feared; and life passed away in a state of perpetual anxiety and agitation. But this was not all: perplexed, even when they admitted the doctrine, about the will of the Deity, and the mode of securing his favour after death, with their own philosophic speculations they intermixed the religion of the people. They acknowledged the existence of the popular divinities; clothed them with the attributes of the Eternal himself; and, anxious to obtain their benediction, were punctilious in attending at their temples, and united in the sacrifices that were offered. Such was the conduct of the most worthy and the most enlightened; of Socrates¶ and of Plato**, of Cicero†† and Seneca‡‡.

* Ex divina mente universa delibutos animos habemus. Cic. in Cat. Maj.
† affigit humo divinae particulam auriæ. Hor. Sat. ii. 5.
|| Thus Plutarch, in allusion to the destiny of the soul, as maintained both by Pythagoras and Plato, ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀθέτουσαν τὴν παράπτωσιν πρὸς το ἑαυτὸν. Placit. iv. 9.
¶ Xenoph. Mem. i. i. Diog. Laert. i. ii. ** De Legib. i. viii. †† Appian.
†† Tacit. i. xv. Suet. in Ner.
An incorruptible soul, however, being thus generally conceived to constitute a portion of the human frame, it became, from a very early period, necessary to inquire into the part it was destined to perform while connected with the body. And from its being admitted on all hands, by those who denied, as well as by those who contended for its incorruptibility, to be of a more volatile and attenuate nature than the body properly so called, it required no great degree of acuteness to appropriate to it, as its peculiar prerogative, the principle of thought and consciousness; or to maintain consecutively, that thought or consciousness could not result from pure elementary matter under any combination. It is commonly imagined that this latter tenet was the foundation of the former; but whoever examines the history of mankind will perceive that the idea of an immortal or incorruptible soul was very generally accredited for ages before the science of metaphysics or psychology was heard of, or even conceived; and the parent is hence transmuted into the offspring.

Such was the general belief in the age of Epicurus, and such it continued to be in the time of Lucretius; and hence it was necessary to reduce the doctrine to the crucible of minute examination and experiment, in order to ascertain its veracity. This each of them appears to have done with a precision that scarcely leaves a wish ungratified, and the result is, admitting their reasoning to be correct, that the frame of man is simple, uncompounded matter; that matter, in its gross and cruder state, composes the body, and in its more refined or gaseous, the soul or spirit,

That rears th' incipient stimulus, and first
Darts sentient motion through the quivering frame.*

Has modern science added any thing to this discovery, or rests the question as handed down to us in the pages of Lucretius? The Chris-

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tian scriptures, I admit, which have brought life, as well as immortality, to light, the present nature of man, as well as his future destiny, teach us, in my apprehension, most clearly and unequivocally, not only that the body will arise from the grave, but that the soul will exist antecedently to such an event in a state of separation. In this respect, therefore, the Epicurean were more estranged from the truth than their opponents, or rather the phenomena of nature, in which they implicitly confided, afforded them no direct evidence upon the subject, and tended to a contrary conclusion: but so far as relates to the constitution of the entire man, to the materiality of the soul itself, the indications of nature, and their own deductions, appear to have been equally correct, and by no means to be contradicted by revelation. To render the soul immortal, why is it necessary that it should be immaterial? Immortal is a term that does not occur in the scriptures: it has been introduced in aid of reason alone; and it has, unquestionably, engendered more perplexity than its fondest advocates ever flattered themselves it would remove. Perception, consciousness, cognition, we continue to be told, are qualities which cannot appertain to matter; there must hence be a thinking, and an immaterial principle, and man must still be a compound being.

Yet why thus degrade matter, the plastic and prolific creature of the Deity, beyond what we are authorised to do? Why may it not perceive, why not think, why not become conscious? What eternal and necessary impediment prevents? or what self-contradiction and absurdity is hereby implied? Let us examine nature, as she presents herself to us in her most simple and unorganized forms; let us trace her through her gradual and ascending stages of power and perfection.

Matter is denominated inert and brutish: as an individual monad or atom, however, and placed at an infinite distance from all other
atoms, can it alone deserve such an appellation, if it deserve it under any circumstances. Admit the existence of two or more atoms, and whatever be the distance at which they are placed from each other, they will begin to act with reciprocity; diminish the distance, and the action will be sensible; the power of gravitation will obviously exert itself; they will approximate, they will unite. In its simplest form, therefore, matter evinces the desire of reciprocal union, or, as it is commonly called, the attraction of gravitation. Increase its mass, arrange it in other modifications, and it immediately evinces other powers or attractions—and these will be perpetually, and almost infinitely, varied, in proportion as we vary its combinations. If arranged, therefore, in one mode, it discloses the power of magnetism; in another, that of electricity, or galvanism; in a third, that of chemical affinities; in a fourth, that of mineral assimilations, of which the very beautiful *flos ferri* affords us a striking example. Pursue its modifications into classes of a more complex, or rather, perhaps, of a more gaseous, or attenuate nature, and it will evince the power of vegetable, or fibrous irritability; ascend through the classes of vegetables, and you will, at length, reach the strong stimulative perfection, the palpable vitality of the mimosa pudica, or the hedysarum gyrans, the former of which shrinks from the touch with the most bashful coyness, while the latter perpetually dances beneath the jocund rays of the sun. And when we have thus attained the summit of vegetable powers and vegetable life, it will require, I think, no great stretch of the imagination to conceive, that the fibrous irritability of animals, as well as vegetables, is the mere result of a peculiar arrangement of simple and unirritable material atoms.

But let us not trust to conjecture; let us mark the progress of nature through the animal kingdom, as well as through the vegetable, and trace the first doubtful and evanescent symptoms of incipient percep-
tion and spirit. The seeds of plants possess no irritability whatever; yet nothing but an evolution or augmentation, a mere change and increased organization, are sufficient to produce this new and higher power. It is precisely the same with animals. The fecundated egg of a hen, or other bird, when first laid, is as destitute of all irritability as the acorn of an oak-tree; the mother nourishes it with heat, and the embryo chick expands in growth, and becomes susceptible of new faculties, till, at length, it bursts its inclosure, and the senseless embryo speck is transmuted into an active and perfect animal. The mother, however, after she has deposited her egg, communicates nothing but heat; for the warmth of an oven would have answered the purpose as well as that of her own body; and, in many countries, the former is preferred to the latter. The same fact occurs with respect to viviparous animals; for, whatever be the theory of generation we may adopt, the first filaments of the fetus, although formed within the body, are as destitute of sensation as the first fibres that pullulate from the seed or egg after its discharge from the parent stock: and hence the aphis, and some other animals, are possessed of a double power of propagating their young according to the season of the year; in the spring-time producing them oviparously, and viviparously in the summer. Hence then, animal sensation, and, hence, necessarily and consequently, ideas and a material soul or spirit; rude and confined indeed in its first and simplest mode of existence, but like every other production of nature, beautifully and progressively advancing from power to power, from faculty to faculty, from excellence to excellence, till it at length terminate in the perfection of the human mind.

Such appears to be the clear indication and gradual progress of nature, and such was the doctrine of Epicurus. But such was not the whole of his doctrine. He pursued the mind into her inmost recesses; he analyzed her powers, and endeavoured to develope her very tex-
ture, as distinguished from the external and grosser body. To enter minutely into this subject would occupy far too much space, and I refer the reader, therefore, to the following poem, Book III. v. 100—265, and the explanatory notes which will be found appended. Let it at present suffice to observe, that the mind was supposed to be the result of a combination of the most volatile and ethereal auras or gasses, diffused over the whole body, though traced in a more concentrate form in some organs than in others. Nor could any conception be more correct or happy: it is the very philosophy of the present day, boldly predicted and accurately ascertained. Such, from the clearest and most convincing experiments, are the sources of all nervous communication; and why may not a certain modification of such gasses constitute the mind itself, and form the very texture of that separate state of existence which the infallible page of revelation clearly indicates will be ours? Analogy, I admit, points out to us, as it did to Epicurus and his disciples, that such a texture can be no more incorruptible, than the less subtilized body itself, which is avowedly doomed to the grave; and it may moreover be questioned, whether a frame so attenuate be capable either of organization, or permanent endurance. As the suggestions of analogy, however, are erroneous with respect to the body, we can place no dependence upon them with regard to the mind, admitting it to be material in its frame. Matter is not necessarily corruptible under any form. The body, which is now mouldering in its grave, will hereafter experience a glorious resurrection; the corruptible will put on incorruption; the mortal, immortality. As then the material body is privileged to enjoy incorruptibility in a future period, so may the material mind be privileged to enjoy it from its birth. Why it should be requisite for that which seems to constitute one harmonious whole to separate, and for the mind to exist by itself in an intermediate state of being, is a mystery which equally attaches to the material and immaterial systems. But the power that is capable of giving personality and consciousness to matter in its grosser and more palpable form,
must unquestionably possess a similar power of bestowing the same qualities on matter in its most attenuate and evanescent.

This opinion, however, I offer as a speculation to be pursued, rather than as a doctrine to be precipitately accredited *. Yet its tendency is by no means idle or unimportant: since, if capable of establishment, it will, in a considerable degree, remove the objections which attach to the common systems of materialism, elucidate the Mosaic account of the first creation of the soul from a divine breath or aura infused into the body, and give stability to universal tradition, by developing the nature of that evanescent and shadowy texture, under which, among all nations, the soul has ever been supposed to exist. Opposed as the two theories of materialism (in the manner in which it is commonly professed) and immaterialism are to each other, it is curious to observe how directly and essentially they tend to one common result with respect to a point upon which they are supposed to differ diametrically: I mean, an assimilation of the human soul to that of the brute. The materialist, who traces the origin of sensation and thought from a mere modification of matter, refers the perception, cognition, and reflection of brutes, to the very same principle which produces such endowments in man; and believing that this modification is equally, in both instances, destroyed by death, maintains like Solomon, that "as the one dieth, so dieth the other; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast:" and his hope of a future existence depends exclusively upon the resurrection of the human body, as positively predicted in the Christian scriptures. The immaterialist, on the contrary, who conceives that mere matter is incapable, under any modification, of producing the effect of sensation and ideas, is under the necessity of supposing the existence of another and a very different substance in a state of combination with it: a sub-

* The subject will be found farther investigated in a new theory of physiology which the author shortly intends to submit to the public.
stance not subject to the changes and infirmities of matter, and altogether impalpable and incorruptible. But if sensation and ideas can only result from such a substance in man, they can only result from a possession of the same substance by brutes: and hence the level between the two is equally maintained by both parties, the common materialist lowering the man to the brute, and the immaterialist exalting the brute to the man. The immaterialist, however, on the approach of dissolution, finds a difficulty to which his antagonist is not subject, for he knows not, at that period, how to dispose of the brutal soul: he cannot destroy an incorruptible and immaterial substance, and yet he cannot bring himself to a belief that it is immortal. This difficulty is extreme, and no system that has hitherto been invented has been able to surmount it. By some immaterialists, and particularly by Vitringa and Gronovius, it has been conceived, that as something distinct from matter may be granted to brutes to account for their powers of perception, man may also be in possession of a principle superadded to this, and which alone constitutes their immortal spirit; but such an idea, while it absurdly supposes every man to be created with two immaterial spirits instead of one, leaves us as much as ever in the dark as to the one immaterial, and, consequently, incorruptible soul or principle possessed by brutes. The insufficiency of the solution has not only been felt but acknowledged by other immaterialists, and nothing can silence the objection, but to advance boldly, and deny that brutes have a soul or percipient principle of any kind; that they have either thought, perception, or sensation; and to maintain, in consequence, that they are mere mechanical machines, acted upon by external impulsion alone. Des Cartes was sensible that this was the only alternative; he, therefore, cut the Gordian knot, and strenuously contended for such a theory: and Polignac, who intrepidly follows him, gravely devotes almost a whole book of his Anti-Lucretius to the elucidation of this doctrine; maintaining,
that the hound has no more will of his own in chasing the fox or the hare, 
than the wires of a harpsichord have in the excitation of tones; and that, 
as the latter is mechanically thrown into action by the pressure of the 
fingers upon the keys, so the hound is mechanically driven forwards by 
the pressure of the stimulating odour that exhales from the body of the 
fox or hare upon his nostrils*. Such are the fancies which have been 
invented, to explain what appears to elude all explanation whatever, 
and, consequently, to prove that the original theory itself is unfounded.

Yet the objections that apply to the theory of materialism, as com-
monly understood and professed, are still greater. By the denial of an 
intermediate state of being between the two periods of death and the 
resurrection of the body, it opposes what appears to be, not only the 
general tenor, but, in some instances, the direct declarations of the 
Christian Scriptures†: and by conceiving the entire dissolution and 
dispersion of the animal machine, of which all the atoms may become 
afterswards constituent portions of other intelligent beings, it renders a 
future and resumed personality almost, if not altogether, impossible. 
The idea I have thrown out seems to avoid the difficulties attached to 
both systems. It says to the materialist, matter is not necessarily cor-
ruptible: you admit that it is not so, upon your own principle, which 
strenuously asserts, that the body itself will, hereafter, arise incorrup-
tible and immutable. It says to the immaterialist, the term immaterial 
is the mere creature of system, at the same time that it by no means an-
swers the purpose of its creation: it tells him that it is a term not to be 
found in the scriptures, which, so far from discountenancing a belief that 
the soul, spirit, or immortal part of man, is a system of gaseous or eth-
erial matter, seem rather to authorize such a conception by expressly

* Anti-Lucr. l. vi. 640.
1 Peter, iii. 18. 20. 2 Peter, i. 13, 14.
asserting that it was originally formed from an air-or aura, which was breathed into the body of Adam, in consequence of which he became a living soul, and by presenting it to us under some such modification in every instance in which the dead are stated to have re-appeared.

In reality, the difference between this hypothesis and that of immaterialists, in general, is little more than merely verbal. For, there are few of them who do not conceive that the soul, in its separate state, exists under some such shadowy and evanescent form, and that, if never suffered to make its appearance in the present day, it has thus occasionally, appeared in earlier times, and for particular purposes. Yet, what can in this manner become palpable to material senses must itself be material in its texture, otherwise it could produce no impression on the external organs, and must for ever remain impalpable and imperceptible: a similar texture of existence seems, therefore, to be presupposed by both systems; and the only discrepancy between them is, that while the one denominates it material, the other, but I think less accurately, denominates it immaterial. From what source universal tradition may have derived the same idea of disembodied spirits I pretend not to ascertain; the inquiry would, nevertheless, be curious, and might be rendered important: its universality, independently of the sanction afforded to it by revealed religion, is no small presumption of its being founded on fact. My only object, in this digression, has been to conciliate discordant opinions, and to connect popular belief with philosophy.

But to return to the subject before me. I have already observed, that the Epicureans were addicted to religious abstractions, and that the great founder of the sect composed various treatises upon the duties of piety and holiness. These, according to Cicero, were possessed
of an ardour and enthusiasm which would have become a priest*; and it has hence been inquired what could be so absurd as to recommend piety, and engage in devotional exercises, if the soul be not immortal, if there be no resurrection of the body, and the Deity interfere not with moral actions lest the human will be curtailed in its liberty? This question has been proposed often; and the adversaries of Epicurus have maliciously replied to it, that he was only influenced to such a conduct by a fear of offending the civil power. It is impossible, however, to form a more false conjecture of his motives, nor can any one give credit to such reply for an instant, who is acquainted with the magnanimity he evinced throughout every stage of his life; the fortitude with which he opposed the prevailing superstitions of the people, and the simplicity of his own religious tenets. "We are accustomed," observes Gassendi, upon this very point, "to assign two causes why mankind should worship the Deity: the one is, his own excellent and supreme nature; and the other, the benefits he is continually conferring upon us by restraining us from evil, or vouchsafing to us some positive good †." It was then, by the former, and the far purer of these motives, by which Epicurus was actuated. Seneca, indeed, expressly tells us so: "He worshiped God," says he, "induced by no hope, by no reward, but on account of his most excellent Majesty, and Supreme Nature alone‡." "And why should we not," inquires Bayle, "allow to Epicurus the idea of a worship which our most orthodox theologians recommend as the most legitimate and the most perfect? For they preach to us, from day to day, that though there should be no paradise to hope for, and no hell to dread, we should, nevertheless, be obliged to honour God, and to do whatever

* De Nat. Deor. l. i. 41.
† Duplicem solemus assignare causam, quare Deum homines colant, unam dicimus excellentem, supremamque Dei naturam; alteram beneficia, &c. lib. iii. c. 4.
‡ Deum celebant nulla spe, nullo pretio inductus; sed propter majestatem ejus eximiam, supremamque ejus naturam. De Benefic. lib. iv. cap. 19.
we think agreeable to his nature.* But, independently of these considerations, the devotional services of the Epicureans carried a positive and physical benefit along with them. By occasional abstractions from the world, all undue attachment to it was diminished, if not totally eradicated; and by confirming themselves, during these periods of retirement, in a calm and confidential resignation to the determined series of events, they obtained a complete victory over their passions, and gave the truest enjoyment to life.

What, then, is there so much worse, so much more impious, in the tenets of Lucretius and Epicurus, than in those of their contemporaries? That we of the present day are possessed of more knowledge and illumination, upon the important doctrine of a future life, should be a source of continual thankfulness,—and a stimulus to superior virtue. The advantages they enjoyed, however, they improved as far as they were able: let us in this respect, at least, follow their example,—and go and do likewise.

But to revert to the life of our poet. In the midst of his retirement, Lucretius did not enjoy all that undisturbed tranquillity which he had fondly painted to his imagination. He had retreated from the storms and tumults of a public life, but he could not become indifferent to the welfare of his country. His eyes seem to have been frequently wandering back to those busy scenes where so many of his ancestors had signalized themselves for wisdom and patriotic virtue: and the disturbances which the ambition of the triumvirs had introduced into the Senate, and the disputes between Clodius and Milo into the forum; the venality so flagrantly discovered in elections to every public

* Pourquoi ne voudrions nous pas qu’Epicure ait en l’idée d’un culte, que nos theologiens les plus orthodoxes recommandent, comme le plus légitime, et le plus parfait. Ils nous disent tous les jours que quand on n’aurait ni le paradis à esperer, ni l’enfer à craindre, l’on serait pourtant obligé d’honorer Dieu, et de faire tout ce que l’on croiroit lui être agreable. Art. Epicure.
office, whether of questors, praetors, tribunes, or consuls; the unprincipled and traitorous conduct of Pompey, who maintained an army devoted to his own interest, at the very gates of the city; the general insurrection in Gaul, and the unsuccessful expedition against the Parthians, are said to have preyed severely upon his heart. While, at the same time, to complete his affliction, his beloved friend, Caius Memmius, who, by the advice, and with all the influence of Julius Caesar, had just before offered himself a candidate for the consulate, but had been obliged to yield to the superior interest and artifices of Pompey, was attacked with a charge of bribery and corruption, under a law which had lately been proposed by Cato, and sanctioned, with difficulty, in the comitia, and which provided that every one, against whom such a charge could be substantiated, should be banished from the republic for life.

That Memmius was guilty upon this occasion can scarcely admit of a doubt: the whole republic was become corrupt, and Cato, whose intention in the proposition of this law was principally directed against Pompey and Caesar, acquired equally the hatred of the rich and the poor for his interference. Neither did the law itself, in any respect, answer the purpose of its virtuous projector; for the people and the Senate, instead of being openly and individually bought up as heretofore, were now only bargained for more privately in the lump, through the medium of the existing consuls and tribunes. On the present occasion, the disturbances were unquestionably very great:—the candidates were numerous, the different factions were powerful; and the tribunes themselves, not knowing which party to embrace, procrastinated the meeting till the time of the writ was expired, and then dissolved the assembly without any determinate issue. Hence ensued an interregnum which lasted for seven months, during the whole of which period Pompey employed the full extent of his influence and address to be elected into the supreme office of dictator;
but finding that the party of Memmius, and the other candidates for the still vacant consulate, were too powerful for this utmost gratification of his ambition, he artfully lowered his pretensions, and had interest enough to obtain the consulate for two dependents upon him, Domitius Calvinus and Valerius Messala. This point being secured, his next object was to glut his vengeance upon those who had precluded him from becoming dictator: Caius Memmius, and various others, were hence arraigned at his instigation before the comitia, upon the charge of bribery I have just adverted to; and though little doubt remains that Pompey himself was the most corrupt man in the court, Memmius was declared guilty, and sentenced to a banishment into Greece. Cicero, upon this occasion, returned the friendship he had so lately received, and pleaded with all his ability for the accused; but the most splendid talents must prove fruitless where the cause is predetermined. It was, probably, in the power of Caesar to have turned the balance against the consuls themselves: but Caesar never consulted any other interest than his own, and he had indubitably as powerful a motive for coinciding with Pompey at this time, as he had for opposing him in the year preceding.

The warm and sympathetic soul of Lucretius, however, was unable to sustain so unexpected a shock, and the endearing attentions of his Lucilia were lavished upon him in vain. It threw him into a fever, affected his intellects, and, in a paroxysm of delirium, he destroyed himself.

* Giffan. de Gent. Memmiad.
† This is the cause generally assigned by his biographers and commentators; and as Memmius was exiled in the year of the city 701, and towards the close of that year, the date we are furnished with precisely coincides with that offered by the Chronicle of Eusebius, which states Lucretius to have been forty-four years old at the time of his death. Cicero, as I have already observed, in his letters to Atticus, vii. 24, 25, speaks of a Lucretius, a bosom friend of Cassius, who was resident at Capua, at the time when the senate fled from it, along with Pompey's army, at the approach of Caesar; and who repeatedly communicated to Cassius an account of the transactions that occurred. If the Lucretius here referred to were the sub-
He was, at this time, about forty-four years of age: the date of the
city being probably 702, and his poem, though completed, had not
ject of this memoir, he must have been at least four years older at the time of his decease, than Eusebius
has allowed; for the flight of Pompey and the senate from Capua did not take place till the year of the
city 705. Yet the Lucretius here spoken of was rather a relation of the poet, than the poet himself: for,
although from a similarity of years, from mutual connexions, and, more than every thing else, a mutual
attachment, and open avowal and defence of the Epicurean system, it is in the highest degree probable, and
indeed uniformly admitted, that the closest acquaintance and intercourse were maintained between Titus
Lucretius and Cassius; yet the former does not appear to have possessed a roving disposition, much less a
disposition to have travelled into a quarter of great political tumult and danger. It is said, that he once
accompanied his friend Caius Memmius to his government in Bythinia; and, had Memmius been at this time
alive, and still in a state of exile, it would be much more reasonable to look for Lucretius in Greece, to which
place Memmius had been banished, than at Capua, in the midst of civil tumults and contending armies. The
Chronicle of Eusebius, therefore, continues still unimpeached, and we cannot do better than rely upon it.

There is more controversy among the critics, concerning the time when Lucretius died, than when
he was born; for while Eusebius, and consequently St. Jerom, fix him to have been at this period forty-
four years old, there are others who will not allow him to have been more than twenty-six; and, it is curi-
ous to observe, in what manner the present and similar mistakes have been copied from writer to writer,
and in every copy have exhibited some ingenious addition. Thus, Donatus kills him, or rather makes him
kill himself, on the very day in which Virgil took his virile gown. "Decimo septimo anno," says he, "aoatis
virilem togan cepit, illis consulibus iterum quibus natus erat. Eventuque ut co ipso die Lucretius poeta
discederet." Vit. Virg. P. Breit, whom Bayle has convicted of eight errors in his first eight lines, ac-
cords, in this instance, with Donatus. De Poetis Latinis. But Creech, who appears to have met with
some such anecdote, yet not to have remembered the story completely, declares, that he died, not on the
day of Virgil's majority, but on that of his birth; and immediately adds, that a Pythagorean might hence
easily conceive, that the soul of Lucretius had instantaneously passed into the body of Virgil, and thus
at once inspired him with a truly poetick taste. "Vix," says he, "absoluto opere mortuir, co ipso die quo
natus est Virgiliius; et aliquis Pythagoreus credat Lucretii animam in Maronis corpus transisse, ibique
largo usu, et multo studio exercitatae poetae evasisse." In Pref. Lucer.

Equally erroneous, too, or, at least equally unfounded, is that report of Eusebius, that the paroxysm
of insanity in which Lucretius destroyed himself was produced by philtres, administered to him by Lu-
cilia in a fit of jealousy, and with a view of recovering that affection which she was suspicious he had be-
stowed on some other object: whence the commentator upon Creech's English version, and after him
Guernier, have advanced a step farther, and, without the smallest authority, thrown out a hint that this
lady was perhaps his mistress, and not his wife, although she is expressly denominated his wife by Euse-
bius, St. Jerom, and every early writer who has left us any tidings upon the subject. Who does not per-
ceive that the whole of this story of philtres and jealousy is a fiction founded upon the double fact of
the grief and alienation of our poet's mind, and the fond and assiduous attention which Lucilia bestowed
upon him during his illness? And who does not, at the same time, perceive an attempt to renovate the
same charge of voluptuousness, which was so maliciously advanced against Epicurus and his disciples in
former ages?

But this is not the whole of the wonderful tale narrated in the Chronicle of Eusebius; for he did not,
as it seems, kill himself upon first becoming insane, but lived many years afterwards, and, like Torquato
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hitherto been made public. Cicero, notwithstanding the enmity he had manifested against Epicurism from the moment of his deserting this system of philosophy, out of regard to the memory of his deceased friend, undertook to become his editor, and to revise it in the few places where revision was necessary. This task, it is probable, he executed about a twelvemonth afterwards, during the winter he spent in Cilicia; the government and protection of which was, at that time, committed to his hands.

Tasso, or our own lamented Cowper, evinced regular alternations of reason and derangement; during the intervals of which malady, like these two poets also, he composed the greater part of the work that has immortalized him. That he may have been subject, during his last illness, to some alternating insanity, is by no means improbable, but not from the ridiculous cause of an amorous philtre communicated to him in a fit of jealousy, and especially the sort of philtre employed by mistake upon this occasion, which, according to St. Jerom, was aconite or monks hood. "Illa sponte sua," says he, "miscuit aconitum: Lucilla decepta fuvorem propinavit, pro amoris pocula." That monks-hood will speedily and effectually poison is, I suppose, known to every one, but that it should produce the marvellous effect of a periodic madness, will not be very readily accredited by botanists or physicians. Giffarius has well observed, that the whole story reposes upon no authority, and is entitled to no belief; and he hence attributes the poet's decease, with far more probability, to the cause assigned in the text.

* There has been a long and idle contest among the critics, whether the six ensuing books of the Nature of Things be the whole of which the poem ever consisted. The question originated from a casual assertion of Varro, that a verse, not now to be found in any part of it, formed the beginning of its twenty-first book; but Varro does not mention, whether it were the twenty-first book of The Nature of Things, or of some other poem Lucretius may be supposed to have written, and which Frachetta conceives he actually did write. Had this, however, been the fact, it is almost impossible that we should not have been made acquainted with its title, and its object, as well as possessed some other fragments besides this one solitary verse of Varro, delivered down to us, either by Priscian, Tertullian, Lactantius, Arnobius, or Donatus, who have quoted so largely from all the six books of the Nature of Things. At the same time, it is scarcely possible, upon a minute and critical examination of the Nature of Things, to conceive that any additional book could either have preceded or been superadded to those, of which the poem consists in its preserved form. It comprises a perfect whole as it exists at present; and no didactic poem I am acquainted with, either ancient or modern, has fairer pretensions to the harmonious combination of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Its object is to develop the principles of the philosophy of Epicurus. It commences, therefore, with its first rudiments; it exhibits and establishes its general doctrines; and it then applies those doctrines to the explanation of all the phenomena of nature: the most familiar, as well as the most abstruse. The two last books, indeed, may be regarded as a kind of dramatic denouement or peripetia of the whole; in which, from the principles progressively advanced, every event is accounted for, and rendered luminous. The dark curtain of nature is, as it were, undrawn: her multifarious wheels are at work before us—and the vast and entire machine is presented in all its connections and dependencies. I cannot, therefore, but agree with Giffarius in conceiving, that either Varro
Thus perished, untimely, Titus Lucretius Carus, the immortal author of The Nature of Things, and whom Scaliger, with a felicitous brevity of character, has denominated "a divine man, and an incomparable poet." But virtue and talents have no arbitrary control over the mutable enjoyments of the present world: and not Lucretius alone, but almost every one of those illustrious Romans, whom I have enumerated as the friends of his youth, may be adduced as forcible examples of the truth of this position. There is, indeed, a similarity of fate and misfortune attendant upon the latter part of their lives, so truly astonishing, if not altogether unparalleled, that I cannot consent to close this biography without taking a brief glance at it.

Caius Memmius, who, as I have already observed, was banished, by his countrymen, into Greece, died during his exile. He retired,

himself must have written erroneously, when he alluded to a verse in the twenty-first book of Lucretius, or that some transcriber of Varro has equally erred in writing Lucretius for Lucilius, or some other poet whose labours have not descended to the present day. But the author of The Nature of Things appears to have settled the controversy in the completest manner himself, by pointing out to us, in two express passages, the first and last books of which the poem was ever designed to consist.

Thus, that the sixth book was to conclude the work, we may collect from the following verses towards the commencement of this very book itself:

Tu mibi suprema prescripta ad candida calcis
Currenti spatium prae monstra, callida Musa,
Calliope! requies hominum, divômque voluptas:
Te duce ut insigni capiam cum laude coronam. Lib. VI. v. 91.

Muse most expert, belov'd of gods and men,
Calliope! O aid me as I tread
Now the last limits of the path prescrib'd,
That the bright crown with plaudits I may claim. v. 94.

And that the doctrine of a vacuum constituted the subject of the first book, we learn from the following:

Nunc omnes repetam quam raro corpore sint res,
Conmemorare, quod in primo quoque carmine claret. Lib. VI. v. 936.

This thus premis'd, recall we next to mind
How rare the frame of all things, as ere while
Conspicuous prov'd we in our earliest strain.

first of all, to Athens, where he resided for some time; whence he removed to Mytelene, and, last of all, to Patre, near Corinth. Here, from the suavity of his manners, the inhabitants unanimously conferred upon him the freedom of their city. He settled, therefore, among them, and adopted, a short time before his death, a particular friend of Cicero's, of the name of Lyso, who was himself a citizen of Patre. Brutus and Cassius, in the last convulsions of Roman liberty, unable to survive the death-blow the republic had received at Philippi, followed the example which Cato had not long before given them at Utica, and fell by their own swords. The resolution of Caius Velleius, who was likewise engaged in this fearful battle, did not yet forsake him altogether. In conjunction with Lucius and Tiberius Claudius, he maintained the contest a few months longer; but upon the final triumph of Octavian at Perusia, he fled into Sicily, with a few other virtuous characters who had survived the battle of Philippi, and, in the same manner, destroyed himself. The fortune of Lucius Cicero I am unacquainted with: like Lucretius he appears to have abstained from all personal connexion with the government, and to have possessed a large share of the affection of his brother Marcus, who, in his familiar letters, is frequently speaking of him in terms of great fraternal tenderness.

The unhappy fate of Marcus and Quintus Cicero are too well known to need any detail in this place. They both fell, in consequence of the infamous convention between Lepidus, Octavian, and Antony, by which the confederates agreed to sacrifice to the private vengeance of each other the most esteemed and most virtuous of their friends. The black catalogue was completed, and the names of the two brothers forming a part of it, they, with the rest, were proscribed, and condemned to death. Quintus was barbarously beheaded, along with his son, in his own house at Rome, to which he had privily returned for pecuniary supplies. The circumstances attending his discovery and execu-
tion are deeply interesting and pathetic, but cannot be dwelt upon at present. Marcus, as is known to every one, was overtaken and slain at a little farm he possessed at Caieta; at the time he was searched for, he was concealed amidst the shades of his garden; but his retreat was pointed out by an ungrateful young man, who had formerly been a slave to Quintus Cicero, and had been emancipated at the particular request of Marcus, whose affection for him had from this time been rather that of a father than of any other relation. His head and his right hand were immediately severed from his body by a tribune whom his eloquence had not long before saved from the disgrace of a public execution.

The fates of Pomponius Atticus, and of Lucretius Vespillio, the two last of the early friends of our poet, of whom I shall give any account, were more fortunate, and they are the only persons who can lay claim to any degree of success among the whole of this virtuous and patriotic party. The names of both of them were likewise enrolled in the black catalogue of the proscribed. Yet against Vespillio, who, as I have before observed, had made literature and eloquence his chief pursuit, and had seldom or never interfered in the dangerous politics of the day, no great degree of resentment appears to have prevailed among the triumvirs: he was concealed from his pursuers by an ingenious contrivance of his wife; and after the heat of the pursuit was over, he fled at first to Sulmo, the birth-place of Ovid, and afterwards to Cnæum *, whence, upon the termination of the civil war, he returned to Rome, and persevered in his former profession of the law.

Titus Pomponius Atticus was a character of more prominence: without forfeiting his reputation for patriotism, he had hitherto possessed sagacity enough to be respected, and sought after by all the con-

* Plut. in loc.
tending factions of his country. He had been on terms of alliance with Caesar and Anthony, while the most intimate friend of Cassius and Brutus:—yet Anthony, upon the present occasion, readily resigned him, at the solicitation of his two colleagues: and hence his name was also in the list of the proscribed. On the first surmise of this villany, that unrivalled presence of mind, for which he had ever been remarkable, proved again of essential service to him. The object of Atticus, who was at this time in Rome, was, like that of the two Ciceros, to reach either Macedonia or Sicily; but he pursued a different plan to accomplish it: and the stratagem he invented succeeded according to its merit. He attired himself, without loss of time, in the habit of a Roman praetor, and disguised the slaves whom he selected to accompany him in the dress of attendant lictors. He left the city with all possible speed, travelled in the most public manner, and invented a story, to give plausibility to his journey, that he was sent by the triumvirs themselves to negotiate a peace with young Pompey. In this manner he was received in every city through which he passed with all possible marks of distinction, accommodated with horses, provisions, and every assistance he required—travelled entirely at the public expense, and arrived at Sicily in perfect safety. In this retreat he continued quiet and unmolested, till the political tempest of his country had discharged itself of its fury. He then returned to Rome, at the particular request of Augustus, and continued in possession of the esteem both of himself, and Agrippa, till his death; which, nevertheless, was not long afterwards effected by his own hands: extreme grief, in all probability, for the loss of his earlier companions and friends, having compelled him to a step which was common among the wisest and most virtuous of the heathen world; and regarded rather as an act of duty and heroism, than of criminality and disgrace.
APPENDIX.

Having thus amassed together the scattered fragments that relate to the life of Lucretius, added some few memoirs of other illustrious Epicureans who were his coëval and friends, and attentively examined the doctrines they professed, I proceed to offer a brief sketch of the alternate support and opposition experienced by this celebrated school in subsequent aeras.

It is once more necessary to observe, that every school of philosophy among the Greeks, whether of Ionic or Italic origin, as well as every sect whom they proudly denominated barbarian, whether Chaldean, Egyptian, Persian, or Celtic, pre-supposed the eternal existence of matter: upon the form or mode, however, of its original existence, and the process by which it acquired its present appearance and organization, they differed very materially; some maintaining, that every thing has existed from everlasting, as it appears at present; and others, that the visible world has had a beginning.

Among the Greeks, Ocellus Lucanus and Aristotle were the chief who contended for the first opinion: the former asserting, that the universe is utterly incapable of generation or corruption, of beginning or end, and that it is of itself perfect, permanent, and eternal; and the latter, asserting still more expressly, not only that the universe, as to its elementary matter and general configuration, is eternal and undereved, but that mankind, and every other species of animals, have subsisted by an uninterrupted chain of propagations from all eternity,
without origin or first production; and that the vegetable and mineral kingdoms are of equal, underived, and everlasting duration. I enter not into the more mysterious parts of the peripatetic system, the sacred triad of Form, Privation, and Matter, the Primum Mobile, the Ἠπελεχία, or Perfect Energy, by which the Primum Mobile itself was first put into motion, and continued in a state of uninterrupted activity; I confine my remarks to its more palpable and tangible axioms, and which admit of no disputation: of the rest, much is involved in doubt, and not a little in contradiction. In reality, the physics of Aristotle, notwithstanding the authority of his name in other respects, do not appear to have made any great impression upon the world at any time; they are the weakest part of his philosophy, and rather betray the vanity of attempting to innovate upon existing systems, than of elucidating what was not understood.

The espousers of the doctrine that the form, though not the matter, of the visible world has had a beginning, divaricate into a variety of ramifications, of which the chief are the Pythagoric, the Platonic or Academic, and the Atomic.

In the system of Pythagoras, we trace a sort of mystical triad as clearly as in that of Aristotle; and it is probable that the former set the example, and even gave the hint both to Aristotle and Plato. The Pythagorean triad was expressed by the Greek numbers, one, two, and three, or monad, duad, and trine. In reality, numbers were all in all with Pythagoras, the very cause of essence to beings*. But to drop his esoteric or concealed institutions, the material universe, upon the Samian philosophy, was itself the supreme and formative Divinity; the eternal or universal Mind, residing in, and animating the mass of matter as a whole, in the same manner that the human mind resides in,

and animates the grosser body. The mind or soul of human beings, however, as well as of all other animals, was, upon this hypothesis, capable of quitting the external frame upon its dissolution; yet it was not capable of an independent existence; it migrated from body to body, and, after various chyliads, or thousands of years, returned to its original frame, in consequence of its resurrection from the grave. Upon this theory, the soul of the world gave motion, figure, and phenomena to itself; and the earth existed, because it willed to exist, out of its own substance. It was, in the language of Anaxagoras, an έμψυχον, or animated system.

The theory of Plato was, in many points, derived from Pythagoras; for Socrates, of whom Plato was one of the most distinguished scholars, was rather a moral and political, than a physical or metaphysical philosopher; and hence his creed was either deficient upon the subject of cosmology, or too simple and irrecondite to satisfy the curiosity of his pupils. Plato, too, had his trine or triad of essences, as well as Pythagoras and Aristotle; but, like that of Aristotle, it was evidently borrowed from Pythagoras. The triad of Plato consisted of an eternal, intelligent, immaterial Deity; a logos (ὁ λογισμός του Θεου) or Divine Reason, the eternal fountain of ideas, or the exemplars of things; and matter. The logos, or logismus, the fountain of all forms or ideas, was in every respect a parallel principle with the duad of Aristotle, both being possessed of a similar power, and equally dependent upon the Perfect Energy, or Supreme and Eternal Agent. Matter, however, was not thus dependent; for it was a principle as eternal, incorruptible, and underived, as the immaterial Deity. It was strangely supposed, however, to be incapable of form or quality *, and hence the necessity of conceiving the existence of a logos.

* On this account the terms incorporeal, and immaterial, are not synonymous in Platonic writings; matter itself being incorporeal, or without form or body, till associated with the divine exemplar or logos: a distinction necessary to be attended to in the study of the Academic hypothesis.
or source of all forms and ideas, which, with Plato, are nearly convertible terms; an idea, properly so called, being an intellectual form, and a form, literally so denominated, a visible idea. From the union, then, of the logos, or Divine Reason, with matter, proceeded an animated world, and sensible or corporeal existences. The kind of union supposed to subsist between the Divine Reason or exemplar, and the Deity itself, it is difficult to explain, or even to conjecture. In some part of his writings, and especially in his Timæus, Plato seems to regard the former as a being impersonated and distinct from the efficient Cause; but, in general, he speaks of it as a mere medium or instrument employed, and he was thus commonly understood by philosophers of contemporary schools. Hence Seneca, in express allusion to this doctrine, asserts, that "the exemplar is not the efficient cause of reason, but an instrument necessary to the cause *;" and hence, too, Laertius expressly regards it as nothing more than the mind or reason itself of the immaterial Deity †. Be this, however, as it may, since unfashioned matter constitutes the third substance in this triad of creative powers, the trinity of Plato can bear no possible resemblance, in its first and undisguised declaration, to the trinity of the Christian church. Whatever, then, may become of the divine logos or exemplar, it is evident, that Plato conceived the existence of two eternal and independent causes of all things; the one, that by which all things are created, which is God; and the other, from which all things are created, which is matter: and, in this respect, he completely assimilated his views with the Epicurean hypothesis. He conceived, however, independently of this tenet, that unfashioned matter had a soul of its own, exclusive of the animating and intelligent energy it received from the supreme Architect; and in this tenet seems to consist the chief absurdity of the Platonic hypothesis; for he hereby appears, in a great degree, to

* Epist. 65.  † In Plat. i. iii. 69—78.
render the interference of all foreign control unnecessary, if not impertinent and tyrannical. The soul of man he conceived to be of a superior nature to this soul of the world, to have emanated originally from the Supreme Divinity, and by him to have been planted, for some cause not clearly ascertained, in different stars or planets; where it is ordained to wait, till a material body is prepared for its reception on earth: on the dissolution of which, the soul, if virtuous, refunds or remigrates to the Divinity itself; if vicious, is sentenced to a material Tartarus, and chastised with material punishments.

I now proceed to the consideration of the Atomic theory, which, in the hands of Democritus, supposed the existence of matter alone, divided into an infinite multitude of primary or elementary particles, of which some were eternally intelligent, and others eternally senseless and incogitative; and hence incapable of resisting the action of the former, by whose control over them, and union with them, the visible world was produced. Under the plastic hands of Epicurus, however, the atomic philosophy assumed a very different, and much more rational appearance. Matter with him consisted of an infinite multiplicity of elementary corpuscles; of which the whole were equally unintelligent and senseless, and solely operated upon in the work of creation by an immaterial Divinity *, "possessed of all immortality and beatitude," and through the medium of a system of "immutable laws which they received at the commencement of the universe †," and which will continue to act till the universe itself shall be dissolved.

In its mere physical contemplation, therefore, the theory of Epicurus allows of nothing but matter and space, which are equally infinite and unbounded, which have equally existed from all eternity, and

* See the preceding Life of Lucretius, p. lxxiv.  
† Ibid. p. lxxiv.
from different combinations of which every individual being is created. These existences have no property in common with each other; for, whatever matter is, that space is the reverse of, and whatever space is, matter is the contrary to. The actually solid parts of all bodies, therefore, are matter; their actual pores, space, and the parts which are not altogether solid, but an intermixture of solidity and pore, are space and matter combined. Anterior to the formation of the universe, space and matter existed uncombined, or in their pure and elementary state. Space, in its elementary state, is positive and unsolid void: matter, in its elementary state, consists of inconceivably minute seeds or atoms—so small that the corpuscles of vapour, light, and heat, are compounds of them; and so solid that they cannot possibly be broken, or made smaller, by any concussion or violence whatever. The express figure of these primary atoms is various: there are round, square, pointed, jagged, as well as many other shapes. These shapes, however, are not diversified to infinity; but the atoms themselves, of each existent shape, are infinite or innumerable. Every atom is possessed of certain intrinsic powers of motion. Under the old school of Democritus, the perpetual motions exhibited were of two kinds:—a descending motion, from its own gravity; and a rebounding motion, from mutual concussion. Besides these two motions, and to explain certain phenomena which the following poem develops, and which were not accounted for under the old system, Epicurus supposed that some atoms were occasionally possessed of a third, by which, in some very small degree, they descended in an oblique or curvilinear direction, deviating from the common and right line anomalously; and hence, in this respect, resembling the oscillations of the magnetic needle.

These infinitudes of atoms, flying immemorially in such different directions, through all the immensity of space, have interchangeably tried and exhibited every possible mode of action,—sometimes repelled
from each other by concussion; and sometimes adhering to each other from their own jagged or pointed construction, or from the casual interstices which two or more connected atoms must produce, and which may just be adapted to those of other configurations, as globular, oval, or square. Hence the origin of compound bodies; hence the origin of immense masses of matter; hence, eventually, the origin of the world itself. When these primary atoms are closely compacted together, and but little vacuity or space intervenes, they produce those kinds of substances which we denominate solid, as stones, and metals: when they are loose and disjoined, and a large quantity of space or vacuity occurs between them, they produce the phænomena of wool, water, vapour. In one mode of combination, they form earth; in another, air; and in another, fire. Arranged in one way, they produce vegetation and irritability; in another way, animal life and perception.—Man hence arises—families are formed—society multiplies, and governments are instituted.

The world, thus generated, is perpetually sustained by the application of fresh elementary atoms, flying with inconceivable rapidity through all the infinitude of space, invisible from their minuteness, and occupying the posts of all those that are as perpetually flying off. Yet, nothing is eternal and immutable but these elementary seeds or atoms themselves: the compound forms of matter are continually decomposing, and dissolving into their original corpuscles: to this there is no exception:—minerals, vegetables, and animals, in this respect all alike, when they lose their present configuration, perishing from existence for ever, and new combinations proceeding from the matter into which they dissolve. But the world itself is a compound, though not an organized being; sustained and nourished like organized beings from the material pabulum that floats through the void of infinity. The world itself must therefore, in the same manner, perish: it had a
beginning, and it will eventually have an end. Its present crasis will be decompounded; it will return to its original, its elementary atoms; and new worlds will arise from its destruction.

Space is infinite, material atoms are infinite, but the world is not infinite.—This, then, is not the only world, or the only material system that exists. The cause whence this visible system originated is competent to produce others; it has been acting perpetually from all eternity; and there are other worlds and other systems of worlds existing around us. In the vast immensity of space, there are also other beings than man, possessed of powers of intellect and enjoyment far superior to our own: beings who existed before the formation of the world, and will exist when the world shall perish for ever; whose happiness flows unlimited, and unalayed; and whom the tumults and passions of gross matter can never agitate. These, the founder of the system denominated gods;—not that they created the universe, or are possessed of a power of upholding it; for they are finite and created beings themselves, and endowed alone with finite capacities and powers;—but from the uninterrupted beatitude and tranquillity they enjoy, their everlasting freedom from all anxiety and care.

Such is the system of Epicurus, reduced to a brief outline; and such the sublime subject of the poem that follows. Those who are conversant with modern philosophy will perceive, from this short sketch, a striking resemblance to a great variety of the most important and best established doctrines of the present day. These I pretend not to investigate in this introductory essay, as the different comparisons may be more advantageously brought forwards in the progress of our pursuit. To the ensuing pages I therefore refer my readers for additional information; and am much mistaken if, on closing the volumes, they will not coincide with Lambinus in admitting that the phi-
Philosophy of Epicurus was the most rational, and enforced the best principles of any system of philosophy recorded by prophane writers.

The doctrines of this system, however, were from time to time disputed by other schools: and the contest appears for a long while to have been conducted with no small equality between the disciples of Epicurus, Aristotle, Zeno, and Plato; each sect, in its turn, prevailing over the others.

The chair of Epicurus was filled upon his death by Hermachus, one of his most confidential friends and followers, whom by his will he appointed his sole executor, and whose intrepidity in defending his master's tenets against the sophists and dialectics eminently qualified him for this office. The Epicureans of chief estimation besides himself, anterior to the era of Lucretius, were, Metrodorus, Polyænus, Polystatus, Dionysius, Basilides, Apollodorus, Protarchus, Phædrus, and Zeno; of whom the last two, as I have already observed, were joint residents and professors at the Epicurean establishment, when Lucretius, and his co-students, were committed to it for education. I have already mentioned the names of a great variety of characters of the first rank and celebrity, who professed Epicurism at the time in which Lucretius flourished; to these may be added, Trebasius, Piso, Albutius, Pansa, and Patro, who was recommended to the protection of Caius Memmius by Cicero himself*. Even at this period, therefore, the Epicurean school appears to have enjoyed a complete triumph at Rome over every rival institute: nor could it fail of doing so, from the conjoint exertions in its favour of such characters and scholars as Atticus, Cassius, Velleius, Memmius, and Lucretius. Even in the Augustan age, it seems still to have retained, if not to have increased, its

* Epist. Fam. xiii. 1.
popularity. We are told by Seneca, that not the learned alone, but even the unlettered, reverenced the name of Epicurus; and Lactantianus asserts, that no other sect was, at this time, by any means so flourishing. It is to the credit of this sect, moreover, that, notwithstanding its great numbers, it never subdivided into parties; and that the opinions of its institutor were voluntarily submitted to with more implicit confidence, than Pythagoras, even by an express law, could ever extract from his γνησίοι διάλεγον, or most attached and genuine disciples.

It was in consequence of this perfect deference to the doctrines of Epicurus, and the uninterrupted union of his followers, that the school continued to flourish under the Roman emperors, for a long course of years, as Laertius asserts, after other schools had begun to decay. The most celebrated adherents to this system, from the death of Lucretius to the establishment of the Christian religion, were Pliny the elder, Celsus, Lucian, and Diogenes Laertius. Of these, the first, to whom we are indebted for his "Natural History of the World," does not, however, appear to have imbibed the whole of the Epicurean theory, and especially the tenet of a multiplicity of habitable worlds. Celsus is far better known as an Epicurean philosopher, in consequence of the controversy between himself and Origen. His works are totally lost, except detached passages cited by Origen in his reply. It is generally conjectured, that he flourished under Adrian and Aurelius Antoninus. Origen, however, mentions two philosophers of this name, both Epicureans; the former of whom, he tells us, existed in the reign of Nero, while the latter was born in that of Adrian, whom he survived *.

* Ἀνά τε παραλείψαμεν Κλαύσων γνησίοι Επικουρίους τοι μεν, πρότερον, κατὰ Νερονα' τούτων δὲ, κατ' Αδριανον, κατ' Αὐτοκρατόριον. L. i. contr. Cels.

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Lucian is far better known as a severe but humorous satirist than as a politician or philosopher, though he has some pretensions to notice in the two last characters. He flourished under Aurelius Antoninus, by whom he was appointed procurator of Egypt with a liberal salary. Philosophic tenets of every kind seem to have sat but loosely upon him; yet, in his Dialogues, he always treats his avowed master with respect, and he is almost the only philosopher to whom he is decently civil. He unwarrantably misrepresents Socrates, and declares Epicurus to have been the only sage who retained a sound intellect in the midst of madmen and fools. To the writings of Diogenes Laertius I have already had frequent occasion to refer. He lived in the beginning of the third century of the Christian æra, and is well known to the republic of letters as a most diligent biographer. According to Jonssius, he acquired the surname of Laertius from having been born at Laertes, a small city of Cilicia*: and he did what every man should do who is in pursuit of truth, and has sufficient leisure for the purpose. With an active and unbiased mind, he profoundly investigated all the different systems that were proposed to him by the literature of the Greeks; and having minutely appreciated the pretensions and merits of each, he gave his hearty suffrage in favour of Epicurus, and immediately began to collect, into one regular tract, all the scattered fragments that yet remained of him relative to his person, his principles, and his practice. Laertius, from many of the idioms he has adopted, appears to have been acquainted with the writings of the Christian fathers, and has hence been believed to have been a Christian himself. "But this," says Menage, "is impossible, he could not have been a Christian, for he bestows immoderate praises on Epicurus†.

* Jonass. i. iii. 12.
† Eπικούρους διδασκ. pro eo quod vulgo Gallice dicitur lapsum, in Aristotelis vita usurpavit; qui loquendi modus cum Christianorum scriptorum proprius videatur, Laertium Christianum fuisse vir qui dam doctus suspicatur; sed frustra, Christianum non fuisse, indicio esse possunt quæ Epicuro tribuit laudes immodicas. Observ. i. 1.
It must be confessed, however, that Epicurism, which thus maintained its sway at Rome, obtained at no time any great degree of favour at Alexandria, where, under the Ptolemies, learning and learned men received the most flattering encouragement; and which continued, under the Roman emperors, to be the chief seat of philosophy and science. For this contempt it is, nevertheless, easy to account. The warm and elevated minds of the Asiatics are possessed of more imagination than judgment; they are fond of what is marvellous, and prefer the splendour of mysticism to the beauties of simplicity. It was from this quarter that Pythagoras derived his system, and much of its enigmatic involution was artfully transferred into their own doctrines, both by Plato and Aristotle. The Orientalists were, therefore, hence, prepared for the tenets of the Samian, Academic, and Peripatetic schools, while the students of the latter formed a ready alliance, not only with the scientific arcana of the magi, gymnosophists, and Egyptian priests, but with the vulgar superstitions and vernacular traditions of the country. Hence, in a century or two after the commencement of the Christian æra, there was not a single school in this celebrated mart for learning, whether Grecian or Asiatic, that retained its purity. A change of some kind became necessary, and it was attempted; not, however, as it ought to have been, by a return to first principles, but by a pretended selection, from every system, of that which was conceived to be its essential or most valuable doctrines: whence, a new order of philosophy sprang up, more absurd and heterogeneous than any which had preceded it; and this, from the choice which was thus exercised, its advocates denominated Eclectism. Of this confused amalgamation, or rather general plunder of opinions, Potamo is said to have been the inventor; but, as from Platonism a larger share had been stolen than from any other theory, and as the name of Plato still preserved a large portion of its primaeval repute and veneration, the greater body of the Eclectics continued to denominate themselves Platonists, notwithstanding their innovation upon his doctrine.
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What considerably added to the confusion of this Babel edifice was, that from the growing reputation of the Christian church, the purity of its principles, and the incontrovertible miracles which had been wrought by many of its earliest professors, Christianity and Judaism had both been studied as philosophic sciences, and many of their doctrines been suffered to intermingle in the general mass. In consequence of which, multitudes of the earlier Christians themselves were induced to frequent Alexandria; where, in too many instances, they caught the common contagion, and combined the mysteries of modernized Platonism with the simple precepts of their own creed. Hence the writings of Athenagoras and Clemens Alexandrinus abound with pagan doctrines; and they themselves, as well as Pantaenus and Ammonius, were all successively instructors in the catachetic school in this metropolis. Ammonius, however, in process of time, apostatised from the Christian faith; and his immediate followers, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Jamblichus, became in succession its most inveterate adversaries: yet it is probable that their attachment to Christianity would have rendered it more disservice than their enmity; for though possesst of considerable learning, they were all, in the highest degree, mystagogues and enthusiasts; Plotinus contending with violence for the doctrine of divine emanation, and, as connected herewith, the worship of gods, daemons, genii, and heroes; Porphyry, for the purgative exercise of corporeal abstinences and mortifications; and Jamblichus surrendering himself without restraint to all the superstitious practices of divination. The early connection of some parts of the Christian church with Oriental gnosticism, a belief which in many respects approximated that of Platonism, and paved a way for the reception of the latter, shews clearly how liable Christianity was to debasement from its earliest propagation, in consequence of the lawless sway of human passions and opinions, and how much more it would have suffered from the friendship than from the hostility of such hallucinated philosophers.
Into this chaotic mass of opinions, Epicurism, however, was never received. It was founded on physical experiments which could not be sublimated to the airy regions of Platonism, Pythagorism, Cab-balanism, Gnosticism, or Eclectism. The dialectics of Aristotle might dazzle by their subtlety and corruscation; the asseverations of the Stoics might, in some degree, impose by their dogmatism; the indecision of the Sceptics might attract by its indolence and independence, but the system of Epicurus was, in no respect, calculated for the meridian of Alexandria. M. Degerando indeed, observes, that in Rome it discovered a disposition to shake hands with the Sceptic school, when on its decay*; but I am acquainted with no fact that can support such an assertion: no philosophy was possessed of more decisive axioms, and no disciples could adhere to them with more inflexibility. He is more correct in observing, as he does shortly afterwards, that “Epicurus, Zeno, and the Cyrenaics, contributed no gift to Alexandrian Eclectism;” and, that “their maxims were exiled as so many importunate laws, which awakened the spirit, and snatched it from those delicious reveries, in which it loved to lap itself †.”

On this account, also, we may easily perceive, why Epicurism, or the Atomic doctrine, should have acquired but little notice during the earlier ages of the Christian church. I have already shewn, that whatever connection the latter had formed with the Grecian philosophy, was through the medium of the Samian, Platonic, or Peripatetic schools, which appear alternately to have triumphed over each other, and al-

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* La philosophie Grecque, transplantée à Rome, éprouva bientôt, sur les empereurs, les effets de cet esprit de combinaison. Les théories de Platon cherchèrent à s'allier avec la morale des Stoïciens; celle d'Epicure parut tendre une main amie au Scepticisme abandonné. Histoire comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie, vol. i. ch. 8.

† Epicure, Zénon, les Cyréniens ne portèrent aucun tribut à l' Eclectisme Alexandrin: leur maxims furent écartées comme autant de loix importunes qui en éveillant l'esprit, l'eussent arraché aux douces rêveries dont il aimoit à se nourrir. Ibid.
ternately to have fallen. In effect, both the ethics of the Epicureans, which were only studied in the uncandid and deceitful narratives of hostile writers, and the whole range of their physical system, which denied all particular interference of Providence, the immortality of the soul, and a state of future resurrection,—till considerably explained and modified, were sufficient to excite alarm, and justify indignation. It was, for a similar reason, that Aristotle himself was, for a long period, anathematized; his doctrine of the eternity of the world being conceived an essential part of his entire system. Origen, indeed, who beheld in the eclectic chaos an attempt to unite the schools of Aristotle and Plato, seems to have conjectured that a similar coalition might advantageously have been produced between Peripatetism and Christianity; but this conjecture appears rather to have terminated in a simple wish, than in any actual effort*. Hence, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Eusebius, and almost all the most learned defenders of the Christian faith, who flourished during its first six centuries, discover a strange propensity to a variety of Platonic and Pythagoric doctrines, but especially to the former, even while they openly and honestly oppose the grosser absurdities towards which they tended. St. Austin asserts expressly, that he was prepared for the reception of Christianity by a perusal of the writings of the later Platonists⊥; and in many of the hymns of Synesius, bishop of Ptolemais, which have yet survived their author, we trace much more of Cabbalism, Gnosticism, Platonism, and Peripatetism, than of the pure precepts of the gospel he professed‡.

Yet, though the school of Aristotle was thus generally abandoned by the learned Fathers of the Christian church, it was by no means

* Even so late as the thirteenth century, the writings of Aristotle were prohibited by the synod of Paris, and afterwards under pope Innocent III. by the council of Lateran. Laun. de Fort. Ar. l. c.
‡ P. 312.
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abandoned by the heretics; and the accuracy and legitimacy of reasoning, which they acquired by the study of the dialectics of this philosopher, gave them, in much of the common controversy, a manifest and decided advantage. The Christian Fathers were, at length, sensible of this advantage themselves; and, about the beginning of the eighth century, began to discover an inclination to enlist this part of the Peripatetic philosophy into the banners of their own faith. The attempt was first introduced by Joannes Damascenes, who flourished at the period I am advertting to, and retired about the middle of life, from a high station at the Saracen court, to a monastery at St. Abas, that he might enjoy full leisure to prosecute his studies. From this æra, Aristotle began to obtain an ascendency over his rivals; nothing was heard of but the trivium and quadrivium of the Lycaean, or that circle of instruction, into which the liberal arts were at this period divided; the trivium comprising grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics; and the quadrivium, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy: and so complete was the triumph of this school at one time, and so extravagant the general attachment to its philosophy, that Melancthon makes it a matter of complaint, that in sacred assemblies the ethics of Aristotle were read to the people, instead of the gospel*. Some few and feeble attempts were occasionally made to revive the credit of Plato; and in one or two instances, and especially under the pen of Rosceline, who flourished in the twelfth century, to introduce the opinions of Zeno, but they were all of contracted limits and temporary duration; whence, till the revival of learning in the fourteenth century, may the scholastic system be fairly regarded as maintaining a complete sway over the mystic, as well as over every other, by which it was occasionally assualted. Plato was left in obscurity, the doctrines of Zeno abandoned, and Epicurus known only by name.

* Apol. A. C. p. 63. See also Laun. c. ix. 210, in which a similar complaint is repeated.
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It is astonishing, indeed, to observe the ignorance of the schoolmen, as to the real philosophy of Epicurus, from a short time after the commencement of the Christian æra, to the beginning of the fifteenth century; for, excepting a few of the primitive Fathers of the church, Lactantius seems to have been almost the only writer tolerably instructed in its tenets. And, hence, almost every person who differed in his philosophic opinions from the dogmas of the synods and ecumenic councils, was denominated an Epicurean. Alexander, therefore, a Christian, who is supposed to have flourished in the beginning of the second century, was always looked back to as a disciple of this school, because he maintained, if we may credit Albertus Magnus, that God is matter, or does not exist independently of matter; that all things are essentially God, and that the figures of bodies are all imaginary accidents, and have no real existence*.

David de Dinant, a Christian philosopher of the thirteenth century, is reported to have espoused the same tenets, and is imagined by Bayle, to have been an immediate disciple of another Christian philosopher of the same creed, of the name of Amalric, who, in like manner, taught, that “all things are God, and God is all things, both the Creator, and the thing created;” and whose body was preposterously dragged out of its grave, many years after it had been quietly inhumed, and sentenced to the flames for heresy †. These philosophers were both esteemed Epicureans in their principles, as was also the celebrated Peter Abelard, who wielded with so much reputation the weapons of polemic divinity, about half a century before the æra of Dinant. Giordano Bruno has likewise occasionally been ranked in the same catalogue: a bold and fantastic

† Omnia sunt Deus, Deus est omnia; Creator et creatura idem, &c. Bayle. Dict. Hist. et Crit. Art. Spinoze Res A. Almaric, though the fact is not recorded by Bayle, had, in his life-time, been convened before the second Parisian council, and, on account of his declared errors, fallen under its severe censures.
philosopher who existed as late as the 16th century, and was a strong champion for the eternity of matter. The works of Bruno, from which I shall occasionally offer extracts, were dedicated to our own well-known countryman, Sir Philip Sydney. England, indeed, had afforded him an asylum from the persecutions of bigots and enthusiasts on the Continent; and, from a variety of complimentary canzonets, which he composed in praise of the beauty of the ladies of London, for Bruno, it seems, was a gallant and a poet, as well as a philosopher, he acquired no small degree of the favour of queen Elizabeth herself. But the caprice and imprudence of Bruno prevented him from being satisfied with the polite attentions he received from our fair countrywomen: he returned to Naples, the city in which he was born, towards the close of the 16th century, and, having engaged in fresh theological disturbances with some of the cardinals of the Roman church, he was condemned, and burnt for heresy.

But none of these appear to have been, strictly speaking, of the Epicurean school; the eternity of matter was, undoubtedly, a tenet maintained by the founder of this sect, but maintained, as I have already observed, in common with every other philosophic school whatsoever: while the essential intelligence of matter, or material atoms, was a doctrine totally repugnant to the first principles of their system. These philosophers might, therefore, have been of the school of Democritus, who contended for the intelligence of a certain classification of atoms; or of that of Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, or Aristotle; but they could not possibly be followers of the system of Epicurus. Indeed, I cannot perceive any great degree of difference between the doctrines of Abelard, and his inveterate antagonist Champeaux, notwithstanding the high reputation he acquired in consequence of his triumph over him. Champeaux was accused of believing the Deity material, or, in the language of Bayle, of disguised Spinosism (Spinozeme non de-
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velopé *) and yet, whatever may have been the immediate arms with which Abelard encountered this heterodox son of the church, we are told that, on other occasions, he himself never hesitated to assert, that “God is all things, and all things are God; that he is convertible into all things, and all things are convertible into him; imitating, in this respect, the theosophy of Empedocles or Anaxagoras, and distinguishing the species of things according to their simple appearance ‡.

Abelard was therefore ranked,—and certainly considered as an atomist, with much more reason than many of the rest, whose names I have glanced at,—among the scholars of Epicurus: and Arnobius, of whose abilities Du Pin gives us no very favourable opinion †, Hierocles, the subtle and celebrated Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and an almost infinite number of other combatants of equal ability, were, from age to age, engaged in subverting the doctrines of these imaginary Epicureans.

Shortly after the revival of letters, however, and especially about the 15th century, notwithstanding the superiority which Aristotle still continued to maintain in the cloisters of monks, and the establishments of professed schools, the doctrines of Epicurus began, once more, to obtain a warm, and, in some measure, a fashionable encouragement. Philelphus, Alexander ab Alexandro, Coelius Rhodigianus, Volaterranus, Jean François Pic, and many other philosophers of equal repu-

† Deum esse omnia, et omnia esse Deum; eum in omnia converti, omnia in eum transmutari asserruit: quia Empedoclae, aut forte Anaxagoricæ præventus theosophia, distinguébat species secundum solam apparentiam, nempe quia aliquot atomi in uno subjecto erant eductæ quæ latebant in alio. Carvuel. Phil. Real. I. iii. s. 3.
‡ Arnobius pretended to have been called to the profession of the Christian faith by his dreams. The bishops obliged him to give some proof of his attachment to their own religion, and he composed a work in seven or eight Books, entitled "Adversus Gentes." This publication I have never had an opportunity of perusing; but Du Pin informs us, that it was written with much haste, and that he appears to have been but little acquainted with the mysteries of the Christian faith. "Il attaque," observes he, "avec beaucoup plus d'adresse la religion des Pâiens qu'il ne defend celle des Chrétiens." Bibl. des Auth. Eccl. Tom. I. p. 204.
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*Ed. 1638. Wertemberg. †Lugd. Bat. 1648.
‡In essa si spiega buona parte della filosophia di Democrito adattata alla verita Christiana. See Crescembini’s Comentarj Poetici, l. ii. 10.
§Gassendi Physique. Tom. II.
‖This publication was imprinted in 1635, and entitled “Epicteto Español en versos consonantes, con el origin de los Estocios, y su defensa contra Plutarcho, y defensa de EPICUCRO contra la opinion commun.
¶This book I have not seen, but I quote from Gassendi, to whom it appears to have been familiar.

...had, at this time, the hardihood to intermix the atomic philosophy with the tenets of the Christian faith. Sennert, an eminent physician at Wirtemburg, published an express elucidation and defence of the atomic system, in a work entitled, Hypomnemata Physica, “Heads of Physics’;” Vives and Ramus ventured publicly to expose the defects of the Aristotelian philosophy, and Chrysostom Magneni, who published “A Treatise on the Life and Philosophy of Democritus,” attempted to reconcile the systems of the Peripatetics and the Atomists; a vain effort, however, and which he was obliged to relinquish. Magneni was an Italian, and the poets of Italy appear to have taken, at the same time, as much pains to restore the atomic system as the philosophers themselves. Hence Michele Milani wrote a very long and learned canzone, in which he unequivocally asserts, that it was purposely meant to adapt a great part of the atomic hypothesis to the Christian verity. His example was followed by Baptista Guarini, who also wrote a book in favour of the same school: and shortly afterwards by Francisco de Quevedo, a Spanish poet and philosopher, and by our own countryman, Sir William Temple.

But the 17th century presented us with two Epicureans, of far more celebrity than any of these: I mean Gassendi and Du Rondelle; both natives of France, and both of whom laboured with more assiduity and critical investigation to establish the moral character of the founder of this school, and the truth of his fundamental doctrines, than any of its adherents from the era of Diogenes Laertius.

Of these two accurate critics and elaborate scholars, Gassendi has acquired the greater share of reputation: for he not only wrote a bio-
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The fame of Gassendi was soon proclaimed through all Europe, and Epicurus began at last to obtain his turn of ascendance in our literary schools and universities. Cudworth, although professedly a Platonist, had already felt himself compelled to adopt the atomic philosophy so far as related to its physics: "An Abridgment of Gassendi's Philosophy," together with several other works in favour of the atomic or Epicurean system, was published by Francis Bernier, a learned physician of Montpellier, while our own countryman Walter Charlton, wrote a treatise of a similar tendency in England, entitled "Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charletoniana;" and another to the same effect by G. B. De Sancto Romano, was produced from the Paris press, under the title of Physica e Scholasticis Tricis liberata: "Physics rescued from Scholastic Jargon."

The progress of modern Epicurism, however, though thus attempered and christianized, was not endured without much apprehension, and even a vigorous resistance. Nor was this apprehension, indeed, without some degree of reason: for while Gassendi was amassing and concentrating whatever could be advanced by ancient history, physical facts, and ingenious argumentation, in favour of Epicurus and his opinions,—supported at the same time, as he is reported to have been, by St. Evremond,—Bayle* was endeavou
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between the atomic philosophy and scepticism; and Leibnitz and Wolfe between that and Platonism or Pythagorism. Hobbes, the intimate friend of Gassendi, attempting to press the atomic system still farther, was reviving the long exploded doctrine of Democritus respecting the necessary intelligence of separate elementary corpuscles; and Spinosa, with several other heterodox Jews of Spain and Portugal, were renewing the old Eleatic doctrine that the universe, or matter collectively, and not in distinct atoms, was the Deity, and efficient cause of all things. It is not a little singular, that this last doctrine of Spinosa, or rather of Xenophanes, from whom both himself and the Eleatic sect immediately derived it, that God is the Universe, and the Universe God, not transitively, or with a power of emanation, but imminently and immutably, was now, for the first time, pretended to be discovered as comprising a part of the faith professed by two philosophic frater-

nonne qu'il n'y a plus que des ignorans on des entités qui puissent juger mal d'Epicure. Discours Prelim. de M. de Bougainville. See his translation of Polignac's Anti-Lucretius into French.

† The monads of Leibnitz, however, are not precisely the same as those of Epicurus. They were immediately derived from the Pythagoric system, and hence have a closer resemblance to the numbers of the Samian, or the ideas of the Academic philosophy. Monads, under Leibnitz, as under Pythagoras, have no parts, neither extension, figure, nor divisibility; each, however, is a true atom of nature, and incapable of destruction, except by the power of the Creator. Each monad differs from every other; and each is also possessed of perception and appetite, in which respect each may be said to partake of the nature of soul. This power of perception and appetite produces an internal principle of alteration; and hence the sympathies and affinities, the repulsions and separations, the combinations and forms of bodies. It is to this source, therefore, that we are obviously to look for the foundation of the late Dr. Darwin's philosophy, though I do not remember that he has any where indicated the fountain from which he derived it.

‡ A complete edition of the works of Spinosa have been lately published in 8vo. by professor Paulus of Jena. Spinosa was the son of a Portuguese Jew, and born at Amsterdam in 1632. His mode of reasoning is extremely incorrect; and hence his arguments may, in many instances, be as well adapted by his adversaries as by himself. The following extract may serve as an example of this want of appropriation. Proposito. "Idei rei singularis, actu existentis, Deus pro causâ habet; non quatenus infinitus est, sed quatenus alâ rei singularis actu existentis ideâ affectus consideratur; cujus etiam Deus est causa, quatenus alâ tertiâ affectus est, et sic in infinitum."

Demonstratio. "Ideâ rei singularis, actu existentis, modus singularis cogitandi est, et a reliquis distinctus; adeoque Deus, quatenus est tantum res cogitans, pro causâ habet. At non, quatenus est res absolute cogitans; sed quatenus alio cogitandi modo affectus consideratur, et hujus etiam, quatenus alio affectus est, et sic in infinitum. At qui ordo, et connexion idearum idem est ac ordo, et connexion causarum; ergo unius singularis ideâ alia ideâ sive Deus, quatenus alia ideâ affectus consideratur, est causa, et hujus etiam, quatenus alia affectus est, et sic in infinitum." Q. E. D. Ethic. Prop. ix.
nities in Japan* and China, of which the latter is denominated Foe Kiao†.

The creed or system of lord Bolingbroke seems to have been an intermixture of that of Spinosa and Leibnitz; or, to ascend higher, of the Pythagoric or Platonic, and the Eleatic schools; and hence the celebrated Essay on Man, which was certainly planned by himself, and composed by Mr. Pope, without his having been aware of its tendency, at the direct instigation of his noble patron, discloses, in every page, the doctrines of sufficient reason and a material deity: on which account, on its first appearance, the poem was regarded, and especially on the Continent, as one of the most dangerous productions that had ever issued from the press. In the present day, we allow to it a very liberal extent of poetic licence, and with such allowance it may be perused without mischief; but a few verses alone are sufficient to prove its evil tendency, if strictly and literally interpreted. The following distich, for example, discloses the very quintessence of Spinosism:

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul †.

And the general result drawn from the entire passage, which is too long to be quoted, is no less so:

In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear—whatever is, is right.

If every thing be right at present, there is no necessity for a day of retribution hereafter; and the chief argument afforded by nature, in

† To justify such observation, it is only necessary to compare this couplet, and the entire passage which belongs to it, with the following verses of Virgil, who has derived the idea he exemplifies from the very same source as Spinoza:

His quidam signis atque hac exempla securi,
Esse apibus partem divinae mentis, et haustus
favour of a future existence, is swept away in a moment. Unite the propositions contained in these two distichs, and illustrated through the whole poem, and it follows, that the Universe is God, and God the Universe; that, amidst all the moral evils of life, the sufferings of virtue, and the triumphs of vice, it is in vain to expect any degree of retribution in a future state; every thing being but an individual part of one stupendous whole, which could not possibly subsist otherwise; and that the only consolation which remains for us is, that the general good is superior to the general evil, and that whatever is, is right:

If plagues and earthquakes break not heaven's design,
Why then a Borjia or a Catiline *

Hence, Pope was generally denominated, on the Continent, the modern Lucretius. As a merely moral poet, he was permitted to be read in Switzerland: but his French translator confesses that he thought it a duty he owed society, to correct, and render less daring, many of the expressions contained in the original work. "This school of philosophers," observes M. Bourguet, in a letter to M. de Meuron, state-councillor of the king of Prussia, "takes a pleasure in confounding all ideas: in pretending to develop God, it miserably confounds him

Ætherios disce Deum, namque ire per annes
Terrasque tractasque maris, caelumque profundam.  

Led by such wonders, sages have opin'd
That bees have portions of a heavenly mind;
That God pervades, and, like one common soul,
Fills, feeds, and animates the world's great whole. Warton.

Innumerable passages of a similar tendency might be selected from both the Georgics and the Æneid, but the task is unnecessary.

* There is no doubt that Pope was imposed upon by Bolingbroke, and is said to have regretted, in the latter part of his life, that he had thus lent the full extent of his talents to the propagation of infidelity. Hence, the following stanza of Mr. Mason, which professedly alludes to Pope, in his Elegy to a young nobleman:

The bard will tell thee, the misguided praise.
Clouds the celestial sunshine of his breast;
E'en now, repentant of his erring lays,
He heaves a sigh amid the realms of rest.
with nature, and reduces mankind very nearly to the rank of brutes. In effect," continues he, "Mr. Pope, in his Essay on Man, has not said a syllable on the nature of the soul,—the most excellent part of man—on its immateriality, on its indestructibility, on its immortality. He has drawn the ideas of his poem from the works of lord Shaftesbury, from which, in many places, he has copied the very expressions. And, as to his morality, it is as superficial and heathenish (superficie et payenne) as his lordship's own." See the Journal Helvetique 1738, and Reflexions sur les Ouvrages de Literature, Tom. VI. p. 111.

Philosophic speculations therefore, of such a tendency, and actually productive of such consequences, could not be indulged without apprehension, and were not to be promulgated without resistance. It was in vain that Gassendi, St. Evremond, Leibnitz, and Wolfe, appealed to their punctual performance of Christian duties, and public attendance upon Christian worship; Hobbes, Bayle, and even Spinoza, appealing to the same, some degree of suspicion still attached to all of them, and the eloquence of Bossuet and Fenelon, the subtlety of Malbranch, the logic of Clarke, and the gigantic talents and learning of Cudworth, were all called forth and confederated in the common cause. Des Cartes had already, moreover, began to put forth his enormous powers in pursuit of some new system of natural philosophy; and though, like Cudworth, compelled to drink, in some measure, from the Epicurean stream, he enlisted under the banners of the alarmists, and his prodigious and well-directed opposition was a host of itself in their support.

But logic and natural philosophy were not the only weapons employed against these heterodox sons of the church, the muses were also applied to for their contribution, and, notwithstanding their having espoused the opposite cause in Italy, they consented to the application which was made to them in France; in consequence of which,
the cardinal Polignac, whose name is well known in the republic of letters, produced a Latin poem of nine Books in hexameter verse, of no small degree of merit, which he entitled " Anti-Lucretius, sive de Deo et Natura*;" from which title it is obvious, that the aim of the cardinal was chiefly directed against the modern disciples of Epicurus: but, whatever might be its success, and how well soever such success might be deserved against other philosophic reformers, neither poetry nor prose had any avail in this instance. The dialectics of the schools had yielded to the novum organon of the immortal Bacon; syllogetic logomachies to an attentive examination of nature; the Epicurism of Gassendi was embraced by the most eminent mo-

* This celebrated poem, we learn from the Eloge of M. de Boze, as also from the preface prefixed to the first edition, took its rise from mere accident. During a short residence of the abbé Polignac in Holland, in the year 1697, he formed an acquaintance with the learned Peter Bayle, whom he was astonished to find attached to the system of Epicurus, and delighted with the poem of Lucretius, which he appeared to have completely committed to memory. The abbé found this system was gaining ground very considerably among men of letters, and immediately determined on opposing it by a poem of an opposite tendency. On his return, therefore, to the quietude of his own home, he composed one in five books, which he entitled Anti-Lucretius. This formed the rudiments of the future and more perfect work, which extended to nine, and which added, to the attack upon Lucretius, an additional assault upon the doctrines of Spinoza, Hobbes, Newton, and even Locke himself. Polignac was about forty years old when he commenced this undertaking: he proceeded with it very slowly; reading it, as it advanced, to Malbranche, and a great number of other literary friends, both before his election to his cardinalship, and afterwards, during his residence at Rome; but, perhaps, no poem, after all, has had so many escapes from being buried in oblivion. The cardinal himself was forty years at work upon it, and at length died at the extreme age of eighty, leaving it still unfinished; and in such a confused state, from the variety of additions and alterations he had made in it, that it was attended with the utmost difficulty, in many instances, to trace its connection. His friend the abbé Rothelin, however, to whom on his death-bed he entrusted his indigested papers, undertook the Herculean task. At this task he laboured occasionally for several years, and, at length, died himself as he was on the point of completing it. This was an additional evil, from which the poem did not recover for a long time; finally, about the year 1749, nearly half a century after its commencement, it was ushered into the world by M. de Beau, Professor of Eloquence in the University of Paris.

This poem is certainly possessed of very considerable merit: its Latinity is, for the most part, correct, though by no means equal to that of Buchanan or Casimir; its order is perspicacious, and its similies, in general, appropriate. Its principal defects appear to be inanimation and extravagance of system. The greatest injury it sustains is from its title: the author, in this respect, should have been more modest: by himself, he is certainly instructive, fertile, and elegant; but he has no pretensions to enter the list with Lucretius.—A very good French translation of this poem was given in prose by M. de Bougainville, perpetual Secretary of the Royal Academy of Belles Lettres in 1750.

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modern philosophers, and at last appears to have obtained an eternal triumph, from its application, by Newton and Huygens, to the department of natural philosophy, and, by Locke and Condillac, to that of metaphysics.

It is useless to pursue this history any further: the systems which have since been started in opposition to the Atomic, however splendid and fashionable for the moment, have already flitted away, or have no prospect of obtaining any permanency. Of these, the principal is that of the Idealists, of whom the chief leaders were Berkely and Hume. The former, dissatisfied with Locke's explanation of the mode by which sensation is communicated to the mind, incapable of tracing the connexion between external objects and the mind itself, and consequently the existence of an external world, boldly denied such an existence, and maintained that sensations and ideas were mere modifications of the soul, concatenated by a system of laws immutable and universal; whence the existence and necessary connexion of cause and effect, the proof of identity, and the demonstration of an intelligent Creator. The system of Hume was founded upon that of Berkely; but, instead of restraining, it extended it to a still more extravagant length. Hume, in imitation of Berkely, contended that the external world was incapable of proof; that the mind or soul was nothing more than a consciousness of existence, and that such consciousness depended alone on a succession of ideas produced either by sensations or impressions: but he maintained exclusively that he could no more trace any necessary catenation between such ideas or sensations, between one event and another, than he could trace the existence of external objects. Facts, he admitted, conjoined with facts, but are not necessarily connected with each other; and hence to assert that such connexion was produced by a system of operative laws, was, in his opinion, to presume, but by no means to reason. Upon this theory, therefore, there is no-
thing existing in all nature but impressions and sensations, and the ideas thence resulting;—there is no such thing as causation, no proof of identity, none of a God. Yet it would be injustice to assert, that Mr. Hume hence denied the being of a God; on the contrary, he admitted it, and pretended to found his belief of such a Being on a kind of innate impression, though he would not allow it the name of an innate idea *, a sort of moral sentiment, as developed by Hutchinson.

The ideal system has been opposed with no small degree of success by two others derived from very different premises, yet each highly ingenious, and in many respects incontrovertible: the one invented by Dr. Hartley, and founded on the doctrine of vibration and the association of ideas; the other by Dr. Beattie and Dr. Reid, and which appeals to the decisions of common sense;.

These responsive theories, however, originating in our own country, have not satisfied the metaphysicians of the Continent; and, in reality, being principally directed to our own meridian, they do not embrace all the objectionable points presented by continental hypotheses which have obtained celebrity enough to require notice. M. Kant has hence advanced a new system, which has the boast of being of universal application, and in every respect undervied from antecedent philosophers: but as this is a system rather intellectual than material, it by no means falls within the scope of the present lucubration to analyze it. It affects, in a greater degree than any other theory whatever, to take nothing for granted, and to trace all ideas and cognition to their earliest source; yet, with a singular sort of contradiction, it commences with pre-supposing the existence of certain first principles and an external world. It is strangely obscured, moreover, by the perplexity and abstruseness of its vocabulary, its author not only having invented a host of new terms, but too generally ap-

* On Human Understanding, Essay xii.
† See these different systems more minutely adverted to in the Note on Book IV. v. 766. of the ensuing Poem.
propriated to those in common use a sense foreign to that in which they are daily employed upon other, or even similar occasions; so that the proselyte has not only the task of learning a new language before he can be initiated into the Kantian philosophy, but of unlearning that which it has cost him years, perhaps, to acquire. It is on this account that M. Kieseweter, as well as several other disciples of the professor, have attempted to re-model its nomenclature, to render his conceptions less obscure and recondite, and to present the whole theory in a form more abridged and systematic *. At the present moment, nothing in Germany is so fashionable as the study of the Transcendental Philosophy, or Criticism of pure Reason, as its inventor has chosen to denominate it; but many, who have studied it, are dissatisfied with it already, and appear to be aiming at an erection of different schools out of its ruins. Its chief antagonists for this purpose are M. M. Jacobi and Reinhold, and an anonymous author, who signs himself OEnesidemus, all of whom seem equally sensible of its insufficiency, and have hence attempted to connect it with some other theory. Jacobi, like Leibnitz, whose system in many respects he avowedly prefers to the Kantian, is a professed Platonist, and on this account is for connecting the Transcendental Philosophy with Platonism †: OEnesidemus, as his fictitious name imports, is a Sceptic, and he, on the contrary, is for conciliating it with the philosophy of Pyrrho ‡: while Reinhold, who has invented a sort of theory of his own, which is denominated Elementary Philosophy, makes it his object to form a junction between the Transcendental and the Elementary §. After all, however, Kantism itself, notwithstanding its proud boast of perfect independence and originality, seems, in many respects, to be little more than a kind of modern eclectism, an hypothesis deduced from prior schools, and in many instances betraying

† Beiträge zur Leichtern übersicht, &c. band 3. Hamburg, 1802.
‡ Beiträge zur Berichtigung, Hamburg, 1803. § OEnesidemus; ou Observations sur la Philosophie de Reinhold.
its pillage. "It attracts," observes M. Degerando, who has well studied it, "the friends of Natural Philosophy by the nature of its results; those of Rational Philosophy by the character of its methods. It says to the former, 'all knowledge is restricted to the limits of experience;' it says to the latter, 'all knowledge proceeds, à priori, from the laws of the understanding.' With Locke, it asserts, that there are no innate ideas; with Leibnitz, that experience can only result from the chain established between different facts, through the medium of internal notions: it has imitated Plato in his ideas of pure reason; Aristotle, in his logical forms. It has flattered Idealism, by repeating after it, that we can know nothing but the mere appearances of things; Scepticism, by throwing over the principle of thought itself, the veil in which she has involved all external existences; finally, it seems to open a door to great numbers of those who, tossed for a long time on the ocean of systems, exhausted by the clash of all opinions, by the uncertainty of all metaphysics, seek for repose on a shore remote from all such disputes *.

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THE

NATURE OF THINGS.

BOOK THE FIRST.
ARGUMENT.

Lucretius opens his Poem with an invocation to Venus, and then dedicates it to Memmius; briefly treating of its subject, and endeavouring to clear it from the charge of impiety. He now commences his subject in detail, and attempts to prove that nothing could spring from, or can return to, nothing; that there are certain minute corpuscles, which, though imperceptible to the senses, may be conceived by the mind, and whence every thing originates: that there is also space or vacuum—besides which nothing is to be traced in Nature: and that whatever else appears to exist, as weight, heat, poverty, history, war, are merely the conjunctions or events, the properties or accidents, of body and void; and that these elementary corpuscles are perfectly solid, indivisible, and eternal. He confutes the opinion of Heraclitus, who held that fire was the principle of all things; and of other philosophers, who, instead of fire, maintained the same of air, water, and earth; and at length of Empedocles, who regarded the whole as equally elementary and primordial. He attacks the homoeomery of Anaxagoras, and ridicules its absurdity. He contends, that the Universe is infinite on all sides; that space cannot be limited; and that the property of infinity attaches equally to body and void. Hence he severely censures those who believe that there exists a central point in the Universe, or admit the doctrine of central gravitation. He concludes with a brief panegyric upon philosophy, by the light of which mankind are able to penetrate the profoundest mysteries of Nature.
DE RERUM NATURA.

LIBER PRIMUS.

Æneadum genetrix, hominum divómine voluptas,
Alma Venus! coeli subter labentia signa

Ver. 1. Parent of Rome—] Nothing can be more
beautiful or appropriate than this introductory ad-
dress. Our author is engaging in a philosophic poem,
which is to trace the origin and nature of things in
all their unbounded variety and extent. He is writ-
ing at Rome, and chiefly for the benefit and instruc-
tion of his own countrymen; and what imaginary
power could so properly be invoked, since invoca-
tions have been resorted to in all ages, as the deity
who was the acknowledged source of all animal and
vegetable life? What power could be so properly
invoked by a Roman poet, desiring, more espe-
cially, of bespeaking the esteem of the multitude,
as the divinity from whose embraces with a mortal
immemorial tradition had derived their national de-
scent?

But the poem was entered upon in a period of tur-
bulence and war; probably about the year of Rome
695, and the 32d of our poet’s age; in the midst of
the contest with Mithridates and his Asiatic allies,
while Clodius was intriguing at the forum, and the
banishment of Cicero was determined upon through
the connivance of both Pompey and Caesar. (See
the preceding Life, p. xxxviii.) All Rome was at this
time divided into factions: the people were striving
against the patricians, and the patricians against the
people. In such a state of affairs, what chance had
the poet or the philosopher to be attended to? Lu-
cretius was aware of the difficulty, and, with great
political delicacy and address, invokes the only deity
who, according to the mythology of his coun-
try, could captivate the god of war, and induce him
to unbuckle his armour.

This exquisite invocation has, nevertheless, been
strongly and repeatedly objected to, as totally inco-
sistent with our poet’s avowed disbelief of the system
of religion at that time established by the govern-
ment. “Cette invocation,” says the Baron des Coutures,
“a surpris beaucoup de savans comme contraire à la
doctrine d’Epicure.” In another French publica-
tion, entitled “Lettres Recueillies par Jean Michael
Brutus,” there is an epistle from Petrus Victorius
to Giovanni della Casa, archbishop of Benevento, in-
quiring whether Du Rondelle, who had then just
published his celebrated little treatise “De Vita et
Moribus Epicuri,” had taken notice of such an ap-
prehended incongruity? To this epistle no answer
is subjoined; but Du Rondelle appears to have
BOOK THE FIRST.

PARENT OF ROME! by gods and men belov'd,
Benignant Venus! thou! the sail-clad Main,

thought the objection too puerile to be noticed, for he certainly has not adverted to it. Tycho Brahe was likewise consulted upon the same subject, in 1596, by Is. Pontanus, who defended our poet with much dexterity and success. See Lettres publiées par M. Malthæus, à Leide, 1698, 8vo.

The Baron de Coutures has also offered an ingenious vindication. He denies this introductory part of the poem to be mythological, and contends that the whole is pure and allowable allegory: that Venus, in the sense here adopted, is a mere symbol of universal generation; and Mars, her paramour, of universal destruction: from the embraces of which two opposite powers proceed the regeneration, re-combination, and re-dissolution of all things; upon which doctrine the whole system of Epicurus is founded.

Mr. Hume, however, who has likewise engaged in a short critique upon the same subject, is not disposed to be so easily satisfied. He admits that Venus may possibly, in this introduction, be allegorically addressed, and that Lucretius, as a philosopher, had a right to address her "as the generating power which " animates, renews, and beautifies the universe; but " he was soon betrayed." continues our critic, "by " the mythology of his age, into incoherencies, while " he prays to that allegorical personage to appease " the furies of her lover Mars." Essays, vol. ii. p. 424. Of which precisely opinion was the cardinal Polignac:

Immemor ipse sui, Martis describat amorem.

ANTI-LUCR. v. 35.

False to his creed, he paints the loves of Mars.

Now, allowing that the solution of De Coutures is somewhat too recondite, I can by no means perceive the incoherency complained of by Mr. Hume. The character of Mars is, in the present instance, altogether as allegoric as that of Venus; and the fiction of their union as correct and consistent with the true spirit of allegory, as any fiction that was ever invented. Venus is the poetic type of all female grace and excellence; Mars, of all the qualities of the hero: the one the goddess of beauty; the other the genius of war. What is there then incoherent in the loves of such ideal personages; in their mutual embraces; and the triumph of the former over the latter? The same fact is realized every day in the natural world. It is the very type of the connexion between Alexander and Thais, Marc Antony and Cleopatra, our own Edward and Elconora. That such an allegory was consonant with the mythology of the Grecian people,
Quae mare navigerum, quae terras frugifereus,
Concelebras; per te quoniam genus omne animantum

is creditable to the consistency of that mythology itself. But, surely, Lucretius was not to relinquish a beauty of this description, merely because it coincided with the popular faith of his countrymen, or might even be founded upon it. In my mind, it was an additional motive for his having recourse to it; and nothing can, in a greater degree, demonstrate the delicacy of his taste, or the correctness of his judgment.

It is true, he is commencing a poetical essay, with the express purpose of confuting the popular mythology of both Greece and Rome. He asserts repeatedly that the whole system is fictitious, and totally unworthy of credit; but he asserts at the same time, that so long as it is regarded as mere fiction, no evil can ensue, and that its beauties are numerous and apposite:

Call, if thou choose it, the resounding deep
Neptune, and Ceres term the golden grain,
Be Bacchus wine, its vulgar source forgot,
And e'en this globe of senseless Earth define
Parent of Gods; no harm ensues but mark,
'Tis fiction all, by vital facts disprov'd.

NAT. OF THINGS, B. ii. 666.

The address, therefore, introduced at the commencement of this poem, is pure, appropriate allegory, deriving a high degree of beauty from its relation to the popular mythology of the times. Surely, the Abbé St. Pierre must have totally forgotten this, and fifty other passages of a similar tendency, when he thus hastily expressed himself: "Je n'en dirai pas "d'avantage sur ce poëte; l'exorde de son poëme en "est la refutation."

The Portuguese poet Camoëns, than whom no man was ever better acquainted with classical literature, has followed Lucretius in a great part of this very allegory, as he has also in a variety of other conceptions, and in the present instance with peculiar felicity. The deity chiefly introduced into the Iliad is the Urania-Venus, or heavenly Love of the ancients. Gama, the hero of the piece, is thwarted in his voyage of discovery towards India, by the devices of Bacchus, the chief demon of that country, who, as the voyagers advance towards the Indian highlands, flies with all speed to Neptune, and intreats him to raise a tempest and shipwreck them on the very point of completing their enterprize. The whole is exquisitely delineated. Neptune consents; and the gods of the winds are ordered into immediate action. The storm commences; and its description is perhaps unrivalled. The terrified adventurers are in the utmost danger, and expect every instant to perish. Gama addresses himself to the Almighty, the God of the Christian church, to him who was formerly the refuge of Israel in passing through the Red Sea, and of St. Paul in sailing over "the sandy syrtes of the faithless waves."
The chieftain's prayer is heard: the star of love (amorosa estrella) is discovered in the horizon, preclusive of the approach of Venus herself, who immediately appears, and, in consistency with the power assigned her by Lucretius, averts the impending destruction, puts to flight the winds and the tempests, and restores to the world, peace, serenity, and gladness. Mas ja a amorosa estrella scintillava,
Diante do sol claro orizonte,
Messageira do dia, e visitava
A terra, e o largo mar con ledo fronte;
Venus que nos ceos a governava, &c.

When now the silver star of Love appear'd;
Bright in the east her radiant front the rear'd;
Fair through the horrid storm the gentle ray
Announce'd the promise of the cheerful day;
From her bright throne celestial Love beheld
The tempest burn, and blast on blast impell'd;
Her lovely nymphs the calls, the nymphs obey;
Her nymphs, the virtues who confess her sway;
Round every brow the bids the rose-buds twine,
And every flower adorn their locks to shine.—
Bright as a starry band the Nereids phone,
Instant old Eolus' sons their presence own;
The winds die faintly, and in softest sighs
Each at his fair one's feet descending lies. MICKL.

Since writing the above, I have looked into the Spanish commentary of Manuel de Faria i Sousa, where I find the same conjecture advanced, that the
And fruitful Earth, as round the Seasons roll,
With Life who swellest, for by thee all live,

personification of Venus by Camoens, is an imitation of the present passage of Lucretius, whom the learned annotator has, moreover, vindicated at the same time. "Por ventura," says he, "que imitó el poeta en esta elección al grande filósofo Lucrecio, que resulto a cantar de las producciones de la naturalezas no invocó otra deidad sino a Venus, a quien la filosofía antigua atribuía el título de autora de la cosas alma Venus," &c. to which he adds, "I esso sin memoria alguna de que Venus pro otro lodo sea deidad lasciva; i por eso la invoca con título de pureza alma Venus, attendantiendo a los oficios lícitos que ha de hacer en el poema en toda especie de generación: que es lo a que destinó nuestro poeta haziéndola autora de la producción de la "Christianidad, i policia en la Asia."

I am nevertheless afraid that Camoens cannot so easily be defended as Lucretius, upon the point of allegory; the Portuguese bard having inharmoniously combined the mythology of the Greeks with the doctrines of the Christian church. Hence Mr. Mickle, notwithstanding his defence of Camoens in this respect, has thought proper in his version to smooth away its more obnoxious prominences, by omitting, in Gama's prayer to the Supreme Being, his reference to St. Paul and the Israelites, and by concealing the pagan term Venus under the more general and accordant appellation of Celestial Love. Yet the impropriety is not greater in thus blending the supernatural agency of the Christian religion with the mythology of the Greeks, than in combining the former with the Gothic machinery of magic and incantation; a practice that was common among Christian poets in every country throughout Europe, till the sublime and harmonious system first introduced by our own Milton into his immortal and unrivaled epic. No critic, however, has less right to be severe upon Camoens than Voltaire, though no critic has animadverted so harshly; for the former has not only introduced the very same combination of machinery into his Henriad, but has been guilty of the grossest incongruity in arranging it. Instead of following Lucretius and Camoens, in representing the power of Love as becalming every tempest and restoring tranquility to nature, he has given to Love himself (to Cupid instead of Venus), and in a poem founded upon Christian tenets, the power of exciting the most terrible storms, and of unchaining all the winds and all the lightnings of heaven: and in this manner alone does he separate Henry of Navarre from his companions, and conduct him to the residence of the fair Gabrielle:

Il agite les airs que lui-même a calmés;
Il parle, on voit soudain les elemens armés.
D'un bout du monde à l'autre, appellant les orages,
Sa voix commande aux vents d'assembler les nuages,
De verser les torrentes suspendus dans les airs,
Et d'apporter la nuit, la fondre, et les éclairs.

HENRIAD. Liv. 9.

The winds he maddens that he calm'd of late,
He speaks—and all is elemental hate.

From pole to pole his voice terrific flies,
Bids clouds o'er clouds, o'er tempests tempests rise;
Suspending torrents from their fountains fall,
And thunders, lightnings, night, usurp the ball.

With how much more elegance as well as classical propriety is this office allotted by Camoens to old Cólus?

Yet it may be observed, that neither Voltaire nor Camoens presumed to invoke Venus, or any other of the Grecian deities, for poetic assistance, as Lucretius has done at the commencement of this poem; but neither Voltaire nor Camoens had the same motive, otherwise there can be no doubt that each would have followed the example thus set before them. Invocations, indeed, either to real or allegoric powers, have been customary among poets in all ages. The practice is of immemorial date; and the man who would venture to begin a poem of importance without it, would be sure to incur the displeasure of the Muses, and perhaps be adjudged guilty of a contempt of court. Hence Vida, in his advice to his pupils, observes, that the best poets of every period have adhered to this usage.
Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis:
Te, Dea, te fugiunt ventei; te nubila coeli,
Adventumque tuum: tibi suaveis dædala tellus

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Celestia divum
Auxilia implorant, propriis nil viribus ausi.
Quos ores autem non magni denique refert,
Dum memor auspiciis cujusquam cuncta deorum
Aggrediens: Jovis neque enim nisi rite vocato
Numine, fas quiequam ordiri mortalibus altum.

Poetic ii. 20.

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Implore
The timely aid of some celestial power,
To guide your labours, and point out your road.
Chuse, as you please, some tutelary god,
But still invoke some guardian deity,
Some power to look auspicious from the sky.
To nothing great should mortals bend their care,
Till Jove be solemnly address in prayer.

Pitt.

Hence Homer and Virgil invoke the muse, without any specific name, in the commencement of their respective poems; Vida and Klostock, the holy Ghost; Milton, both; Tasso and Sanazaro, the holy Virgin; and Gesner, an impersonification of enthusiasm. Dante and Ariosto, indeed, have occasionally adopted more extraordinary invocations still; and the objections of the critics will certainly apply to them with but little possibility of palliation; for the former, in the third canto of his Divina Comedia, and the latter, in the same canto of his Orlando Furioso, address the pagan god Apollo with little that can be called pure allegoric allusion, and with very much of the paraphernalia of the popular Grecian mythology.

The cardinal Polignac, who strenuously opposed the philosophy of the Roman bard, and of all other deists or atheists, ancient or modern, in a poem entitled Anti-Lucretius, of which I have already given some account in the preface, and who, so far as relates to poetic ornaments, was a frequent copyist of our author, did not indeed dare to imitate him in the present instance. Like that of Vida and Klostock, the invocation he has adopted is addressed to the holy

Ghost. It is possessed of no small share of beauty, however; and the reader will doubtless be pleased with an opportunity of comparing the addresses of these antagonist poets together.

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Te causa et regula mundi
Omnipotens, aeterna dei sapientia, virtus,
Et mens, et ratio, vitae dux optima nostra,
Ipsaque lux animi, te solam in vota vocabo,
Hunc ades, et vati longum da ferre laborem.
Per te cuncta suo stant ordine, cuncta vIDERI
Tandem, et nativas possunt emergere ab umbris;
In te discendi nobis innata voluntas
Pascitur, et veri nunquam satiata cupido.
Incute vin dictis, propriamque ueliscere causam.

ANTI-LUCRET. 1. 1.

---

Thee the world's great cause,
And guide omnipotent, eternal source
Of virtue, wisdom, intellect, and soul,
Our life's best leader, and the mind's sole light,
Thee only I invoke! be present now,
And aid thy poet in his vast emprise.

All, all survey'd, from thee, in order due,
Spring from the shades profound of native night.
To thee th' innate desire, the thirst unquench'd
Of truth, of science, guide my panting breast;
Arm then thy bard, and thine own cause avenge.

Ver. 1. ---by gods and men belov'd,
Benevolent VENUS! thou the fail-clad main, &c.

The greater part of this address to Venus has been beautifully translated by Spenfer, and introduced into his Fairy Queen. It occurs in B.iv. cant. 10, and the merit of the passage induces me to transcribe it.

Great Venus! queen of beauty, and of grace,
The joy of gods and men, that under skie
Doost fairest shine, and most adorn thy place;
That with thy smiling looke doost pacifie
The raging seas, and mak'st the storms to fly:
Thee, goddess! thee, the winds, the clowdes de feare;
And, living, hail the cheerful light of day:—

Thee, Goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,
The tempests fly: dedalian Earth to thee

And when thou sparest thy mantle forth on bie,
The waters play, and pleasant lands appeare,
And heavens laugh, and all the world shewes joyous cheer.

Then doth the dedale earth throw forth to thee,
Out of her fruitful lap, abundant flowers:
And then all living wights, soon as they see
The spring break forth out of his lusty bowres,
They all do learn to play the paramours:
First do the merry birds, thy pretty pages,
Privily pricked with thy lustful powres,
Chirp loud to thee out of their leavy cages,
And thee, their mother, call to cooke their kindly rages.

Then do the salvage beasts begin to play
Their pleasant frisks, and loath their wonted food;
The lions roar, the tigers loudly bray;
The raging bulls rebellow thro' the wood,
And, breaking forth, dare tempt the deepest flood,
To come where thou dost draw them with desire:
So all things else that nourish vital blood,
Soone as with fury thou dost them inspire,
In generation seeketh to quench their inward fire.

So all the world by thee at first was made,
And daily yet thou dost the same repair:—
Ne ought on earth that merry is and glad,
Ne ought on earth that lovely is and faire,
But thou the same for pleasure didst prepare.
Thou art the root of all that joyous is,
Great god of men and women, queen of th' ayre,
Mother of laughter, and well-spring of bliss,
O grant that of my love at last I may not misse.

The commencement of this address is also imitated by Sir W. Jones, in the opening of his Caissa:

Thou joy of all below and all above,
Mild Venus, queen of laughter, queen of love,
Leave thy bright island, where on many a rose,
And many a pink, thy blooming train repose.

But it would be impossible to enumerate all the copies, to which, in different languages, this exquis-

site address has given birth. One of the best I have met with in any foreign tongue is that of Metastasio, beginning thus

Scendi propizia
Col tuo splendore
O bella Venere
Madra d'amore:
O bella Venere
Che sola sei
Piacer degli uomini
E degli dei, &c.

It seems probable, however, that Lucretius himself is an imitator in the commencement of this address, and that his eye was directed to the following verses in the orphic hymn to Venus, or Aphrodite:

Πηνα γαρ ἐκ θύσιος ἔτοι—γνως τι τα παρα
Ορχήσας την υπερήφανον ἐστιν καὶ γαλάζιον ταῦτα
Εἰ ποιήσεις τα, βούλω τι.

From thee are all things:—all things spring from thee
In heaven above, the many-peopled earth,
In ocean, or th' abyss.

Ver. 6. Thee, Goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,

The tempests fly:—] Much of Lucretius has been copied or imitated, as I have just observed, by poets in all ages and nations. An obvious imitation of these, and the two following lines, are to be met with in the very beautiful and animated Spanish poem, entitled Araucana, by Alonzo Ercilla, a bard of much celebrity, who flourished towards the close of the sixteenth century, and with whom the English reader is in some measure acquainted, by the abstract Mr. Hayley has given of this gallant and spirited production, in Vol. IV. of his "Poems and Plays." The subject of this epic is the warfare between the Spanish invading troops and the undaunted natives of Arauco, a district in the province of Chili in South America. The Indian demon, Epamanon, had appeared in most fearful array over the Spanish forces,
Submittit flores; tibi rident æquora ponti,
Placatumque nitet diffusum lumine coelum.
Nam, simul ac species patefacta est verna diei,
Et reserata viget genitabilis aura Favonii;

And times and tides to herbs and harvests gives.
Rude savage man forth from the wilds she led,
And bound with social and domestic ties.
What rears the feathery tribes but genial love?
But love, what stings the flocks with fierce desire?

To notice, however, all the copies which have originated from this beautiful address, would be endless.
I will only add the following of Dr. Darwin, both because he admits it to be a copy, in a subjoined note, and because he has copied with spirit. He is describing the approach of Eros or Cupid instead of Venus: the son instead of the mother:

Earth, at his feet, extends her flowery bed,
And bends her silver blossoms round his head;
Dark clouds dissolve, the warring winds subside,
And smiling ocean calms his tossing tide.
O'er the bright noon meridian lustres play,
And heaven salutes him with a flood of day.

Hayley.

A more general imitation still is to be met with in the Fasti of Ovid, as was long ago observed by Bentley, from whose notes Mr. Wakefield has introduced it into his own correct and elegant edition:

Illa quidem totum dignissima temperat orbem,
Illa tenet nullo regna minora deo:
Jurque dat calo, terrae, natalibus undis;
Perque suos initus conscient omne genius.
Illa deos omnes (longum enumerare) creavit;
Illa satis caussas, arboribusque dedit;
Illa rudes animos hominum contraxit in unum,
Et docuit jungi cum pare quemque suâ.
Quid genus omne creavit voluprum, nisi blandas voluptas,
Nec coeënt pecudes, si levis absit Amor?

Fast. iv. 91.

Sublime, she modulates th' attemper'd world,
Nor aught of godhead boasts an ampler sway;
Heaven, earth, and peopled main, her rites profess,
And in her fond embrace all nature lives.
She form'd the gods, in all their number form'd,
Book I.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Pours forth her sweetest flow'rets; Ocean laughs, 
And the blue Heavens in cloudless splendour deck'd. 
For, when the Spring first opes her frolick eye, 
And genial Zephyrs long lock'd up respite,

The morning lark, the messenger of day, 
Saluted, with her song, the morning gray: 
And soon the sun arose with beams so bright, 
That all th' horizon laugh'd to see the joyous sight.

Thus, too, in the Berrathron of Ossian: "When 
"thou comest forth in thy mildness, the gale of 
"the morning is near thy course: the sun laughs 
"in his blue fields; the grey stream winds in its 
"vale."

In the same manner, Gessner, in his "Death of 
Abel," b. 1. Sey uns gegröst du liebliche sonne 
'du giesest farb' und anmuth durch die natur, und 
jede schönheit lachet verjüngt uns wieder entgegen. 
"Welcome once more, thou lovely sun! thou givest 
'colours and graces to all nature; and every beauty 
'laughs with renewed youth around us."

But the boldest copy I have met with of this image 
of Lucretius, is by the Spanish poet Lope de Vega, 
in his Hermosura de Angelica, cant. xiii.

Mueve las hojas de la selva el viento 
Y la risa del agua fugitiva, 
Conciertase con ellas de tal modo 
Que parece que esta cantando todo.

Now shakes the grove's green foliage to the breeze, 
'With laughter shakes the stream's perpetual flight: 
'Tis harmony throughout; and earth and seas 
In songs of loud festivity unite.

These verses have all the force of Oriental poetry, 
and are, perhaps, only exceeded by the following 
energetic and parallel passage of the Psalmist: 

Let the sea shout, and all its fulness; 
The world, and all its inhabitants; 
Let the floods clap their hands, 
And the mountains unite in exctasy, 
At the presence of Jehovah who approacheth.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Aëriæ primum volucres te, Diva, tuumque
Significant initum, perculsæ corda tuâ vi.
Inde fere pecudes persaltant pabula læta,
Et rapidos tranant amneis: ita, capta lepore,
[Inlecebrisque tuis omnis natura animantum]
Te sequitur cupide, quo quamque inducere pergis.
Denique, per maria, ac monteis, fluviosque rapaceis,
Frundiærasque domos avium, camposque virenteis,
Omnibus inuiriens blandum per pectora amorem,
Ecscis, ut cupide generatim secla propagent.

Ver. 12. *Thee, Goddess, then, the aerial birds—*
Mr. Wakefield has justly observed that Virgil has happily imitated this passage in his Georgics:

Avia tum resonant avibus virgulta canoris,
Et Venerem certis repetunt armenta diebus.
Parturit almus ager; zephyrique tepentibus auris
Laxant arva sinus: superat tener omnibus humor:
Inque novos soles audent se gramina tuto
Credere: nec metuit surgentes pampinis austros,
Aut actum coelo magnis aquilonibus imbre:
Sed trudit gemmas, et frondes explicat omnes.

Thus elegantly translated by Mr. Sotheby:

Birds on their branches hymeneals sing,
The pastured meads with bridal echoes ring;
Bath'd in soft dew, and fann'd by western winds,
Each field its bosom to the gale unbinds;
The blade dares boldly rise, new suns beneath,
The tender vine puts forth her flexile warch,
And freed from southern blast, and northern shower,
Spreads without fear each blossom, leaf, and flower.

There is however, I think, a much closer imitation in Georg. ii. 242—245.

The greater part of this address to Venus has likewise been obviously imitated by Statius, a frequent copyist of our poet, in his address to the Terra Mater.

O hominum divumque ætarna creatrix
Quæ fluvios, sylvasque, animasque, et semina mundi
Cuncta, Promethasque manus, Pyrrhaque saxa,
Gignis, et impartis quæ prima alimenta dedisti,
Mutastique viros; quæ pontum ambisque, velisque,
Te penes et pecudum gens mitis, et ira ferarum,
Et volucrum requies; firmum atque immobile mundi
Robur innocidui.

Theb. i. viii.

O source eternal both of gods and men!
Who woods, and floods, and mortals, and the seeds
Rear’dst of the world—the stones, and plastic hand
Of Pyrrha and Prometheus, and the stores,
First given, renew’st—renew’st the race of man,
And round the main thy mighty bound propell’st;
The flock’s gay gambols, and the forest-ire,
The lull of birds, alike thou sway’st supreme,
The firm, first pillar of the restless world.

But Statius, and most other imitators of Lucretius,
are exceeded by Petrarch, in the following admirable verses:
Book I.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

13

Thee, Goddess, then, th' aerial birds confess,
To rapture stung through every shiv'ring plume:
Thee, the wild herds; hence, o'er the joyous glebe
Bounding at large; or, with undaunted chest,
Stemming the torrent tides. Through all that lives
So, by thy charms, thy blandishments o'erpower'd,
Springs the warm wish thy footsteps to pursue:
Till through the seas, the mountains, and the floods,
The verdant meads, and woodlands fill'd with song,
Spurr'd by desire each palpitating tribe
Hastes, at thy shrine, to plant the future race.

Zephiro torna, e'll bel temps rimena;
E i fiori, e l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia;
E garrir progne, e pianger filomena;
E primavera candida, e vermiglia.
Ridono i prati; e' l ciel si rasseren;
Giove s'allegra di mirar sua figlia;
L'aria, e l'acqua, e la terra è d'amor piena,
Ogni animal d'amor si riconciglia.

Now zephyr sports, and spring's delicious hours
Lead forth the lovely tribes of herbs and flow'rs.
Now prates the swallow—philomel complains,
O'er every field the white, the vermil reigns:
Bends the pure heaven its azure arch serene,
And ether laughs, enraptur'd at the scene.
O'er earth, air, ocean, Love triumphant sways,
All Nature feels him, and each breast obeys.

Ver. 12. —th' aerial birds—] Hence Pope, with
a reference well worthy of himself:
Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground.

Ver. 13. To rapture stung through every shiv'ring
plume:] To the same effect, Thomson:
'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;

That c'en to birds, and beasts, the tender arts
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love
Can dictate; and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls;—
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

Of the entire passage, the following is a more gen-
eral imitation, by Mr. Roucher, in his “Months:”

L'amour vole, il a pris son essor vers la terre:
Depuis l'oiseau qui plane au foyer du tonnerre,
Jusqu'aux monstres errans sous les flots orageux,
Tout reconnaît l'amour, tout brille de ces feux.
Dans un gras pâturage, il dessèche, il consume
Le coursier inondé d'une bouillante écume ;
Le livre tout entier aux fourants des désirs,
De ses larges naseaux qu'il présente aux zéphyrs,
L'animal, arrêté sur les monts de la Thrace,
De son épouse errante interroge la trace.
Ses esprits vagabonds l'ont à peine frappé,
Il part, il franchit tout, fleuve, mont escarpe,
Précipice, torrent, désert; rien ne l'arrête;
Il arrive, il triomphe, et, fier de sa conquête,
Les yeux étincelans, repose à ses côtés.

Chant. V.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Quæ quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas,
Nec sine te quidquam dias in luminis oras
Exoritur, neque fit lætum neque amabile quidquam;
Te sociam studeo scribundis versibus esse,
Quos ego de rerum natura pangere conor
Memmiadæ nostro; quem tu, Dea, tempore in omni
Omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus:
Quo magis æternum da dictis, Diva, leporem.
Ecifice, ut interea fera moênera militiai,
Par maria ac terras omnis, sopita, quiescant.
Nam tu sola potes tranquillà pace juvare
Mortaleis: quoniam belli fera moênera Mavors

Love flies—and earth his mighty influence shares;
From the bold bird th’ electric flash that dares,
Deep to the monsters that in ocean dwell,
All feel his force, and with his fury swell.
O’er the rich glebe he fires the courser’s blood,
Bathes him in foam, and plunges in the flood;
Stung with desire he snorts th’ aérial tide,
And o’er the Thracian hills demands his bride.
Her breath scarce scented, barriers all are vain,
Cliffs, forests, cataracts, no more restrain:
He flies, he finds, he triumphs, and, oppress,
With eyes still sparkling, yields his limbs to rest.

Ver. 27. To Memmius’ view—] Caius Memmius Gemellus, a fellow-student of Lucretius at Athens. The family of the Memmii were of high antiquity, and of very deserved renown among the Romans. Virgil thought proper to pay them a compliment by representing them as descendants from Mnestheus, who commanded one of the four ships that opened the naval games he has described in his Æneid.

Velocem Mnestheus agit acri remige Pristin,
Mox Italus Mnestheus, genus à quo nomine Memmi.

Mnestheus commands the Pristis, swift of oar,
Italian Mnestheus, whence the Memmius spring.

The Memmius whose patronage Lucretius here bespeaks, arrived at different and distinguished dignities in the Roman republic. During his praetorship he obtained the government of the province of Bithynia, and was afterwards appointed one of the tribunes of the people; an office his uncle had held with the highest reputation to himself, and benefit to the republic. It was this elder Memmius who first excited the Roman citizens to investigate the infamous conduct of Jugurtha, and accused the senate of venality and corruption. He procured an order for the former to be summoned to the forum, from the very center of the kingdom of Numidia; and boldly reprimanded him, when he appeared before the people, for his iniquitous conduct. But the city that, a few years afterwards, banished the virtuous Metellus, was already unworthy of the patriotic and undaunted spirit of Caius Memmius. He fell a sacrifice to the lawless violence of Apuleius and Glaucia, during the comitia for the election of consuls, to which office these ambitious desperadoes were fearful he would have been chosen.
Since, then, with universal sway thou rul’st,
And thou alone; nor aught without thee springs,
Aught gay or lovely; thee I woo to guide
Aright my flowing song, that aims to paint
To Memmius’ view the essences of things:
Memmius, my friend, by thee, from earliest youth,
O Goddess! led, and train’d to every grace.
Then, O, vouchsafe thy favour, power divine!
And with immortal eloquence inspire.
Quell, too, the fury of the hostile world,
And lull to peace, that all the strain may hear.
For peace is thine: on thy soft bosom he,

For a farther account of Caius Memmius Gemellus,
I refer the reader to the life of Lucretius, prefixed
to this volume.

Ver. 32. Quell, too, the fury of the hostile world, &c.]
An ancient commentator upon Statius has justly com-
mended this and the two ensuing verses of Lucretius,
in an annotation upon the following passage, which
is hence obviously borrowed:

O! mitis bellorum reqüies, et sacra voluptas,
Uaunque pax animo; soli cui tanta potestas
Divorumque, hominumque meis occurrere telis
Impune, et mediâ quamvis in exâde frementes
Hoc assistere equos, hunc ensim avellere dextra.

O thou, my balm in war, my dear delight,
And mind’s sole quiet—thou, of gods and men,
Unhurt my fatal arms alone who dar’st,—
Dar’st, in the rage of battle, from the chief
To snatch th’ uplifted sword, or, with prompt aid,
Succour th’ affrighted courser.—

Ver. 34. — on thy soft bosom he, &c.] The de-
scription of this amour is voluptuous, without being

indelicate: and on this latter account more especially,
Lucretius has very considerably the advantage of
either Ariosto or Tasso. Milton perhaps, but Mil-
ton alone, excels him, in his picture of the loves of our
first parents, in the garden of Eden. The purity of
this painting is indeed only equalled by its elegance.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unprov’d,
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean’d
On our first father: half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid. He, in delight
Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,
Smiled with superior love, and press’d her lips
With kisses pure.

Par. Lost, iv. 493.

Camões, who, as I have observed before (see Note
on ver. 1.), has imitated Lucretius in attributing to
Venus the power of tranquillizing every storm, and
restoring happiness to nature, probably had his eye
also directed to this elegant delineation of the same
deity, in his account of her approach to Jupiter, with
a petition in favour of De Gama. The painting is
DE RERUM NATURA. Lib. I.

Armipotens regit, in gremium qui sãpe tuum se Rejicit, æterno devictus volnere amoris:
Atque ita, suspiciens tereti cervice repostâ,
Pascit amore avidos, inhiens in te, Dea, visus;

Then thus the sire, by love eternal struck.
In the following of Petrarc, the similitude is equal,
but results from a different idea:
Ma le ferite impresse
Volgon per forza il cor peggato altrove
Ond’io divento smorto;
E’l sangue si nasconde, i non so dove.
The wounds she then made me sustain
Fix’d my wandering heart on the fair;
I grew pale through each limb with the pain,
And my blood fled—I cannot tell where.

Ver. 38. On thee he feeds his longing lingering eyes]
In the original, “pascit amore avidos—visus,” literally
“feeds his voracious eyes with love.” Thus
Virgil, adopting the same metaphor,
—annim pictura pascit inani.
He, with th’ unsolid picture, feeds his mind.

And Claudian, with a still closer reference to Lucretius:
Illecebris captur, nimiumque elatus, avaro
Pasitus intuivi.
Rufin. i. 164.

Her charms entrance him, and, with love elate,
He feeds his eyes voracious.

This elegant comparison of the fascinating power
of love to a delicious and intoxicating feast, has by
no means been disregarded by modern poets: but, in
general, the latter have rather employed the intishi-
cating cup, in their similes, than the more solid viands
of the banquet; a deviation which Apuleius set
an early example. Thus, lib. iii. of his Transformation
into an Ass: Admissis et sorbilantibus suaviis,
sitienter hausríbant; “Thirsty I drank the soft con-
cealed kisses.” And thus Boccaccio: E non accur-
gendoni, riguardandola, dell’ amoroso veleno, che egli
con gli occhi beveva. Alatiel. “Unconscious, while
The warlike field who sways, almighty Mars,
Struck by triumphant Love’s eternal wound,
Reclines full frequent: with uplifted gaze
On thee he feeds his longing, ling’ring eyes.

“he beheld her, of the amorous poison which he
drank in with his eyes.”

Among the Asiatics this imagery is extremely common; and many of their most favourite metaphors are hence derived. Thus Ferdusi, in his Shah Nameh:

لِب پُراز مِی ببوي كلااب

Lips sweet as wine, and fragrant as the rose.

So Hafiz, the pride of the bowers of Shiraz, with more amplification still:

برخ ساثی پرپیکد
هیچکو حافظ بنوش باده ناب

Drink then kisses sweet as wine
From thy favourite damsel’s cheek;
Never shall her like be thine,
Though through paradise thou seek.

In my notes on the Song of Songs, I have given many other instances of the same figure. Solomon himself was indeed equally attached to it. Thus in the opening apostrophe of the royal bride, Chap. i. 1.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;
For thy love is delicious above wine.

And again, in the following passage, in which the simile equally refers to both eating and drinking; the royal lover, having previously compared his fair bride to a garden or paradise of sweets, on which he was pining to banquet, Chap. ii. 8.

Eat, O my friend! drink,
Yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved!

Perhaps the most exquisite simile of this kind that occurs in modern poetry is to be found in the elegant and well-known song of B. Jonson, generally sung as a glee. It is a direct imitation indeed from the Greek of Philostratus, but the copy is superior to its original; and there is a degree of moral truth and sublimity in the two first lines of the following stanza, which elevates them above all praise.

Vol. I.

The thirst that in the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine.

In the following, Mr. Sotheby proves that he is by no means an unapt scholar in the imitative arts. It occurs in his spirited and harmonious version of Wieland’s Oberon; but its merit is certainly, for the most part, his own; the idea conveyed in the original not exactly corresponding to the imagery exhibited in the translation. The passage is a part of the sixth canto of this fanciful and highly finished poem, and occupies the 54th stanza of the German.

Sie ist nun ganz für Hülm neugeboren,
Gab alles, was sie war, für ihn, &c.

Amanda, too, o’erpower’d with fond desires,
To long-lost joys restor’d, thus warmly press’d,
Resigns herself, caressing and carest,
To each warm kiss that wak’ning passion fires.

His mouth the never-sated draught renew’d,
And from her lip, in sweet voluptuous dew,
Drinks deep oblivion of foreboded woes.

Such are the beauties to which the imagery, and, in some instances, the immediate passage before us, has given birth. The following, however, is an example of false taste, and a case in which it ought not to have been copied. It occurs in the Syphilis of Fracastorio, a poem which is nevertheless possessed of much general merit.

Ulcera (pro le divum pietatem!) informia pulchros
Pacebant aculeas, et dix necis amorem.

Pacebant acri corrosas vulnera nares. L. i.

Foul ulcers fed (kind heav’ns!) the beauteous eye,
The day’s sweet lustre; fed, with acrid grume,
Th’ eroded nostrils.

This passage requires no comment. The absurdity of applying a metaphor, that should be sacred to delicate and agreeable subjects alone, to so foul and fetid an exhibition, must be obvious to every one.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
Hunc tu, Diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
Circumfusa super, suaveis ex ore loquelas
Funde, petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem.
Nam neque nos agere hoc patriaì tempore iniquo
Possumus aquo animo; nec Memmii clara propago
Talibus in rebus communi deesse saluti.

Quod super est, vacuas aureis mihi, Memmius, et te,
Semotum a curis, adhibe veram ad rationem:
Ne mea dona, tibi studio disposta fideli,
Intellecta prius quam sint, contempta relinquas.
Nam tibi de summâ coelì ratione deumque

In quoting the whole of this description, with high commendation, I am surprised that this manifest incongruity should have escaped, as it has done, the eagle eye of Dr. Warton. See his Reflections on Didactic Poetry.

Ver. 39. And all his soul hangs quivering from thy lips.)
It is as little possible to do justice to the original of this line as of the foregoing, v. 38.
Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
An idea somewhat analogous is to be found in ede vii. of Anacreon.
Καρδίαν ὑπὸ μοις αἰχμῶν
Ἀδιηκόντα καὶ αἰτίωσαν.
Now to my lips my heart was flying,
And all my quivering soul was dying.
But perhaps the nearest approximation, in point of merit, is to be traced in the justly celebrated ode of Sappho, so admirably translated by Catullus into Latin, and by Phillips into our own language:

—τοιοι ταοι
Καρδίαν εν στόματα επιτραπέταιν
Ως ἐνοι στραγγοντ' ἐκοι γνωριανης
Οὖν ἐστιν ο섰ην.

'Twas this bereav'd my soul of rest,
And rais'd such tumults in my breast;
For while I gaz'd, in transport toss'd,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

It has generally been allowed that the whole of this exquisite invocation is original. St. Pierre is the only critic I have met with who does our poet the injustice to contend, that it is a copy; and the reader will smile when he is informed that the worthy Abbé suspects him to have been pilfering from the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus. The passage to which he refers is contained in chap. 24, from ver. 5 to ver. 27. Of this sublime delineation he has given a version in French prose, as he has also of the present address of Lucretius, for a companion with each other; and having finished the former, he thus concludes:

"Cette foible traduction est celle d'une prose Latine qui a été traduite elle-même du Grec, comme le Grec l'a été lui-même de l'Hebreu. On doit donc présumer que la grâce de l'original en ont disparu en partie. Mais telle qu'elle est, elle l'emporte encore, par l'agrément et la sublimité des images sur les vers de Lucrèce qui paraît en avoir emprunté ses principales beautés." Etudes de la Nature, Tom. ii. etud. 8. I freely confess that I have met
THE NATURE OF THINGS.

And all his soul hangs quiv'ring from thy lips.
O! while thine arms in fond embraces clasp
His panting members, sov'reign of the heart!
Ope thy bland voice, and intercede for Rome.
For, while th' unsheathed sword is brandish'd, vain
And all unequal is the poet's song;
And vain th' attempt to claim his patron's ear.

Son of the Memmii! thou, benignant, too,
Freed from all cares, with vacant ear attend;
Nor turn, contemptuous, ere the truths I sing,
For thee first harmoniz'd, are full perceiv'd.
Lo! to thy view I spread the rise of things;

with such frequent parallelisms of expression, of figure and phrasology, in Lucretius, with what occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, of which the reader will find many pointed out to him as he proceeds, that I am myself half-tempted to believe the Roman poet was no stranger, either to their existence, or their bold poetic beauties: yet I can trace no sufficient similarity between the passages in question, to render it, in my own opinion, probable that the one is a copy of the other. Let the reader, however, consult for himself. If Lucretius were in reality acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, it was perhaps by means of some persons of this nation, who were resident at Rome, through which city great numbers of Jews were at this period scattered, as there were also throughout all Greece, and almost every part of the Roman dependencies. It was probably from the same source that Virgil, not long afterwards, derived his knowledge of the prophecies of Isaiah; and Longinus, still later, his acquaintance with the cosmogony of Moses. It should be remembered also, that the Hebrew Scriptures had been long translated into Greek, by the seventy interpreters, who flourished in the reign of Ptolemy, and executed their version at his express desire. In consequence of which Dr. Warton openly asserts, that Theocritus was well acquainted with this version, and copied largely from the Song of Songs into his own Idylls. Dr. Hodgson, indeed, maintains the same with respect to Anacreon: but it is often difficult to distinguish between original parallelisms and imitations; and hence the following, from Thomson, may or may not be a copy:

—Who can speak
The mingl'd passions that surpris'd his heart,
And through his nerves in shiv'ring transport ran?

Autumn, 255.

Ver. 43. For, 'while th' unsheathed sword is brandish'd.—' For an account of the probable period of time when Lucretius began his poem on the Nature of Things, see note on ver. 1. of this book. His address to Venus, for the restoration of permanent peace, was not, however, attended with much success; since for more than half a century after the termination of the Jugurthine war, the republic was still violently and perpetually agitated by the ambi-
Dissere incipiam, et rerum primordia pandam;  
Unde omnes natura creet res, auctet, alatque;  
Quoque eadem rursum natura perempta resolvat:  
Quae nos materiem et genitalia corpora rebus 
Reddundâ in ratione vocare, et semina rerum  
Adpellare suëmus, et hæc eadem usurpare  
Corpora prima, quod ex illis sunt omnia primis.  

[Omnis enim per se divôm natura necesse est  
Inmortalii ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,

Ver. 57. Far, far from mortals, &c.] It is much doubted by some of the best commentators, whether the six lines in the original, answering to the present and five following verses, be not an interpolation, or, at least, erroneously introduced by transcribers into the present place. They, at least, discover a certain want of connection with both the antecedent and succeeding sentences. They are not, says Mr. W. Wakefield, to be found in many copies both manuscript and printed; certainly not in the manuscript at Verona, nor in three other copies which I have collected in this country. Bentley regarded them as introduced in this place unconnectedly, and without any reference. And in the margin of the Cambridge manuscript, some ancient annotator has written, "These six verses are transposed into this position from Book II. not on the authority of the poet, but from the ignorance of his copyists." It is on this account they are included, in the original, in brackets; a mark which is here, and in several other places, designed to express a doubt.

They contain, however, the idea of ease and tranquillity, which Homer had long before represented as the common inheritance of the popular gods; although, according to the latter, this tranquillity was sometimes interrupted by contests among themselves, as well as by the daring obstinacy and opposition of mankind: but, excepting in such casual instances of mental commotion, they were omnì vita œctùs, Dii tranquillibus viventes, or, as Mr. Pope expresses it,

Immortals blest with endless ease.

A passage, the Greek of which Milton perhaps had in his recollection, when he wrote in his Paradise Lost,

—Thou wilt bring me soon  
To that new world of light and bliss, among  
The gods who live at ease.  

Silius Italicus was impressed with the same idea; and hence, in describing the deity, says

Imperturbatì placitus tenet otia mente.  
Calm is his quiet, undisturb’d his mind.

The “immortal gods” of the Epicurean system are, however, of a very different description from those of the Greek and Roman populace, and are no where in the poem before us represented as the creators of the world, or as objects of religious worship. They appear, indeed, to be the very same order of existences as the “gods” of Milton, created and blessed spirits, endowed with endless duration, and possessed of far superior faculties to man. They are, therefore, as different from the popular deities of Greece and Rome, as these last are from the christian...
Book I.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.  21

Unfold th’ immortals, and their blest abodes:
How Nature all creates, sustains, matures,
And how, at length, dissolves; what forms the mass,
Term’d by the learned, Matter, Seeds of Things,
And generative Atoms, or, at times
Atoms primordial, as hence all proceeds.

Far, far from mortals, and their vain concerns,
In peace perpetual dwell th’ immortal Gods:
Each self-dependent, and from human wants

orders of angels and archangels. Respecting the essence of these angelic beings Lucretius seems in some measure undetermined. In Book V. 154, he represents them as totally uncompounded of matter, and consequently incapable of either affecting or being affected by material bodies, from the want of some common property.

For their immortal nature far remov’d
From human sense, from matter gross and dull,
Scarce by the mind’s pure spirit can be trace’d.
* * * * *
And, thus, th’ immortal regions must from ours
Wide vary, congruous to their purer frames.

Yet in Book vi. 77, he obviously intimates, that by profound meditation, and abstraction from the world, the solitary soul may attain some slender knowledge of the essence of these pure spirits; and imbibe some portion of their tranquillity and happiness. He asserts, in various places, consistently with the doctrine of species or effluences developed in Book iv. that effigies of these divinities are perpetually flowing from their persons. In Book v. 1192, he expressly declares that mankind, in the commencement of the world, before the mind was distracted by an infinitude of cares and occupations, traced these effigies not unfrequently amidst their solitary musings, and were conscious of their presence in their midnight dreams. And he informs us, in many places, that

Epicurus was much accustomed to such religious abstractions; and that by such abstractions he became divinely illuminated. The whole system, indeed, bears the most obvious resemblance, as I have before observed, to that of Milton in his Paradise Lost, excepting that Lucretius, far from assigning to his divinities the superintendence of the planets, represents them as totally unaffected by every transaction that occurs. For a farther account of this system, the reader may consult the prefixed life of our poet.

Epicurus, however, was not the only philosopher of ancient Greece who admitted the existence of such an order of secondary gods as is here referred to. Plato allowed the same, and apparently to a much greater extent in point of number. Like Epicurus, moreover, he conceived that, although they were the production of the supreme and ineffable principle, they were at the same time self-existent, and independent. Between the two propositions, of creation and self-existence, there seems indeed to be no small degree of discrepancy: but how far the attributes of self-existence and independence may be bestowed on any order of created beings, by the Creator himself, it is not perhaps for our limited capacities to ascertain completely. It is sufficient to observe, on the present occasion, that several of the Greek philosophers appear to have imagined that it was not only possible but actual.
Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunetaque longe;  
Nam, privata dolore omni, privata periclis,  
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,  
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur irâ.]  

Humana ante oculos fede quem vita jaceret  
In terris, obpressa gravi sub Religione;  
Quae caput a coeli regionibus obtendebat,  
Horribili super adspectu mortalibus instans;  
Primum Graius homo mortaleis tollere contra  
Est oculos ausus, primusque obsistere contra:

Ver. 62. *Flee no revenge, no capture virtue prompts.*]  
This verse has given great offence to many of the  
commentators, who appear to have been incapable of  
separating the idea of the immortals, whom our poet  
supposes to exist, like the angels or archangels of the  
Christian system, in the possession of all felicity, but  
nevertheless as secondary powers alone, from the idea  
of one eternal and intelligent First Cause. Lanctantius,  
therefore, bursts forth into the following: *animadversion*  
upon what he erroneously conceived to be its  
tendency: *Dissolvitur autem religio si credamus Epicuro illa dicenti.* De Ir. Dis. 8. *All religion  
vanishes from us the moment we credit this pro-  
position of Epicurus.* But, independently of this  
conception relative to their blessed or immaterial  
spirits, the Epicureans never believed that the Deity,  
or the First Cause himself, at any time, interfered  
with the moral world; since such an interference  
would, in their opinion, have been at once subservive  
of the free-agency of the mind, and have reduced  
mankind to so many passive machines. Epicurus,  
says a writer who was well versed in his system,  
taught, that whatever relates to moral actions, God  
ever attempts to controul, but only what relates to  
the nature of the physical world: *καὶ Ἐπικουρὸς ἔδω κατ' ἔκ-  
νεαν, ἡ μὲν πρὸς τὰς πολλὰς ἀπολογίας ἔδω, ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὰ ὄν ῥεῖν  

Ver. 65. *the gloomy power  
Of Superstition scowled.*] The word  
here translated *superstition* is in the original *religion*,  
and has generally, to the present time, been rendered  
by the translators of our poet in every language, *re-  
ligion.* Even Marchetti has followed the common  
example.  

Giacea l'umania vita oppressa e stanca  
Sotto religion grave e severa.  
And much odium has been thrown upon the Roman  
bard, for the impiety he is here supposed to exhibit.  
But without minutely entering at present into the  
thecology of the Epicureans, it is obvious, from the  
instante he shortly afterwards addsuces,—that, I  
mean, of the sacrifice of Iphigenia,—that the religion  
to which he immediately adveris is the superstitious  
tenets and practices that were popular among his own  
countrymen, and the pagan world at large. And  
surely there could be no impiety in ridiculing such a  
senseless mass of religion as this; since atheism itself  
must have been far less impious than the doctrines  
it inculcated.  

It is but just, however, to observe that Evelyn
Estrang’d for ever. There, nor pain pervades,
Nor danger threatens; every passion sleeps;
Vice no revenge, no rapture virtue prompts.

\[\text{Not thus Mankind. Them long the tyrant power}\]
\[\text{Of Superstition sway’d, uplifting proud}\]
\[\text{Her head to heaven, and with horrific limbs}\]
\[\text{Brooding o’er earth; till he, the man of Greece,}\]
\[\text{Auspicious rose, who first the combat dar’d,}\]
\[\text{And broke in twain the monster’s iron rod.}\]

has translated the passage more accurately, and forms
the only exception to the remark just made, among
the interpreters in our own language.

Whilst sometimes human life dejected lay
On earth, under gross superstition’s sway.
The Baron de Coutures, in his French version, has
also adopted the term; and Voltaire, in adverting to
the incident which comprises the episode that im-
mediately follows, and whose verses the reader will
find quoted in the note on ver. 110 of this book,
with perhaps more emphasis still, has employed the
term funnulceum; a passion which he correctly per-
sonifies, and represents as the unnatural offspring of
religion, the immediate source of every barbarous and
inhuman rite. Henriade, chant. v.

Ver. 66. —tilt be, the man of Greece,
Auspicious rose, who first the combat dar’d.]
Epicurus,—the founder of the sect of philosophers
who were called by his name, and whose system forms
the subject of the present poem. This great and
virtuous man has been more unjustly calumniated than
perhaps any man that ever existed. The purity of
his moral precepts were unexceptionable; and his
own mode of living, instead of having led, as it is
generally represented, to every species of impiety and
debauchery, was uniformly coincident with them,
and hence at all times most chaste and temperate.
His attachment to his country was most ardent; and
his piety most exemplary. In life, and in death, he
was a pattern well worthy the imitation of mankind
in every age and country. Epicurus was born in the
109th olympiad, the 3d year from the death of Plato.
He was, as we learn from Diogenes, the son of Necoles
and Cherestrata, of the illustrious family of the
Philaides at Athens. At the age of eighteen, he
commenced his philosophic studies in this renowned
city, about the era of the death of Alexander, and
the meridian life and splendour of Xenocrates and
Aristotle. Having acquired a high celebrity for in-
telligence and profound research, he instituted at
Athens, when about the age of thirty, a new
school, and propounded to crowded audiences his
own more simple system. For the great outlines
of this he was indebted to Leucippus and Democritus,
the oldest philosophers of the atomic class. Many
of the principles of these earlier sages, however, he
totally discarded; and added, at the same time, se-
veral to the original system. For a farther account
of his life, his frugality, and virtue, I refer the reader
to the biography of Lucretius prefixed to this poem.
Epicurus died of an inflammation from a stone in the
bladder, in the 127th olympiad, and the 72d year of
his age.
Quem neque fana deûm, nec fulmina, nec minitanti
Murmure compressit cœlum; sed eo magis acrem
Inritât animi virtutem, ecfringere ut arta
Naturæ primus portarum claustra cupiret.
Ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra
Processit longe flammantia mœnia mundi;
Atque omne inmensum peragravit mente animoque:
Unde refert nobis victor, quid possit oriri,
Quid nequeat; finita potestas denique quoique
Quâ nam sit ratione, atque alte terminus hærens.
Quâ re Religio, pedibus subjecta, vicissim
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cœlo.
Illud in hiis rebus vereor, ne forte rearis
Inpia te rationis inire elementa, viamque
Indugredi sceleris; quod contra sœpius illa
Religio peperit scelerosa atque inpia facta.
Aulide quo pacto Triviaï virginis aram
Iphianassai turparunt sanguine fede
Ductores Danaûm delecti, prima virorum:

Ver. 73. — the flaming walls
Of heav'n to scale,— It is by this appellation our poet beautifully describes the ethereal or superior portion of the atmosphere of the mundane system, which bounds, as with a sapphire wall, the whole of its vast contents. For a more full and philosophic meaning, however, of this expression, the reader may turn to note on ver. 1112 of the present book. Gray has obviously imitated this verse of Lucretius, in his Progress of Poesy:
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time.
No thunder him, no fell revenge pursu’d
Of heaven incens’d, or deities in arms.
Urg’d rather, hence, with more determin’d soul,
To burst through Nature’s portals, from the crowd
With jealous caution clos’d; the flaming walls
Of heaven to scale, and dart his dauntless eye,
Till the vast whole beneath him stood display’d.
Hence taught he us, triumphant, what might spring,
And what forbear: what powers inherent lurk,
And where their bounds, and issues. And, hence, we,
Triumphant, too, o’erSuperstition rise,
Contemn her terrors, and unfold the heavens.

Nor deem the truths Philosophy reveals
Corrupt the mind, or prompt to impious deeds.
No: Superstition may, and nought so soon,
But Wisdom never. Superstition ’twas
Urg’d the fell Grecian Chiefs, with virgin blood,
To stain the virgin altar. Barbarous deed!
And fatal to their laurels! Aulis saw,
For there Diana reigns, th’ unholy rite.
Around she look’d; the pride of Grecian maids,

And Milton, at least equally impressed with its
beauty, has dilated upon it as follows:
Far off th’ empyreal heaven extended wide,
With opal towers, and battlements adorn’d,
Of living sapphire.

Ver. 89. Around she look’d; the pride of Grecian
maids,] This little episode is well selected,
and inimitably related. On the subject it is designed
to exemplify, it is altogether to the point. It was a
story well known to the world, from the time of
Homer to Euripides, from whom Lucretius has bor-
Quo simul infula, virgineos circumdata comptus,  
Ex utrâque pari maloram parte profusa est;

rewed many of his most delicate touches. But he has given the entire tale a different, and, in my judgment, a more natural action, as well as one more consistent with the narration of the best historians. Instead of painting that sorrow and affliction of mind which our poet has here so correctly delineated, Euripides gives the unfortunate princess the character of a heroine, voluntarily offering herself as a victim for the good of her country, and of Greece at large.

The Greek tragedian has also introduced a different termination, and represented the fair victim as removed by a miracle from the sacred grove, at the moment she was on the point of being immolated, and her place supplied by a deer, provided by Diana in her stead: in which latter fiction he has been followed by Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, book xii. This story is generally supposed to be derived from that of Jephthah, so pathetically related in the book of Judges; and from the resemblance of the names, as also from Jephthah's having lived at the era of the siege of Troy, it is probable both memoirs are derived from one common source. The sacred historian, however, coincides in the catastrophe introduced by Lucretius, and represents the unhappy victim as actually sacrificed: but he agrees with Euripides, in attributing to her the heroism of a voluntary surrender. The following is the description of the Grecian dramatist, which, though highly beautiful, is not superior to that of our own poet:

The fable is undoubtedly well calculated for dramatic representation; and the moderns have had recourse to it almost as frequently as the ancients. The corresponding drama of Buchanan, as derived more immediately from the account given in the sacred Scriptures, is entitled "Jephthe;" but in his catastrophe he has equally departed from his own copy, as well as from Lucretius; following the footsteps and peripatia of Euripides and Ovid. In his elegant description of his heroine, however, whom he denominates Iphis, he has been chiefly indebted to our own poet, having minutely copied almost every trait in the text before us. Iphis, in the drama of Buchanan, having taken a pathetic farewell of her parents, in which she alludes to her own maturity of age, and the bridal hopes that had so lately surrounded her, is thus exquisitely painted, on the very verge of fate.
The lovely Iphigenia, round she look'd,—
Her lavish tresses, spurning still the bond
Of sacred fillet, flaunting o'er her cheeks,—

Quum staret aras ante tristis victima,
Jam destinata virgo, purpureum decus
Per alba fudit ora virgineus pudor,
Cætus viriles intuerie insolens ;
Ut si quis Indum purpura violet ebur,
Rosasve niveis misconet cum lilias.
Sed se per ora cum pudore fuderat
Perspicua certe juncta vis fiducia,
Interque sventes sola fetibus carens,
Metu remisso constitu firma, ac sui
Secura fati : quas tenebat lachrymas
Propinqua morti virgo, populus non tenet.
Alium parentis beneficium recens movet,
Et servitutis patriæ exemptum jugum,
Et solitudo familie clarissima.
Alius acerbam sortis ingemuit vicem,
Longoque lucet, breve redemptum gaudium,
Raroque stabilem rebus in laetis fidem.
Florem juvenæ deflet ille, ct siderum
Similes ocellos, æmulamque auro comam,
Supraque sexum pectoris constantiam.
Et forte solito gratiorem afflaverat
Natura honorem, cu supra monere
Dignata funus nobilis viraginis.
Ut jam ruentis aquor in Tartessium
Phæbi recedens esse gratior solet
Splendor, roseæque vere supremo halitus
Colorque cupidas detinet oculos magis :
Sic virgo fati stat supremo in limine
Parata morti.
As near the altar stood the victim sad,
The destin'd maid,—o'er either cheek so chaste
Spread the wide blush of modesty—unwont
Thus to be compass'd by the throngs of men.
So o'er the iv'ry flows the clear carmine,
So roses oft with snow-white lilies blend.
But, with the virgin blush, spread too the power,
O'er all her visage, of triumphant faith.
Firm stood she, fearless of her fate; with eye
Down cast and tearless; tearless she alone
At this dread hour, while all around her wept.
Some urg'd her sire's heroic deeds of late,
Our country freed from bondage by his arms,
Himself now childless, and his race extinct.
These sigh'd, full deep, o'er fortune's cruel course!
How short is bliss, though bought with endless grief!
How all unstable every joy of man!
While those her flower of youth deplor'd—her eyes
Radiant as stars, her hair that rivel'd gold,
And the firm courage that her sex excell'd:
While happily Nature, with superior charms
Had thus endow'd her at the last sad hour,
To prove how fair an offering she could boast.
As seems the sun more precious, when at eve
His last look trembles o'er the western waves,
And sweeter smells the rose, and lovelier far
Unfolds its blossoms, when the spring retires:
So on the threshold of impending fate
Stood she, prepar'd for death.

The best dramatic piece I have ever met with, de-
derived from the same source, next to this of Buchanan,
is Racine's. It is modelled for the modern stage, and
has often been exhibited with success. Euripides is
the entire source from which the French poet has
drawn his characters. He has considerably, how-
ever, changed that of Achilles; but the piece derives
no benefit from the alteration. With the former, the
Grecian hero is neither a lover of Iphigenia, nor has
ever entertained an idea of marrying her. A report
to this effect is indeed determined upon, in a council
of the Grecian chiefs, at which Achilles was not pre-
sent, but merely to obtain the consent of Clytem-
estra, the mother of Iphigenia, to her daughter's
being conveyed to Aulis; where both the ladies,
agreeably to the directions sent them, arrive shortly
afterwards; and, on meeting with Achilles, accost
him in the character they conceived he was sustain-
ing. A mutual and excessive surprize succeeds: for
Achilles had not even heard of the stratagem by
Et moestum simul ante aras adstare parentem
Sensit, et hunc propter ferrum celerare ministros,

which Iphigenia was thus decoyed. Without having any design of uniting himself with her, he nevertheless quarrels most vehemently with the whole synod of Grecian chiefs, for thus presuming to employ his name on so base an occasion; and advises, but unsuccessfully, to set sail without offering so precious a sacrifice.

Racine, on the contrary, has made Achilles a most violent admirer of Iphigenia, and represents their marriage as on the point of being solemnized, at the very moment when Calchas, the priest, announces the fatal demand of Diana. He represents, also, Iphigenia as resolved, at all adventures, notwithstanding the delirious affection of Achilles, and her own anterior vows of attachment, to submit heroically to the doom decreed her: nor is she to be deterred from self-consecration by the sighs of her mother, or the frantic declarations of the Grecian chiefstain, who threatens, if she suffer herself to be thus destroyed, and the gods be panting for human blood, that he will immediately afterwards immolate the priest who is to sacrifice her, and even her own father, by whose consent alone she is to suffer. There is more rant, indeed, in this speech than Racine is in the habit of introducing:

Si de sang et de morts le ciel est affamé
Jamais de plus de sang ses autels n’ont flammé.
A mon aveugle amour tout sera legitime:
Le prêtre deviendra la première victime:
Le bûcher, par mes mains détruit et renversé,
Dans le sang des bourreaux nagera dispersé.
Et s’, dans les horreurs de ce désordre extrême,
Votre père frappé tombe, et perit lui-même,
Alors, de vos respects, voyant les tristes fruits,
Reconnoissoyez les coups que vous aurez conduits.

Such is the opposite and irreconcilable difference between the bombast of inflated and unnatural passion, and the plain, unvarnished narration of Lucretius. Achilles, however, in the Iphigenia of Racine, is fortunately excused from committing this terrible carnage, by the well-known substitute of a deer: for, as the victim is on the immediate point of being sacrificed, the priest becomes filled with a divine and secret dread, the heavens are loaded with signs and wonders, and this other and more pertinent victim is instantly disclosed.

A tragedy on the same subject was written, a few years afterwards, in France, by Le Clerc, assisted by his friend Coras. This dramatic composition I have never had an opportunity of reading; but either its intrinsic merit was but small, or the envy of Racine was very great on the occasion, since he gave himself the trouble of writing the following epigram on its appearance:

Entre Le Clerc et son ami Coras,
Deux grands auteurs, rimant de compagne,
N’a pas long temps s’ourdiren grands debats
Sur le propos de leur Iphigenie.
Coras lui dit : “La piece est de mon cru.”
Le Clerc repond : “Elle est miennet et non votre.”
Mais aussitôt que la piece eut paru,
Plus n’ont voulu l’avoir fait l’un, ni l’autre.

Le Clerc and Coras, who in partnership rhym’d, Iphigenia who wrote with such spirit, When the drama was done, had a strife most ill-tim’d, On deciding whose chief was the merit.

"’Tis all mine," said Coras,—“To say so is a fraud,”
Cried Le Clerc, “for I wrote it myself.”
But at length when the bantling was usher’d abroad,
Then neither would own the poor elf.

This story is as well calculated for painting as for poetry; and forms the subject of one of the best pieces which has flowed from the pen of Sir Joshua Reynolds: the colouring of which is after the Venetian school, and exhibits one of its happiest copies. Its rival, Jephtha’s Vow, has been selected not less frequently. Perhaps, the best picture from this latter episode is Mr. Opie’s; but, like almost every prior attempt, it is altogether spoiled by the painter’s
And sought, in vain, protection. She survey'd
Near her, her sad, sad sire; th' officious priests
Repentant half, and hiding their keen steel,

throwing a veil over the eyes of the young and beautiful oblation, by which half her charms, and more than half the effect of the subject, is unmercifully destroyed. Among the Greeks there was a most celebrated picture from the tale of Iphigenia, by Timantes, of which Cicero has given us a particular description. Chalcas, Ulysses, Menelaus, and several other personages, were introduced into the scenery, with countenances of great grief and comiseration. The painter, having thus exhausted his art, was at a loss how to express the superior agony of the father; and, with a stratagem somewhat similar to the above, concerning which he has been often complimented, but the idea of which was obviously borrowed from Euripedes, he threw a veil carelessly over his face; "quoniam," as Cicero has elegantly expressed it, "summum illum luctum "pencillo non posset imitari." In Orat."—Be-cause no art of the pencil could delineate the ex-treme grief he endured." These tricks of the profession are, in my apprehension, at all times beneath the dignity of a man of real genius; and bespeak poverty of imagination rather than modesty in the artist.

Ver. 93. — She survey'd
Near her, her sad, sad sire; th' officious priests
Repentant half, and hiding their keen steel.] I must inform the English reader, that the term propter in the original may be translated either as a preposition of motive, or of place; or, in other words, that the version may be rendered—"She perceived "the priests conceal the knife near her father," or "on account of her father." Evelyn, and Creech who has closely copied him, have both pretended to descry a peculiar degree of force and emphasis in the last lection;—in the concealment of the knife on account of the father. I have chosen to consider the preposition, however, as referring to place alone, independently of motive; and that for the following reasons: 1st, It is Iphigenia herself, and not her father, who stands most advanced in the fore-ground of this elegant groupe. She is in every respect the first figure, and he but a second. The poet, true to the feelings of nature, delineates her as fully sensible of the blessings of life, as well as of youth, and the horror of the doom to which she is devoted,—and devoted too by her father's consent. He has amassed together, in the most exquisite and pathetic colours, every circumstance that can tend to depict the agony of her mind, and excite the compassion of the crowd around her. The people pity her; her father pities her; the priests pity her; and while they conceal the sacrificing knife—on whose account do they conceal it? Doubtless on her own.—Near the father, but on account of the daughter. To read the passage otherwise is to destroy half the spirit of the episode. The version of Evelyn and Creech may apply to the tale as related by Euripides, but not as related by Lucretius.

But, zdly, all our best annotators, translators and expositors, have adopted this very interpretation of the preposition which I have given myself. The verb that follows ought, I think, to be celare; and, following the greater number of copies, I have so rendered it in the translation. In the edition of Giffan, however, in that of Bologna, and in that of Mr. Wakefield, as printed on the opposite page, it is celare, "to brandish," instead of "to conceal." But those who prefer celare, must necessarily use propter in the sense offered in the text; for, "to "brandish the knife because of the father," would be nonsense. Coutures who, with myself, has retained celare, has also retained propter in my own signification. "Elle vit," says he, "son père devant "l'autel, elle s'aperçut que les ministres qui cotoient "proches de lui, cachoient le couteau sacré." Precisely to the same effect is the elegant version of Marchetti, who is the only poet, in any nation, by whom Lucretius has hitherto been worthily translated.
Adspectuque suo lacrumas ecfundere civeis;
Muta metu, terram, genibus submissa, petebat:
Nec miserae prodesse in tali tempore quibat,
Quod patrio princeps donarat nomine regem:
Nam, sublata virum manibus, tremebundaque, ad aras
Deducta est; non ut, solenni more sacrorum
Perfecto, posset claro comitari hymenaeo;
Sed, casta inceste, nubendi tempore in ipso,
Hostia concideret maectatu moesta parentis,
Exitus ut classi felix faustusque daretur.
Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum!

Vid' ella a se davante in mesto volto
Il padre, e a lui vicini i sacerdoti
Cesar l'aspra bipenne.

In the interpretation I have given to this passage, I am equally justified therefore by natural propriety, and the opinion of the best critics who have preceded me.

Ver. 101. — vain that first herself
Lisp'd the dear name of Father, eldest born.]
Nothing can be more unfaithful to the original, or more inconsistent with the sentiment our poet is endeavouring to inculcate, than Coutures' version of this beautiful passage. He is protesting against the cruel effects of superstition among his countrymen, and not their laxity of parental affection; against the sacrilegious demands of their priests, and not the severity of their patriarchs. True to the genuine feelings of nature, he represents the sufferings of Agamemnon as extreme: he stood, as it should appear, overcome with grief by the side of his daughter; and nothing but the stern demand of a sanguinary oracle, which he dared not disobey, could obtain his consent to the sacrifice. Yet Coutures has represented him as a monster, void of all parental feeling; not irresistibly enforced, but self-determined to offer up his daughter, and peremptorily resolved that no entreaties should dissuade him from so sanguinary an oblation. "It was in vain," says he, "that she attempted to soften the king, by calling him "her father: she was seized by pitiless hands, and "carried trembling to the foot of the altar." C'etoit en vain qu'elle s'efforçoit d'attendre le roi en l'appelant son père; elle fut arrachée par des mains impitoyables, et menée tremblante aux pieds des autels, &c.
And crowds of gazers weeping as they view’d.
Dumb with alarm, with supplicating knee,
And lifted eye, she sought compassion still;
Fruitless and unavailing: vain her youth,
Her innocence, and beauty; vain the boast
Of regal birth; and vain that first herself
Lisp’d the dear name of Father, eldest born.
Forc’d from her suppliant posture, straight she view’d
The altar full prepar’d: not there to blend
Connubial vows, and light the bridal torch;
But, at the moment when mature in charms,
While Hymen call’d aloud, to fall, e’en then,
A father’s victim, and the price to pay
Of Grecian navies, favoured thus with gales.—
Such are the crimes that Superstition prompts!

Klopstock, however, has been far more sensible of
the beauty and pathos of this admirable picture; and,
with no small felicity, has transplanted it into the
second book of the Messias. It occurs in the soli-
tary meditation of the repentant Abbadona, when he
had first deserted his infernal companions. It is thus
he addresses the Almighty:

O dürft’ ich es wagen,
Ohne zu zittern, ihn schöpfer zu nennen, wie gerne
wollt’ ich
Dann entbehren den zärtlichen vaternahmen, mit
dem ihn
Seine getrunen, die hohen engel, kindlicher nennen.
Oh! without trembling, dar’d I this dread judge
But call Creator, freely would I now
Yield the dear name of father, name belov’d,
And still pronounce’d by those who ne’er trans-
gress’d.

Ver. 110. Such are the crimes that Superstition
prompts.] The translators have generally, as
before observed, employed the term religion, instead
of superstition, to interpret the religio of Lucretius.
I have given my reasons for deviating from the com-
mon example, in the note on verse 63 of this book.
The cardinal Polignac, following the general, but
erroneous interpretation, has deemed it necessary,
in his Anti-Lucretius, to inform us that the poet whom
he opposes was mistaken: that this, and other
equally barbarous transactions, were not the effect of
religion, but of impiety; as though impiety were not
the very subject he meant to object against,—called,
indeed, but falsely, religion, by the general mass of
his contemporaries. The following is the cardinal’s
allusion to the episode before us:

Effera tantum igitur potuit suadere malorum
Impietas, non Religio; quæ prava coercere

Impictus, non Religio; quæ prava coercere
DE RERUM NATURA.

Tutemet a nobis jam quovis tempore, vatum
Terriloquis victus dictis, desciscere quæres.
Quippe et enim quam multa tibi jam fingere possum
Somnia, quæ vitæ rationes vortere possint,
Fortunasque tuas omneis turbare timore.
Et merito: nam, si certam finem esse viderent
Ærumnarum homines, aliquâ ratione valerent
Religionibus atque minis obsistere vatum:
Nunc ratio nulla est restandi, nulla facultas;
Æternas quoniam poenas in morte timendum.

Corda metu, spe recta foret; cunctisque suum jus
Spondet, et humanas vetat obbrutescere mentes.
Quod si ductores Danaum, Calichante magistro,
Terrarunt fato lachrymabilis Iphianasæ
(Grande nefas) classi celares ascessere ventos,
Ac læsum ultricis numen placare Diane,
Non hæc vera dei Reverentia; fecit
Carca Superstitio, et vaci fallacia vatis.
Sed talis nunquam immites cecidisset ad aras
Hostia, vesani dira ambitione parentis
Jussa mori.

Impiety alone persuades to ills,
Religion never. She, coercing strong
The heart deprav’d, with fear,—with ardent hope
Sustains the good: deep in the conscious breast
Her laws she stamps, benign alike to each.
What though the Grecian chiefs, at Calchas’ nod,
Strove with the blood (a deed unjust and dire!)
Of Iphigenia, maid lamented long,
Th’ excite the gales, and calm Diana’s wrath,
That fettered all their navy—Reverence this
Urg’d not, to God most due, but priests deceiv’d,
And Superstition vain. At his mild shrine
No human victim falls; no father there,
Mad with ambition, wipes his crimes away,
Lav’d by a daughter’s blood.

This dreadful and barbarous rite of offering human
victims to heaven was not, however, confined to the
Greeks. There are but few nations, and unfortunately
but few religions, that can plead a total exemption from
such an impious custom, in any age. I have already
observed, in note on verse 63, that Voltaire has
attributed the savage ceremony, in whatever era, and
under whatever religion it occurred, to fanaticism,
whom he has most appropriately personified, and fol-
lowed in his bloody course over the greater part of
the globe. There is so much truth and beauty in his
delineation, as well as immediate reference to the epi-
sode before us, that it would be inexcusable in me
not to offer its perusal to my readers. It occurs in
his Henriade, l. iv.

Il vient, le Fanatisme est son horrible nom,
Enfant dénaturé de la religion;
Armé pour la défendre, il cherche à la détruire,
Et repu dans son sein, l’embrasse, et la déchire.
C’est lui qui dans Raba, sur le bords de l’Arnon
And dost thou still resist us? trusting still
The fearful tales by priests and poets told?—
I, too, could feign such fables; and combine
As true to fact, and of as potent spell,
To freeze thy blood, and harrow every nerve.—
Nor wrong th' attempt. Were mortal man assur'd
Eternal death would close this life of woe,
And nought remain of curse beyond the grave,
E'en then religion half its force would lose;
Vice no alarm, and virtue feel no hope.
But, whilst the converse frights him, man will dread
Eternal pain, and flee from impious deeds.

Guidait les descendans du malheureux Ammon,
Quand à Moloc, leur dieu, des mères gémissantes,
Offraient de leurs enfans les entrailles fumantes.
Il dicta de Jephé le serment inhumain;
Dans le cœur de sa fille il conduisit sa main.
C'est lui qui, de Calchas ouvrant la bouche impie,
Demanda par sa voix, la mort d'Iphigénie.
France, dans les forêts, il habita long-temps,
A l'affreux Teutates il offrit son encens.
Tu n'as point oublé ces sacrés homicides,
Qu'à tes indignes dieux présentaient tes Druides.
Du haut du Capitole criait aux Païens,
"Frappiez, exterminez, déchirez les Chrétiens."
Mais lorsqu'au fils de Dieu Rome enfin fut soumise,
Du Capitole en cendre, il passa dans l'église:
Et dans les cœurs Chrétiens inspirant ses fureurs,
De martyrs qu'ils étaient, les fit persécuteurs.
Dans Londres, il a formé la secte turbulente,
Qui sur un roï trop faible a mis sa main sanglante.
Dans Madrid, dans Lisbonne, il allume ces feux,
Ces buchers solennels, où des Juifs malheureux
Sont tous les ans en pompe envoyés par des prêtres,
Pour n'avoir point quitté la foi de leurs ancêtres.

He comes—Fanaticism, his name abhor'd,
Religion's monster-offspring; clasp'd in mail,
Her weal he simulates, but works her woe,
And, in her lap, embraces and destroys.
'Twas he in Raba, Arnon's banks beside,
Led the fierce Ammonites, when, at the shrine
Of bloody Moloch, mothers, whelm'd with grief,
Offer'd the smoking entrails of their babes.
His was th' inhuman oath by Jeptha sworn;
He, 'gainst the daughter, rais'd the father's hand.
When Calchas op'd his impious lips, 'twas he
Th' oblation urg'd of Iphigenia fair.
With thee, O France! long dwelt he; and thy groves
Claim'd for Teutates, claim'd with incense foul,
And Druid rites, remember'd still with dread.
He, from the Capitol's proud summit, cri'd,
"Strike!" to the Pagans—"let no Christian live!"
But when imperial Rome the cross ador'd,
Her tower in ashes, he the Christians join'd,
And made of martyrs persecutors fell.
He fir'd th' enthusiast sect, that to the block,
In London, led a prince too weak for sway:
Lit in Madrid, in Lisbon lit the fires,
DE RERUM NATURA.

Ignoratur enim, quæ sit natura animæ; 
Nata sit, an contra nascentibus insinuetur; 
Et simul intereat nobis cum, morte dirempta, 
An tenebras Orci visat, vastasque lacunas; 
An pecudes alias divinitus insinuet se, 
Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amœno 
Detulit ex Helicone perenni frunde coronam, 
Per gentes Italas hominum quæ clara clueret.

The solemn butcheries, that, year by year,
Wait the next race of Jews, by priests condemn'd,
For stern adherence to their fathers' creed.

Ver. 123. Yet doubtful is the doctrine, and unknown, &c.] As there is no subject that can be of so much importance to man as a future existence, there is none which has more fully occupied the attention of the meditative and the learned, in every age. The existence itself, the mode of existence, its duration, or interchange, are points that have been agitated and discussed in every possible variety of shape. And what, after all, is the result?—that just as much is now known, by the mere light of reason, as was known above two thousand years ago, when Lucretius wrote his poem. In effect, although of infinite importance, the subject scarcely admits of argumentation of any kind. Of matter, we can discern but little: of immaterial spirit, nothing at all. We have no physical data to reason from; at least, none that will advance us beyond the bounds of probability: and every moral consideration is equally as inconclusive. Hence Cicero, Plato, and many other sages of antiquity, have expressly declared, that the more they meditated on this profound subject, the more their doubts of a future state were increased: while Democritus, Epicurus, Solomon (as it should seem from the general tenor of his writings, and especially his Ecclesiastes, chap. ii. 15, 16. iii. 18, 19, 20), as well as the entire body of the Sadducean sect, disbelieved it altogether. It is an object of revelation, therefore, rather than of reason; and a most illustrious object it is, and completely worthy of the intervention of the Divinity. And without searching further for motives, the Christian philosopher, in the belief of this important truth alone, finds a dignus vindice nodus, a motive amply sufficient to justify an immediate communication from the Creator to mankind. See the prefixed life of Lucretius.

Ver. 125. The soul first lives, when lives the body first,] In the prosecution of this poem, which comprises a complete history of the philosophy of the ancients, I shall have frequent occasion to examine the different systems of opinions that are here enumerated; and to compare them with many which have been started, under the semblance of novelty, in times much more modern. At present I shall content myself with observing, that the opinion conveyed in this, and the preceding line, was that of Democritus, Thales, Epicurus, Empedocles, and a variety of other sages, who differed, nevertheless, very widely, in many other doctrines of their respective theories.
THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Yet doubtful is the doctrine, and unknown
Whether, co-eval with th' external frame,
The soul first lives, when lives the body first,
Or boasts a date anterior: whether doom'd
To common ruin, and one common grave,
Or through the gloomy shades, the lakes, the caves,
Of Erebus to wander: or, perchance,
As Ennius taught, immortal bard, whose brows
Unfading laurels bound, and still whose verse
All Rome recites, entranc'd—perchance condemn'd

Ver. 126. Or boasts a date anterior:—] Plato, in various parts of his Dialogues, seems to have imagined that the soul exists from all eternity, and continues waiting in some distant star till the moment of the formation of its appropriate body, with which it then immediately unites itself, and continues in a state of intimate connection, till, at length, it is once more separated by death; when, according to its degree of moral merit, it is sentenced to Erebus or Elysium. Pythagoras believed, with Plato, that souls were of eternal existence, and, of course, incorporeal; but that upon the dissolution of one body, in which they were placed, they constantly transmigrated to another, as well to the body of brutes as of men. This doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, is of immemorial date, and was equally believed by the Hindus and the Egyptians; from the last of whom Pythagoras probably received it, during his travels into Asia. It was not, however, confined either to Egypt, Hindostan, or Greece; for we find it equally credited, at an early age, in China, and among the Celts in general; and particularly among those of Britain and Gaul. It is hence supposed, by Mr. Davies, to have constituted a common topic of belief among mankind, even in the first post-diluvian century; for to an epoch thus early does he refer the Celtic and Druidic colonizations of Spain and Britain. These, however, are learned and ingenious conceptions, rather than facts of solid and applicable proof. The reader may amuse himself with such, and various other opinions, in this elaborate writer's volume of "Celtic Researches." It appears, from verse 133, that Ennius himself had, at some period of his life, inclined to a belief in the metempsychosis; though, at another period, he seems to have changed his opinion.

Ver. 126. —whether doom'd
To common ruin, and one common grave, &c.] Thus Mr. Cowper, in his beautiful and descriptive poem, "The Task."

Has man within him an immortal soul?
Or does the tomb take all? If he survive
His ashes—where? and in what w^al or woe?

B. ii.

Ver. 130. As Ennius taught, immortal bard,—] Ennius, the Spencer of the Roman poets, flourished about a century before Lucretius, and was the first who attempted an heroic poem in his native language. It is much to be lamented that we have nothing of his writing transmitted to us, in modern times, but

F 2
DE RERUM NATURA. Lib. I.

Et si præterea tamen esse Acherusia templ
Ennius æternis exponit versibus edens:
Quo neque permanent animæ, neque corpora nostra;
Sed quædam simulacra, modis pallentia miris:
Unde, sibi exortam, semper florentis Homerî 125

a few fragments, and detached sentences, occasionally quoted by authors who were his countrymen. These, however, are generally quoted with an admiration of his abilities; and give us a high opinion of him as a philosopher, if not as a poet. Mr. Wakefield has hazarded a conjecture, that the few lines in this passage of Lucretius, which relate to Ennius, comprise the very words which he himself made use of; but this is conjecture alone. This earliest of the heroic poets of Rome, and who was by birth a Neapolitan, instructed the prætor, Marcus Porcius, in the Greek language, at Sardinia, during the consulate of Titus Quintus Flaminius and S. Assius Petus Catus. After the Romans had subdued this island, Caton induced his tutor to reside at Rome, where he died in the 70th year of his age, and was interred in the family tomb of the Scipios, by whom, also, he had been largely patronized. At different periods of his life he wrote a variety of satires, comedies, and tragedies; but his grand poem on the Carthaginian war, comprizing an extent of twelve books, was not concluded till about three years before his death.

Ver. 136. Of Acherusian temples,—] The word templis, in the Latin, is occasionally used by most of the poets to signify any large space or cavity. Thus the fragments of Ennius contain “caerulea cæli templar,” the cerulean concave of heaven. Thus, again, Terence, in his Ennuch, “templa cæli.” And Lucretius employs the same term, in a similar sense, in an almost infinite variety of other places. “Templum,” in this respect, seems perfectly synonymous with the Hebrew term “Beth,” which, when applied to the Supreme Being, means a temple strictly so called: but, at other times, a house, tent, or excavation of any kind. The Hebrew character, denominated Beth, is a happy symbol, as Mr. Allwood has justly observed, of this idea. It is written $\beta$, and is an excavation, with one end open for the purpose of receiving air.

Ver. 136. Where, nor soul

Nor body dwells,—] Whenever, among nations of but small refinement and civilization, the idea is credited, that man is a compound being, possessed of a corporeal body or substratum, and a something incorporeal, superadded to the body, and capable of surviving its dissolution, it, in no instance, occurs to them, that this other substance is itself divisible, and capable of existing in different places, and in different modes of existence, at the same period of time. Pythagoras, who derived much of his instruction from the sages of Egypt, never imagined the human constitution, any more than the brute, to be possessed of more than two constituent principles. It is the common doctrine, if we may credit any of the accounts of travellers and historians, entertained, at this day, among the American Indians, and the inhabitants of New Zealand, and generally among those of the Southern Islands. But this simple division of man into two parts has not satisfied the caprice of all nations, or of all philosophers. Brutes, it has been urged by such persons, have a soul and a body; but man is intrinsically superior to brutes. He must, therefore, possess some essential addition to such a constitution. He must have a reasoning spirit, as well as an animal soul, and a body susceptible of de-
The various tribes of brutes, with ray divine,
To animate and quicken: though the bard,
In deathless melody, has elsewhere sung
Of Acherusian temples, where, nor soul
Nor body dwells, but images of men,
Mysterious shap’d; in wondrous measure wan.

A shadowy form! for, high in heaven’s abodes
 Himself resides; a god among the gods.
There, in the bright assemblies of the skies,
He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.

Virgil has represented the very same fact as taking
place with respect to Anchises, whose manes, his son,
Aeneas, conversed with below, while his soul was residing in the upper and blest abodes. Hence the
propriety of the following lines, which have been attributed to Ovid:

Bis duo sunt homini: manes, caro, spiritus, umbra:
Quatuor ista loci bis supsusceptiunt.
Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra, 
Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit.

Four things are man’s—flesh, spirit, ghost, and shade;
And four their final homes:—hell claims the ghost;
The spirit, heaven; in earth the flesh is laid;
And, hov’ring o’er it, seeks the shade its post.

For a farther elucidation of this subject, sec note
on book iii. verse 100.

Ver. 137. —images of men.] The original is highly picturesque and impressive: “—simulacra, modis pallentia miris.” And Virgil has not hesitated to copy the entire verse.

—simulacra modis pallentia miris
Visa sub obscurum noctis.

Shapes, wondrous pale, by night were seen to rove.
Conmemorat speciem lacrurnas ecfundere salsas
Cœpisse, et rerum naturam expandere dictis.

Quapropter, bene quom superis de rebus habenda
Nobis est ratio; solis lunæque meatus
Quà fiant ratione, et quâ vi quæque gerantur
In terris; tunc, cum primis, ratione sagaci,
Unde anima atque animi constet natura, videndum:
Et quæ res, nobis vigilantibus obvia, menteis
Terrificet, morbo adfectis, somnoque sepultis;

Ver. 149. Whence spring those shadowy forms, which,
e'en in hours
Wakeful and calm, but chief when dreams molest,]
This part of the duty incumbent on the philosopher,
our poet endeavours to perform in book iv. where
the subject is resumed, and discussed in a truly
scientific and masterly manner,—consistently, I mean,
with the system he has adopted. He there ingeniously
assigns the cause why the existence of spectres,
ghosts, and apparitions, has been so generally ac-
ccredited in all ages, and nearly among all nations, as
history informes us it has been; and why the night
has commonly been the season of their supposed ap-
pearance and operation, rather than the day. Thus
the ghost in Hamlet:

I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd.

In the superstitions of all the Northern nations, the
same idea is to be traced, so far as relates to the
time of apparition. Milton, therefore, with much
appropriate beauty, has compared the demon of death
to the night-hag.

—riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant-blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
Eclipses at their charms.

Par. Lost, b. ii.
The rule, indeed, seems to be common to all
countries, as well as to all periods; to the East and
West, as well as to the North; to the sacred writ-
ings, as well as to heathen mythology. It is, hence,
the same season of doubt and terror that the sublime
author of the book of Job has made choice of, for
the appearance of that fearful spectre, which is so
inimitably described in chap. iv. of this unrivalled
drama, and which has been so often adverted to by
men of taste and discernment. Our common transla-
tion does not give all the beauties which are con-
tained in the original; and the reader will, therefore,
excuse me for offering him a new version, which, at
least, has the merit of accuracy, as, I trust, he will
find, on comparing it with the following arrangement
of the Hebrew:

בִּנְפַל הַרְדוֹמָה עַלְיָאָנִשָּׁהּ

בּשָׁפֵשִׁים מַחְוָוָה לִילָה;}
Here Homer's spectre roam'd, of endless fame
Possest: his briny tears the bard survey'd,
And drank the dulcet precepts from his lips.

Such are the various creeds of men. And hence
The philosophic sage is call'd t' explain,
Not the mere phases of the heavens alone,
The sun's bright path, the moon's perpetual change,
And pow'rs of earth productive, but to point,
In terms appropriate, the dissev'ring lines
'Twixt mind and brutal life; and prove precise
Whence spring those shadowy forms, which, e'en in hours
Wakeful and calm, but chief when dreams molest,

'Twas midnight deep; the world was hush'd to rest,
And airy visions every brain possess'd:
O'er all my frame a horror crept severe,
An ice that shiver'd every bone with fear;
Before my face a spirit saw I swim—
Erect uprose my hair o'er every limb:
It stood—the spectre stood—to sight display'd;
Yet trace'd I not the image I survey'd.
'Twas silence dead—no breath the torpor broke,
When thus, in hollow voice, the vision spoke.

No criticism is here necessary. Every one who
reads the description must perceive, in every line,
some peculiar and appropriate beauty. But the im-
possibility of tracing or distinguishing the form of
the apparition, even whilst it stood motionless before
the narrator, and compelled his attention, together
with the erection of the hair of the whole body, con-
vey a boldness and originality of thought superlative
ly impressive. From this fearful picture, Ariosto,
Spenser, and Otway, have drawn many of their best
and finest paintings. They have all of them, like-
wise, made choice of solitude and the midnight sea-
son for the introduction of their supernatural imagery.
But there are some occasions in which a masterly
poet, regardless of the trammels of example, may be
justified in introducing such scenery at any hour, and
even in the presence of the most brilliant or convivial
companies. Thus, in the tragedy of Macbeth, the
ghost of Banquo suddenly arises in the midst of the
entertainment given to the noble thanes; and which,
though by Shakspeare denominated a supper, would,
in the present day, be regarded as an early dinner,
since seven is the hour at which the lords were in-
vited to assemble. The incident is too well known,
and its effect too striking, to need any comment.
There is one description of a similar incident, how-
ever, by which even this of Shakspeare is much ex-
DE RERUM NATURA.

Cernere uti videamur eos, audireque coram, Morte obitâ quorum tellus amplectitur ossa.

Nec me animi fallit, Graiorum obscura reperta Difficile inlustrare Latinis versibus esse;
Multa novis verbis præsertim quom sit agundum Propter egestatem linguæ, et rerum novitatem:
Sed tua me virtus tamen, et sperata voluptas Suavis amicitiae, quemvis ecferre laborem Suadet, et inducit nocteis vigilare serenas,

ceeded, and whence, perhaps, he took the idea;—the apparition, I mean, of the fingers of a man’s hand writing’ mystical characters upon the wall, in the palace of Belshazzar, in the midst of the banquet he was giving to all the nobles of his empire, and their ladies. The whole is related with inimitable excellence in the book of Daniel, and comprises almost every striking circumstance, and every solemn touch, that can render a story impressive. The splendour of the scene, the high rank and number of the company present, the gross impiety and sacrilege they were guilty of, the abruptness of the apparition, the extreme terror and perturbation of the king, and the undaunted probity and resolution of the prophet in decyphering the occult symbols, are all of them most interesting parts of the picture, and harmoniously combine in producing dramatic effect.

The popular mythologies that have most indulged in preternatural appearances of this sort, are those of Odin and Fingal: the former constituting an early creed of the Northern countries on the continent; and the latter, of the inhabitants of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland. Each of these systems of superstition are possessed of a sublimity and terrible grandeur, far beyond what the mythology of Greece can lay claim to: but there is a savage ferocity attendant upon the former, which is repressive to all the feelings of a cultivated mind. The spirits of the departed, that assemble in the aerial hall of the Scandinavian deity, are represented as fighting and massacring each other for amusement, and as drinking a spirituous beverage out of the hollow skulls of their enemies—while the spirits of the Celtic warriors, on the contrary, are delineated as regaling themselves with the hymns of their bards, attuned in praise of love, friendship, or heroism. Often, too, these latter are supposed to be flying on the wings of the winds, to warn those whom they esteem on earth of future dangers, or to protect them beneath the pressure of immediate calamities. Nothing is, therefore, more common than the belief of such benignant apparitions; nothing more frequent than their introduction in the sublime poems of Ossian: and in the utmost regions of the Highlands, and the Hebrides, the same idea is still interwoven with the profession of the Christian religion, at the present moment. Fingal, however, admitted no supernatural agency into his Celtic cred. It is probable the superstition which he systematized, he originally deduced from the Druids; but he rejected all their barbarities, and only retained their sacred order of bards, to whom was paid the utmost degree of reverence. The spirit of the Fingalian, immediately upon his decease, took its flight involuntarily to the banks of the river Loda: if virtuous, or heroic, it was there instantaneous met by the ghosts of its forefathers, and conveyed with rapidity to the great hall of the founder of the race, and claimed its seat among the bleat; but if it
Book I. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Or dire disease, we see, or think we see,
Though the dank grave have long their bones inhum'd.

Yet not unknown to me how hard the task
Such deep obscurities of Greece t' unfold
In Latin numbers; to combine new terms,
And strive with all our poverty of tongue.—
But such thy virtue, and the friendship pure
My bosom bears, that arduous task I dare;
And yield the sleepless night, in hope to cull

had been wicked, or a coward, it was suffered to
hover for ever on the wretched banks of the Loda,
or was condemned to wander on all the winds of
heaven; often perversely misleading the way-worn and
benighted traveller, in the shape of an ignis fatuus.

Respecting the ghosts of the Celtic superstition,
there was one remarkable fact, which I cannot avoid
noticing in this place. While other religions have
often conceived such a kind of ethereal spirit as sepa-
ratey existing, immediately after the decease of
the body,—the system of Fingal assumed, that the
hero had a separate shade or spirit attending him some
short time prior to his death, counterfeiting his
figure, and appearing to different persons, with the
most mournful shrieks, and in the attitude in which
he was about to die. "The account given to this
"day, among the vulgar," observes Mr. Macpherson,
"of this extraordinary matter, is very poetical.
"The ghost comes mounted on a meteor, and sur-
rounds twice or thrice the place destined for the
person to die in; and then goes along the road
through which the funeral is to pass, shrieking at
intervals: at last, the meteor and the ghost dis-
appear above the burial place."

Ver. 158. —that arduous task I dare;
And yield the sleepless night.—] There is a
passage in the Abbé Delille's very beautiful, and,
in the French language, unrivalled didactic poem of
Vol. I.

Les Jardins, in the composition of which the poet
seems to have had his eye directed to this elegant ad-
dress of Lucretius. He exhorts his horticultural
pupils not to rest satisfied, in their attempts to form
a fountain, if, at first, and even for a long time af-
terwards, they should be disappointed in the flow of
water: he advises them to dig deeper and deeper,
since probably the earnestly-desired fluid is just at
hand. And he then proceeds:

Ainsi d'un long effort moi-même rebuté,
Quand j'ai d'un froid détail maudit l'ardité,
Soudain un trait heureux jaillit d'un fond sterile,
Et mon vers ranimé coule enfin plus facile.

So when, myself, o'erwearied with the past,
Curse some dry subject still before me cast;
I too, at times, some happy turn explore,
And my rous'd verse flows brisker than before.

But the style and imagery of Mason, in his English
Garden, exhibits a copy of Lucretius far closer still;
and especially in the following passage:

—Ingrateful sure,
When such the theme, becomes the poet's task:
Yet must he try, by modulation meet
Of varied cadence, and selected phrase,
Exact yet free, without inflation bold,
To dignify that theme; must try to form
Such magic sympathy of sense with sound,
As pictures all it sings: while Grace awakes

G
Quærentem, dictis quibus, et quo carmine, demum
Clara tuæ possim præpandere lumina menti,
Res quibus obscultas penitus convisere possis.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necesse est
Non radiei solis neque lucida tela diei
Discutiant, sed Naturæ species, RATIOQUE:
Quoius principium hinc nobis exordia sumet;
NULLAM REM E NIHILÒ GIGNI DIVINITUS UMquam.

At each blest touch, and, on the lowliest things,
Scatters her rain-bow hues.

B. ii. 250.

Having thus had occasion to introduce into the same
note the names of my two friends, Mason and Delille,
I cannot avoid advertting to the extraordinary coincidence of taste, time, and subject, which subsists between their respective and exquisite didactic poems. The period in which they wrote was during the American war: to this they both allude, and incline to the same side of politics. The subject of their poetry is Picturesque Gardening: the title chosen by each is precisely similar. Their taste appears to have been formed from the same models, and directed to the same ends; and they both speak in the most rapturous terms of Poussin, Milton, and Kent. Mason's poem, I believe, preceded that of the Abbé only about a twelvemonth; but there is no reason to conceive that the latter, though acquainted with the English language, was by any means apprised of such a publication, when he announced his own Jardins.

Ver. 165. — the day's bright javelins.—] "Lucida tela diei." This elegant metaphor is frequently employed by Lucretius, in the prosecution of his poem. Ausonius has borrowed it from him. Mosel. 269.

Exultant udae super arida saxa rapina,
Luciferique pavent Ictalia tela diei.

O'er the sere rock the juicy rape exults,
And dreads the deadly arrows of the day.
Polignac has made a fuller copy still. Anti-Lucr.
b. vi. 1414.

Illa nec solis radies, nec tela diei
Lucida ferre queunt.
Not these the sun's pure beams, nor javelins bright,
Can bear of noon-tide.
Mason, who, as I have just remarked, is a close and classical imitator of our poet, has not failed to employ this bold and beautiful figure, also, in his English Garden.

—Soon thy sturdy axe,
Amid its intertwined foliage driven,
Shall open all his glades, and ingress give
To the bright darts of day. B. ii. 151.

In Dr. Darwin's Loves of the Plants, we meet with the same idea, which is introduced with much beauty and sublimity. He is speaking of the humane Howard.

The spirits of the good, who bend from high,
Wide o'er these earthy scenes, their partial eye,
Saw round his brows a sun-like glory blaze,
In arrowy circles of unwearied rays.

The whole description forms a bold and elevated imagery; for which, however, if I be not much mistaken, he is indebted to Ariosto. The passage I
Some happy phrase, some well selected verse,
Meet for the subject; to dispel each shade,
And bid the mystic doctrine hail the day.
For shades there are, and terrors of the soul,
The day can ne'er disperse, though blazing strong
With all the sun's bright javelins. These alone
To Nature yield, and Reason; and, combin'd,
This is the precept they for ever teach,
That nought from nought by pow'r divine has ris'n.

ref. to is that in which the Italian bard describes the descent of Michael the archangel from heaven, to the Christian camp, at the command of the Almighty.

Dovunque drizza Michel angel l'ale
Fugon le nubi, e torno il ciel sereno,
Gli gira intorno un aureo cerchio; quale
Veggiam di notte lampeggiar baleno.

O R. F U R. C. xiv.

Where'er his course the radiant envoy steers,
The clouds disperse, the troubled ether clears;
And round him plays a circling blaze of light,
Such as when meteors stream through dusky night.

Tertullian, as Mr. Wakefield observes, has introduced this same metaphor of Lucretius into his section on Chastity. "Quibus exquirendis," observes he, "non lucere spicio, lumine sed totius solis lancea, opus est." Cap. 7. "In the investigation of which it behoves us to employ, not the mere shafts of a candle, but the arrowy light of the whole sun."

There is also an introduction of the same elegant figure in a beautiful and tender passage of Jortin; the whole of which the reader will find transcribed, on another occasion, in the note on Book iii. v. 1136.

Siderea, purpurei telis extincta diei
Rursus nocte vigent.

Kill'd by the arrows of the purple day,
The stars at night revisit us.

The use of this metaphor, in the description of a severe frost, is scarcely so bold, and is much more common. Dyer, however, has introduced it, with much picturesque effect, in his delineation of a Lap-land winter.

---the horrid rage
Of winter irresistible o'erwhelms
The Hyperborean tracts; his arrowy frosts,
That pierce through flinty rocks, the Lappian flies.

Fleece, B. i.

In a similar manner, Milton, in his Paradise Regained:

How quick they wheel'd; and, flying, behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy shower.

Whence Gray, in his Descent of Odin:

Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Ver. 168. That nought from nought by pow'r divine has ris'n.] This maxim, originated by Democritus, is frequently referred to by Aristotle, and many other philosophers among the ancients, who were not immediately of the Epicurean school. It is thus repeated by Diogenes Laertius, ix. 44.
Quippe ita formido mortaleis continet omnes, 
Quod multa in terris fieri coeloque tuntur, 
Quorum operum causas nulla ratione videre

That nothing has been produced from non-existent, and to non-existence can never degenerate. It forms the key-stone of the philosophy in the poem before us; and is, therefore, constantly reverted to by Lucretius. By **power divine** we must understand, if we understand any thing at all, either the divinity of the world itself,—in which case he directs his dogma against the Platonists and Pythagoreans, or else the divinity of the popular gods,—and then he is opposing the multitude: since the idea of an eternal intelligent being, at whose mere will and command all Nature sprang into, and is still supported in, her present system of beauty, harmony, and order, constituted, as I have observed in the prefixed life of Lucretius, an avowed article of the Epicurean creed; while various passages of the poem before us, and particularly in the fifth book, prove obviously that Lucretius no more rejected this dogma of Epicurism than he did any other. The real doctrine of Epicurus, upon this subject, appears to be as follows: In common with the philosophers of every school, he believed in the eternity of matter; for they all equally conceived it an absurdity to suppose that the Deity himself could create anything out of nothing; but that though matter existed from all eternity, there was a time when it was first endowed by the intelligent eternal Cause with powers of motion, and a consequent capability of organization and order. From this moment, motion commenced; atoms began to unite with atoms; concrete substances to be produced; affinities to multiply; and the universe to assume form: but an incalculable number of apparently different motions were essayed, and of years exhausted, before that form was finally completed. This theory of cosmogony is detailed most beautifully, and at full length, by Lucretius, in his fifth book; and this, and this alone, explains the declarations of Epicurus, that the world entirely proceeded from the will and command of him who possesses all immortality, and all gratitude. It completely removes the impiety with which this doctrine of apparent chance has been perpetually loaded. It formed, for the most part, the actual opinion of Dinant, Abelard, and other Christian Epicureans, but more especially of Gassendi; and very closely corresponds with the system of Des Cartes, which is founded entirely upon such a supposition. "There is nothing," says he, "contradictory to the rational faculties of man, in conceiving that the Deity did no more than create the original chaos of all things; enduring it with certain laws, and leaving it to the gradual operation of those laws—to produce order from confusion, to separate element from element, and form the vast varieties of animals and vegetables that exist over the whole earth, and are nourished from its bosom." See Baker's Reflections on Learning, chap. vii.; Des Cartes Method. Philos.; Gassendi de Exortu Mundi. And this indeed, with the exception of the eternity of matter alone, is the avowed doctrine of La Metherie, De Luc, Hutton, Whitehurst, Kirwan, and almost all our modern cosmologists. Nor could it be otherwise, than upon such an interpretation, that several learned poets of Italy have attempted to reconcile the principles of Epicurus, or Democritus, with those of the Christian religion; and, among others, Gio. Michele Milani, who, in 1698, printed, as we are told by Crescimbini, a very long and learned canzone on light, extending to not less than eighty-three stanzas; much of which was devoted to this very subject. "In essa," says he, "si spiega buona parte della filosofia di Democrito adattata alla verità Cristiana." Comenianz Poetici, l. ii. c. 10.

If indeed we were to examine the opinions of many of the most celebrated fathers of the Christian church,
Book I.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

But the blind fear, the superstition vain
Of mortals uninformed, when spring, perchance,
In heav’n above, or earth’s sublunar scene,
Events to them impenetrable, instant deem

as well as of the ancient Jews, we should make an approach much nearer still to the cosmology of Epicurus: for several of them not only believed in the gradual evolution of the world, but in the eternity of matter itself; conceiving that matter was necessarily co-eternal with God, as the solar rays are coeval with the sun. Philo appears to have been altogether a Platonist upon this subject. See his Cosmog. vol. 1. p. 5. nov. ed.; and Justin Martyr, Apol. 59. affirms, that the doctrine of Plato, with respect to the creation of the world, is the very doctrine of Moses; and from Moses was borrowed, ἵνα δὲ καὶ πάρε των ἐμετριῶν διδάσκαλων λαβώσα τον Πλατώνα μαθήτα τον έτερον, ὅπου κρομμόν ἐτρεπόντος, κοσμον τοιούτος, κοινωνίας των αυτολογίων γραμματίων τοῦ Μωσίου, λ. τ. l. The ὅλα αὐτοφύα, or unfashioned matter here referred to, out of which the world was created by the Deity, and which was supposed to have been co-eternal with himself, is indeed expressly made mention of by the writer of the book of Wisdom, chap. xi. 17; and he has also been supposed, in consequence, to have been attached to the whole of this opinion. In reality, it is not easy to extricate him from the charge; and Origen, who enters expressly into an examination of the passage, feels himself compelled to remark, that this book is not received by all as canonical Scripture. Few, however, besides Maimonides, have chosen to contend, that the Hebrew נַבֶּה created, in Gen. i. 1, necessarily implies an absolute creation out of nothing.

It has been of late very generally believed on the continent, and probably with a view of reconciling the apparent incongruity of the origin of matter out of nothing, upon Christian principles, that the world is an emanation of the substance of the Supreme Being. Mr. Kant is supposed to favour this belief. It has been professedly brought forwards and supported by M. Isnard, in his work "Sur l’Immortalité de l’âme," printed at Paris in 1802; and is approved of by M. Anquetil du Perron, the learned translator of the Oupnæk’-hat, or abridgement of the Veids. The difficulty, however, does not appear to be in any great degree diminished by such a conjecture; for, if matter be an emanation from the substance of the Deity, then is the Deity himself material, and matter becomes not only eternal, but the Eternal God, the very essence of the Divine Being: a doctrine far exceeding the impiety of the atomic hypothesis, and infinitely more absurd. It is, moreover, a mere revivification of the wildest dogmas of Plato and Pythagoras, obviously derived from India, and still existing in the Braminical Veids. It is thus stated in M. Perron’s version of the Oupnæk’-hat, to which I have just referred: "The whole universe is the Creator, proceeds from the Creator, subsists in him, and returns to him. The ignorant assert that the universe, in the beginning, did not exist in its author, and that it was created out of nothing.—O ye, whose hearts are pure, how could something arise out of nothing? This first Being, alone, and without likeness, was the All in the beginning: he could multiply himself under different forms: he created fire from his essence, which is light, &c." The whole of this doctrine of the Epicurean school is thus fully detailed, by the cardinal Polignac:

Ex nihilo nil fit: lex inviolabilis esto:
Nil ruit in nihilum, clamat tota schola Epicuri.
Ergo si quae sunt, aeterna fuere: nec unquam
Cessatura manent. Intermoriantur ubique
Corpora, materies autem quae corpora fundat
Semper erit, fuit, est: finemque ignorat et ortum.

ANTI-LUCR. ix. 471.

Nought springs from nought: be this the eternal law:
To nought nought tends, shouts all the atomic school.
Possunt; ac fieri divino numine rentur.  
Quas ob res, ubi viderimus nihil posse creari  
De nihilo, tum, quod sequimur, jam rectius inde  
Perspiciemus; et unde queat res quaeque creari,  
Et quo quaeque modoiant operâ sine divôm.

Nam, si de nihilo fierent, ex omnibus rebus  
Omne genus nasci posset: nihil semine egeret.  
E mare primum homines, e terrâ posset oriri  
Squamigerum genus, et volucres: erumpere coelo  
Armenta; atque aliae pecudes, genus omne ferarum,  
Incerto partu, culta ac deserta tenerent:  
Nec fructus iidem arboribus constare solerent,  
Sed mutarentur; ferre omnes omnia possent.  
Quippe, ubi non essent genitalia corpora quoique,  
Qui posset mater rebus consistere certa?
At nunc, seminibus quia certis quaeque creantur,
Some power supernal present, and employ'd.—
Admit this truth, that not from nothing springs,
And all is clear. Develop'd, then, we trace,
Through Nature's boundless realm, the rise of things,
Their modes, and pow'rs innate; nor need from heav'n
Some god's descent to rule each rising fact.

Could things from nought proceed, then whence the use
Of generative atoms, binding strong
Kinds to their kinds perpetual? Man himself
Might spring from ocean; from promiscuous earth.
The finny race, or feath'ry tribes of heaven:
Prone down the skies the bellowing herds might bound,
Or frisk from cloud to cloud: while flocks, and beasts
Fierce and most savage, undefin'd in birth,
The field or forest might alike display.
Each tree, inconstant to our hopes, would bend
With foreign fruit: and all things all things yield.
Whence but from elemental seeds that act
With truth, and power precise, can causes spring

Sir Richard Blackmore, in his Creation, book i.; a production, which, although admitted by Johnson into his own arrangement of English Poems, probably on account of its religious and moral tendency, is but very sparing indeed in true poetic spirit and embellishment. There are many passages in it, however, which are obviously deduced from Lucretius; whose philosophy it was the grand object of the worthy knight to subvert, as far as he was able.
Inde enascitur, atque oras in luminis exit,
Materies ubi inest quoisque, et corpora prima:
Atque hac re nequeunt ex omnibus omnia gigni,
Quod certis in rebus inest secreta facultas.

Prąterea, quur vere rosam, frumenta calore,
Viteis auctumno fundi suadente videmus;
Si non, certa suo quia tempore semina rerum
Quom confluxerunt, patefit quodcumque creatur,
Dum tempestates adsunt, et vivida tellus
Tuto res teneras ecfert in luminis oras?
Quod, si de nihilo fient, subito exorerentur
Incerto spatio, atque alienis partibus anni:
Quippe ubi nulla forent primordia, quæ genitali
Concilio possent arceri tempore iniquo.

Nec porro augendis rebus spatio foret usus
Seminis ad coitum, e nihilo si crescere possent.
Nam fient juvenes subito ex infantibus parvis,
E terrâque, exorta repente, arbusta salirent:
Quorum nihil fieri manifestum est, omnia quando
Paullatim crescut, ut par est, semine certo;
Crescentesque genus servant: ut noscere possis
Quidque suâ de materiâ grandescere, alique.
Powerful and true themselves? But grant such seeds, 
And all, as now, through Nature's wide domain, 
In time predicted, and predicted place, 
Must meet the day concordant; must assume 
The form innately stampt, and prove alone 
Why all from all things never can proceed. 

Whence does the balmy rose possess the spring? 
The yellow grain the summer? or, the vine 
With purple clusters, cheer th' autumnal hours? 
Whence, true to time, if such primordial seeds 
Act not harmonious, can aught here survey'd, 
Aught in its season, rear its tender form, 
And the glad earth protrude it to the day? 
But, if from nought things rise, then each alike, 
In every spot, at every varying month, 
Must spring discordant; void of primal seeds 
To check all union till th' allotted hour. 

Nor space for growth would then be needful: all 
Springing from nought, and still from nought supply'd. 
The puny babe would start abrupt to man; 
And trees umbrageous, crown'd with fruit mature, 
Burst, instant, from the greensward. But such facts 
Each day opposes; and, opposing, proves 
That all things gradual swell from seeds defin'd, 
Of race and rank observant, and intent 
T' evince th' appropriate matter whence they thrive.
Huc adcedit, uti sine certis imbribus anni
Laetificos nequeat fetus submittere tellus;
Nec porro, secreta cibo, natura animantum
Propagare genus possit, vitamque tueri:
Ut potius multis communia corpora rebus
Multa putes esse, ut verbis elementa videmus,
Quam sine principiis ullam rem existere posse.

Ver. 220. The timely show'r from heaven must add
Benign
Its influence too,—] The author of the book
of Job, the sublimest drama that was ever composed
by any writer, whether sacred or profane, denomi-
nates, with inimitable elegance, chap. xxxviii. 31.
these refreshing and seasonable showers " the sweet
influences of Chimah;" or, as it is rendered
in the Septuagint, and thence borrowed into our
English version, " of the Pleiades." The constella-
tion Chimah (נֵבִיל מֹעֵד) answers to the more modern
sign Taurus, as Chesil (צלע) does to Capricorn;
and the alternate seasons of spring and winter, the
revival and destruction of the world, are hence beauti-
fully alluded to: Mazaroth (מְזוֹרֹת) is, in all pro-
bability, the zodiac at large; and Aish (אֹיש) Arct-
turus, one of the most remarkable stars in the northern
hemisphere,—and hence, by an elegant synecdoche,
employed for the northern hemisphere itself. See
this subject more minutely examined in the note on
book ii. verse 1105 of the present poem. The Greek
translators, however, not being positive as to the term
Mazaroth have, in this instance, and in this alone, re-
tained the Hebrew lection; in which conduct they
have also been followed by the translators of the Eng-
lish version. I cannot avoid noticing, in this place,
the absurd argument of that biblical blunderer Thomas
Paine, deduced from these two verses, to prove the
invalidity and spuriousness of the whole book of Job.
Finding these Greek terms in the English version,
and apprehending, from his gross ignorance of the
original, that the same Greek terms occurred in the
Hebrew, he has ventured to assert that this book
could never have been written originally in Hebrew;
that it must have been first of all compiled, in a much
later period than is generally contended for, by some
romance-writer of Greece, and afterwards translated
from the Greek into the Hebrew tongue, from
But matter thus appropriate, or e’en space
For growth mature, form not the whole requir’d.
The timely shower from heav’n must add benign
Its influence too, ere yet the teeming earth
Emit her joyous produce; or, the ranks
Of man and reptile, thence alone sustain’d,
May spring to life, and propagate their kinds.
Say rather, then, in much that meets the view,
That various powers combine, concordant all,
Common and elemental, as in words
Such elemental letters,—than contend,
That void of genial atoms, aught exists.

Why form’d not Nature man with ample pow’rs
To fathom, with his feet, th’ unbottom’d main?
To root up mountains with his mighty hands?

which, as an original publication in this latter language, we have received it into English. This, however, is but one blunder among a thousand that might easily be selected from this unrivalled specimen of sober and classical criticism.

In allusion to this elegant description in the book of Job, Milton, who indefatigably examined the Scriptures, as well for their poetic ornaments as important doctrines, thus paints the first production and appearance of this constellation before its Creator:

—The Pleiades before him dance’d,
Shedding sweet influence.

Par. Lost, vii. 370.

Ver. 251. To fathom, with his feet, th’ unbottom’d main?
To root up mountains with his mighty hands?

As a philosopher, Lucretius was superior to all vulgar prejudices and stories; and his uniform aim is to release the mind from their undue influence. He treats, therefore, in these lines, as unauthentic fables the wonderful relations of Polyphemus, and the giants. Of the former of whom, we learn from Virgil, what was the popular belief as to his stature:

—graditurque per æquor
Jam medium nec dulcis flunctus latera ardua tinctit.

Æn. iii. 364.

—through deepest seas he strides,
While scarce the topmost billows touch his sides.

Dryden.

Of the latter, this is his description in a different poem:

Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam
Scilicet et Ossæ frondosum involvere Olympum.

Georg. i. 288.
Multaque vivendo vitalia vincere secla;
Si non, materies quia rebus reddita certa est
Gignundis, e quâ constat quid possit oriri?
Nihil igitur fieri de nihilo posse fatendum est;
Semine quando opus est rebus, quo quæque creatae
Æris in teneras possent proferre auras.

Postremo, quoniam incultis præstare videmus
Culta loca, et manibus meliores reddere fetus,
Esse videlicet in terris primordia rerum;
Quæ nos, fecundas vortentes vomere glebas,
Terræique solum subigentes, cimus ad ortus.
Quod, si nulla forent, nostro sine quæque labore,
Sponte suâ, multo fieri meliora videres.

Huc adcedit, uti quidque in sua corpora rursum
Dissolvat natura, neque ad nihilum interimat res.

On Pelion Ossa thrice they strove to raise,
On Ossa vast Olympus, crown'd with bays.

The magnitude of the pagan giants or Titans,
however, is nothing to that fabled, either by the
Mohammedans, or the Talmudists, of our first
parents; who, by the former, are said to have been as
tall as a high palm tree;—and, by the latter, to have
measured nine hundred cubits; and to have waded
from Paradise, after their expulsion, through the
ocean to the eastern extremity of Europe. See Bar-
toloz. Bibl. Rabin i. 65, and Yahya, Comment. in
Korân.

Klopstock appears obviously to have imitated these
verses of Lucretius, in his description of the approach
of Magog to the infernal assembly, convened by
Satan on his return from earth.

—Die meere zerflossen in lange gebirge.
Da sein kommender fuss die schwarzen fluten zer-
theilte.—
Jetzo, da er das trockne betrat, da warf er verwüstend,
Noch mit seinen gebirgen ein ganzes gestad' in den
abgrund. Messias, b. ii.

—To mountains heav'd the main,
As its black waves his forward footsteps press'd:—
Till, gain'd the strand, th' uprooted shore he hurl'd,
With all its rocks, deep down the dread abyss.

Ver. 247. And as from nought the genial seeds of things]
Having elucidated his first position, "that nothing:
Or live o'er lapsing ages victor still?
Why, but because primordial matter, fixt
And limited in act, to all is dealt
Of things created, whence their forms expand.
And hence again we learn, and prove express,
Nought springs from nought, and that, from seeds precise,
Whate'er is form'd must meet th' ethereal day.

Mark how the cultur'd soil the soil excels
Uncultur'd, richer in autumnal fruits.
Here, too, the latent principles of things,
Freed by the plough, the fertile glebe that turns
And subjugates the sod, exert their power,
And swell the harvest: else, spontaneous, all
Would still ascend by labour unimprov'd.

And as from nought the genial seeds of things
Can never rise, so Nature that dissolves
Their varying forms, to nought can ne'er reduce.

Can spring from nothing,” our philosophic poet
now ventures to advance a second, and maintains
that “nothing can ever be annihilated, or reduced
to nothing.” This axiom he supports by four arguments, which extend to verse 306. According to
the constitution of Nature, not a single substance
can be dissolved, or even change its texture, without
the interposition of some foreign and superior force. But if all things were perishable throughout, and
subject to utter annihilation, no such foreign force
would be necessary; and we should, in a variety of
instances, be eye-witnesses of the sudden evanescence
of substances we had falsely deemed solid: Thus,
eto, if, upon the gradual or ultimate decay of things,
every atom were completely destroyed, there could be
no regular return of anterior productions;—productions which have been exhibited at definite intervals,
and without any variation, through an incalculable
series of years, and which must, therefore, for aught
that appears to the contrary, on the first view of such
productions, continue to be exhibited for ever. Were not this a fact,—were all things perishable, and
equally perishable, a similar degree of sudden and
external force would divide their contexture, and all
would equally vanish in a moment: nor could
we trace, in that case, the uniform interchange
of substance into substance; follow up its dis-
junction or dissolution; and predict in what form,
and at what definite period, it would next appear
before us.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Lib. I.

Nam, si quid mortale e cunctis partibus esset,
Ex oculis res quæque repente erepta periret;
Nullâ vi foret usus enim, quæ partibus ejus
Discidium parere, et nexus exsolvere, posset.
Quod nunc, æterno quia constant semine quæque,
Donec vis obiit, quæ res diverberet ictu,
Aut intus penetret per inania, dissoluatque,
Nullius exitium patitur Natura videri.

Praeterea, quæquomque vetustate amovet ætas,
Si penitus perimit consumens materiem omnem,
Unde animale genus generatim in lumina vitæ
Reducit Venus; et reductum dædala tellus
Unde alit, atque auget, generatim pabula præbens?
Unde mare, ingenuæi funtes, æternaque longe
Flumina, subpeditant? unde æther sidera pascit?

Ver. 265. —or, ether feed the stars?] The Stoics,
Epicureans, and almost all the schools of ancient
philosophy, conceived that the stars, and even the
sun itself, were fires that required continual pabulum,
or fuel, in consequence of continual exhaustion.
This pabulum, as they imagined, consisted of exhalations
of the finest texture, perpetually, but insensibly,
ascenting from the earth and seas, and, when con-
verted into ether, directing their course through the
skies for this purpose. Hence Callimachus, Hym.
Del. 175.

—η νεφελης
Τιτησι, κύκκοι πλιστα καὶ νεφι βουκλωται.
——numerous as stars
That feed on air, and wander round the pole.

A more full and philosophic account of this an-
cient opinion may be collected from our author's
system of the origin of the world, as inimitably de-
lined in the fifth book of this poem. In total con-
sonance herewith, Pliny tells us in plain prose, Nat.
Hist. i. ii. c. 9. "Sidera vero haud dubio humore
" terreno pasci." —" That the stars are doubtless
" fed by exhalations from the earth." And hence
Virgil, in a passage I will quote, with an emenda-
tion strenuously contended for by Mr. Wake-
field:

In fleta dum fluvií current, dum montibus umbra,
Lustra dabunt convexa, polus dum sidera pascet,
Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque mane-
bunt. —Æn. i. 611.
Were things destructible throughout, then all
Abrupt would perish, passing from the sight;
Nor foreign force be wanting to disjoin
Their vital parts, or break th' essential bond.
But since, from seeds eternal all things rise,
Till force like this prevail, with sudden stroke
Crushing the living substance, or within
Deep entering each interstice, to dissolve
All active, Nature no destruction views.

Were time the total to destroy of all
By age decay'd,—say whence could Venus' self
The ranks renew of animated life?
Or, if renew'd, whence earth's dedalian power
Draw the meet foods to nurture, and mature?
Whence springs and rivers, with perpetual course,
The deep supply? or, ether feed the stars?

Sir Isaac Newton supposes an ether surrounding
the atmosphere of planets, and subtile enough to
penetrate the pores of all bodies whatever; most of
the phenomena of which he imagines to depend upon
its powers. In consequence of which, he denomina-
tes it a subtile or ethereal medium. Des Cartes,
in like manner, admits a species of ether, which he
calls "materia subtilis;" and which, consistently
with his doctrine of an universal plenum, he conceives
not only adequate to pervade, but actually filling all
the vacuities of bodies. But the ether of the ancient
poets and philosophers much more nearly resembles
the congregation of hydrogen or inflammable air of
modern chemists; and which, almost to a certainty,
according to some late chemical experiments, floats on
the aerial atmosphere of the globe, and seems to realize
the imaginary fifth element of the Chinese and Hindu.
Hydrogen is determined by Mr. Cavendish,
to be ten times lighter than common air: according
to the laws of gravitation, it must, therefore, be con-
tinually ascending through it, and resting above it;
for there is no more reason for supposing it should
be restrained, or combined with it in its passage,
than for supposing that air must be restrained or
combined in its passage through water. Thus dis-
engaged, and freed from all pressure, this volatile
gas necessarily then expands to inconceivable tenuity;
and accumulating, as from its own levity, and the
motion of the earth, it must do, principally over the
poles, it is probably the cause of fire-balls, northern
lights, and many other phenomena which are ex-
hibited in the superior regions.
Omnia enim debet, mortali corpore quæ sunt,
Infinita ætas consumpse ante acta, diesque.
Quod, si in eo spatio atque ante acta ætate fuere,
E quibus hæc rerum consistit summa reducta;
Inmortali sunt natura prædita certe:
Haud igitur possunt ad nihilum quæque revorti.

Denique, res omnes eadem vis caussaque volgo
Conficeret, nisi materies æterna teneret
Inter se nexu, minus aut magis indupedita;
Tactus enim leti satis esset caussa profecto;
Quippe, ubi nulla forent æterno corpore; quorum
Contextum vis deberet dissolvere quæque.
At nunc, inter se quia nexus principiorum
Dissimiles constant, æternaque materies est,
Incolomi remanent res corpore, dum satis acris
Vis obeat pro texturâ quoiusque reperta.
Haud igitur redit ad nihilum res ulla, sed omnes
Discidio redeunt in corpore materiai.
Whate’er could perish, ever-during time,
And rolling ages, must have long destroy’d.
But if, through rolling ages, and the lapse
Of ever-during time, still firm at base,
Material things have stood, then must that base
Exist immortal, and the fates defy.

Thus, too, the same efficient force apply’d
Alike must all things rupture, if, within,
No substance dwelled eternal to maintain
In close, and closer, links their varying bonds.
E’en the least touch,—for every cause alike
Must break their textures, equal in effect,
If no imperishable power oppos’d,—
E’en touch were then irrevocable death.
But since, with varying strength, the seeds within
Adhere, of form precise, and prove express
Their origin eternal,—free from ill,
And undivided must those forms endure,
Till some superior force the compact cleave.
Thus things to nought dissolve not; but, subdu’d,
Alone return to elemental seeds.

Time with his own eternal lip shall sing:
Ver. 38.
And again, in book vii. of the same poem:
—virtue shall enrol your names
In Time’s eternal records.
Ver. 361.

In like manner, in the sacred writings we meet with
Habak. iii. 6. ותפצלו הערים, עד
He beheld and scatter’d the nations;
The everlasting mountains were dispers’d;
The perpetual hills bowed down.

Vol. I.
Postremo, pereunt imbres, ubi eos pater Æther
In gremium matris Terræ præcipitavit:
At nitidæ surgunt fruges, rameique virescunt
Arboribus; crescent ipsæ, fetuque gravantur.
Hinc aliter porro nostrum genus, atque ferarum:
Hinc lætas urbeis puerûm florere videmus,
Frundiferasque novis avibus canere undique sylvas:
Hinc, fessæ pecudes, pingues per pabula læta,
Corpora deponunt; et candens lacteus humor
Uberibus manat distentis: hinc nova proles

Ver. 287. When, on the bosom of maternal Earth,
    His showers redundant genial Ether pours;]
The beauty of this passage needs not be pointed out to any one. In the personification of the poets, ether has always been allotted a masculine, as the earth has a feminine gender; and the productions of nature have been regarded as the fruits of their con-nubial embraces. Virgil has imitated our poet, Georg. ii. 325; and "he strives hard," observes Dr. Warton, "to excel him; but I am afraid it cannot be said that he has done it."

Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbris Æther
Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, et omnes
Magnus alti, magno commixtus corpore, fetus.
Ether, great lord of life, his wings extends,
And on the bosom of his bride descends,
With showers prolific feeds the vast embrace,
That fills all nature, and renews her race.

The idea is common among the Greek poets; and it is more than probable that if Virgil borrowed the above from Lucretius, Lucretius himself had a reference to the following verses, in a fragment of Euripedes:

Earth loves the shower, when, parch’d with summer-heat,
Her barren womb no genial moisture knows;
And genial Ether loves, with showers distent,
On her soft lap to fall in dalliance sweet.
From the fond union that creates, at once,
And nurtures all things, man himself proceeds,
Augments and ripens.

Tasso has unquestionably an allusion to this passage of our poet, in his Jerusalem Delivered; and his description is highly beautiful.

La terra, che dianzi afflitta ed egra
Di fessure le membra avea ripiene,
When, on the bosom of maternal Earth,
His showers redundant genial Ether pours,
The dulcet drops seem lost: but harvests rise,
Jocund and lovely; and, with foliage fresh,
Smiles every tree, and bends beneath its fruit.
Hence man and beast are nourish’d: hence o’erflow
Our joyous streets with crowds of frolic youth;
And with fresh songs th’ umbrageous groves resound.
Hence the herds fatten, and repose at ease,
O’er the gay meadows, their unwieldy forms;
While from each full-distended udder drops
The candid milk spontaneous; and hence, too,
With tottering footsteps, o’er the tender grass,

La pioggia in se raccoglie, e si rintegra,
E la comparte alle piu interne vene:
E largemente i nutritivi umori
Alle piante ministra, all’ erbe, ai fiori, &c.

Cant. xiii.

—Earth that late her gaping rifts disclos’d,
And fainting lay to parching heat expos’d,
Receives and ministers the vital show’rs
To fading herbs, to plants, to trees, and flow’rs:
Her fever thus allay’d, new health returns,
No more the flame within her bosom burns;
Again new beauties grace her gladden’d soil,
Again renew’d, her hills and valleys smile.

Hoole.

Long as this note is, and numerous as are its references, I cannot conclude it without instancing a parallel passage of Hebrew poetry, which, in point of sublimity and elegance, surpasses even Lucretius himself. The reader will find it in Psalm lxv. 9, 13.

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it;
Thou abundantly enrichest it

With the ‘dewy’ stream of God, replete with water.
Thou preparest, and fittest it for corn:
Thou drenchest its furrows; its clods thou dissolvest;
Thou mellowest it with showers; thou blessest its increase;
And with thy bounty thou crownest the year.
Thy footsteps drop fatness; they drop on the pastures of the desert,
And the hillocks are begirt with exultation.
The pastures are clothed with flocks, the vales are covered with corn;
They all shout and sing aloud for joy.

Ver. 299. With tottering footsteps,—] The description here given us of the lamb just dropped into the world is not more beautiful than accurate. Dyer who, to the advantage of much original genius, added a strict attention to the various phenomena of nature, has a picture of the same subject in his Fleece.
Artubus infirmis teneras lasciva per herbas
Ludit, lacte mero menteis perculsa novellas.

Haud igitur penitus perunc quæquamque videntur;
Quando alid ex alio reficit Natura, nec  ullam
Rem gigni patitur, nisi morte ajuta alienâ.

Nunc age sis, quoniam docui nihil posse creari
De nihilo, neque item genita ad nihilum revocari;
Ne quà forte tamen cœptes diffidere dictis,
Quod nequeunt oculis rerum primordia cerni;
Adciepræterea, quæ corpora tute necesse est

which will by most readers be regarded as a copy.
It is thus he addresses the shepherd:

But spread around thy tenderest diligence
In flowery spring-time when the new-dropt lamb,
Tottering with weakness, by his mother's side
Feels the fresh world about him.

It is not a little extraordinary that this most characteristic trait in our poet's inimitable picture, the tottering footstep, (artubus infirmis) of the new-born lamb, should have been entirely omitted, not only by Creech, but even in the prose version of Guernier. The French translation of Couture is likewise as little to the purpose: but Marchetti, who is always beautiful, and nearly always just, and by far the most elegant translator that has ever attempted to give Lucretius into any modern language, has not suffered this part of the description to pass unnoticed:

Quindi per i lieti paschi i grassi armenti
Posan le membra affaticate stanche,
E dalle piene mamme in bianche stille
Gronda sovente il nutrivo umore
Onde i novi lor parti ebri e lascivi
Con non len ferno pie scherzant per l'erbe.

Evelyn, likewise, though in feeble poetry, has preserved something of the idea in the following lines:

Hence pure milk from distended teats distils,
And late-fall'n young warm'd with sweet suck it fills;
Who, frisking o'er the meadows, as they pass,
Frolic their feeble limbs on tender grass.

The delineation both of the bleating lamb, and the unweildy ox, is imitated in Les Jardins de Delille: but he has entirely omitted this delicate and picturesque touch; nor does his introduction of the chariort horse into the group, which is not found in Lucretius, altogether atone for its absence:

Là, du sommet lontain des roches buissonneuses,
Je vois le chevre pendre. Ici de mille agneaux
L'écho porte les cris de côteaux en côteaux.
Dans ces prés abreuves des eaux de la colline,
Couché sur ses genoux, le bœuf pesant rumine;
Tandis qu'impétueux, fier, inquiet, ardent,
Cet animal guerrier qu'enfantà le trident,
Deploie, en se jouant, dans un gras pâturage
Sa vigueur indomtée et sa grace sauvage.

Chant i.

There hangs the wild goat o'er the bushy steep,
Here o'er the hills a thousand echoes leap.
Book I.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Gambol their wanton young, each little heart
Quivering beneath the genuine nectar quaff’d.

So nought can perish, that the sight surveys,
With utter death; but Nature still renews
Each from the other, nor can form afresh
One substance, till another be destroy’d.

But come, my friend, and, since the muse has sung
Things cannot spring from, or return to nought,
Lest thou should’st urge, still sceptic, that no eye
Their generative atoms e’er has trac’d;
Mark in what scenes thyself must own, perforce,

From flocks shrill bleating. In you mead the steer
Bends his huge bulk by rivulets cool and clear;
While bold, impetuous, fierce, and fill’d with pride
The warrior beast, that issu’d from the tide,
Displays, as o’er the fattening glebe he skims
His dauntless force, and savage grace of limbs.

Ver. 302. — Nature all reneweth
Each from the other, &c.—] The discoveries
of modern chemistry have established the truth of this
doctrine beyond the possibility of controversy. Every
thing is produced from, and nourished by, every
thing; by the recombination of the particles of one
body, when decomposed, a second body is gene-
rated, from this second a third, from this third a
fourth, and in the same manner to infinity. “The
corruption of one substance,” observed Aristotle,
many ages ago, “is the generation of another: and
the generation of one substance is the corruption
of another.” It would form an admirable motto
to the Lavoisierian system. 'H touti φθις, άλλα γι-
νιν ή τούτο γινος άλλα φθις.

There is hence much appropriate beauty in that
part of the heathen mythology which represents Sa-
turn, or Chronus, the origin of all things, the father
of gods and men, as devouring the children he had
generated; and hence, too, the strict propriety, as
well as elegance, of the following line addressed to
him in one of the hymns of Orpheus:

'Ως διπάντος μιν οπίνα ναι αυξει; μεταλιν αυτος.

Thou all-consuming, all-renewing power!

Ver. 306. But come, my friend, &c.—] The poet is
not content with having logically established the truth
of his position; he is anxious to remove every doubt
which can possibly be urged in opposition to it. And
the only argument which he conceives capable of
producing doubt at all is, that no such eternal and
unchangeable principles or seeds are discoverable in
bodies by ocular perception. The force of such ar-
gument or observation, however, he completely frus-
trates by proving, in a variety of elegant and appo-
site instances, that we unanimously admit the exist-
ence of bodies even where, as in the case in question,
the eye is possesst of no power of decision; and a
different tribunal is appealed to. The illustration of
this assertion is continued to verse 373.
Constitute esse in rebus, nec posse videri.
Principio, venti vis verberat incita pontum,
Ingenteisque ruit naves, et nubila differt;
Interdum, rapido percurrens turbine, campos
Arboribus magnis sternit, monteisque supremos
Sylvifragis vexat flabris: ita perfurit acri
Cum fremitu, sævitque minaci murmur, pontus.
Sunt igitur venti nimirum corpora caeca,
Quae mare, quae terras, quae denique nubila coeli,
Verrunt, ac subito vexantia turbine raptant.

Ver. 312. — *th' excited wind torments the deep* ;
Virgil has several beautiful descriptions of a storm of
wind in his different poems: and in most of them he
has been indebted to Lucretius, though I do not
know that he has excelled him in any. The following
is bold and picturesque:

Qualis hyperboreis Aquilo cum densus ab oris
Incubuit, Scythiaeque hyemes atque arida differt
Nubila; tum segetes alta campique nutantes
Lenibus horrescunt flabris, summaque sonorem
Dant sylve, longique urgent ad littora fluctus:
Ille volat, simul arva fugit, simul æquora verrens.

*Georg. iii. 196.*

So Boreas in his race, when rushing forth,
Sweeps the dark skies, and clears the cloudy North:
The waving harvests bend beneath his blast,
The forest shakes, the groves their honours cast.
He flies aloft, and, with impetuous roar,
Pursues the foaming surges to the shore.

**Dryden.**

Lucretius, in his turn, has been indebted to Homer.
The storm of wind he has here so admirably described,
and the storm of water to which he immediately after-
wards compares it, both probably owe their origin to
the following simile, introduced to illustrate the rage
and activity of Tydides:

*Oven yap συμτιξών, ποταμον πλαύστω σωμάς;
Χνίμαρρα, ὃ τ' ὕκα βίων εκδόσει γέφυρας, &c.*

*I. E. 87.*

Thus from high hills the torrents swift and strong
Deluge whole fields, and sweep the trees along;
Thro' ruined moles the rushing wave resounds,
*O'erwhelms the bridges,* and bursts the lofty bounds:
The yellow harvests of the ripen'd year,
And flatted vineyards one sad waste appear;
While Jove descends in sluicy sheets of rain,
And all the labours of mankind are vain.

**Pope.**

It is from Homer or Lucretius Ariosto has copied
his description of the same phenomenon. The de-
struction of the incumbent bridge, with several other
circumstances, occur alike in each of them. *Orl. Fur.
C. ix.*

—*allhora gonfio, e bianco gia di spume
Per nieve sciolta, e per montane piove,
E l'impeto de l'aqua havea disciolto,
E tratto seco il ponte, e il passo tolto.*
Still atoms dwell, tho' viewless still to sense.
    And, first, th' excited wind torments the deep;
Wrecks the tough bark, and tears the shivering clouds:
Now, with wide whirlwind, prostrating alike
O'er the waste champian, trees, and bending blade;
And now, perchance, with forest-rendering force,
Rocking the mighty mountains on their base.
So vast its fury!—But that fury flows
Alone from viewless atoms, that, combin'd,
Thus form the fierce tornado, raging wild
O'er heav'n, and earth, and ocean's dread domain.

— the waters swelled with heavy rains,
And melted snows, had deluged all the plains;
And, loudly foaming, with resistless force,
Had borne the bridge before them in their course.

Thomson, in his description of an autumnal flood,
has forgotten to introduce this piece of imagery, but
in other respects he is minutely picturesque, and pos-
sess of considerable merit.

Red from the hills innumerable streams
Tumultuous roar; and high above its banks
The river lift: before whose rushing tide
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains,
Roll mingled down— all that the winds had spar'd
In one wild moment ruin'd.

But the bold and energetic muse of the Spanish
poet Ercilla, has far surpassed both the Italian and
the English. To this admirable bard, as well as
gallant soldier, I have already adverted, and shall
have frequent occasion to refer. A variety of his
definitions prove him to have been well acquainted
with Lucretius, and well worthy of imitating him.
The passage I now allude to occurs in the ninth
canto of his Araucana near the commencement, and
comprises the opening of the tempest that announced
the visible appraoch of the Indian daemon Epona-
mon:

Subito comeno el ayre a turbarse,
Y de prodigios tristes se espessava:
Nuves con nuves vienen a cerrarse,
Turbulento rumor se levantava,
Que con ayrados impitus violentos
Monstravan su furor los quatro vientos.
Agua rezia, granizo, piedra espessa
Las intrica das nuves despendian
Rayos, huenos, relampagos, apriessa
Rompen los cielos y la tierra abrian.

The air grew troubled with portentous sound,
And mournful omens multiplied around:
With furious shock the elements engage,
And all the winds contend in all their rage.
From clashing clouds their mingled torrents gush,
And rain, and hail, with rival fury rush:
Bolts of loud thunder, floods of lightning rend
The opening skies, and into earth descend.

Hayley.
Nec ratione fluunt aliæ, stragemque propagant,
Ac quom mollis aquæ fertur natura repente
Flumine abundanti; quem largis imbribus auget
Montibus ex altis magnus decursus aquæi,
Fragmina conjiciens sylvorum, arbustaque tota:
Nec valdei possunt pontes venientis aquæi
Vim subitam tolerare; ita, magno turbidus imbru,
Molibus incurrit, validis cum viribus, amnis;
Dat sonitu magno stragem; volvitque sub undis
Grandia saxa; ruit quæ quidquam fluctibus obstat.
Sic igitur debent venti quoque flamina ferri:
Quæ, veluti validum quom flumen proculuere
Quam libet in partem, trudunt res ante, ruuntque
Inpetibus crebris; interdum vortice torto
Conripiunt, rapideique rotanti turbine portant.
Quæ re etiam atque etiam sunt venti corpora cæca;
Quandoquidem factis, et moribus, æmula magnis
Amnibus inveniuntur, aperto corpore quei sunt.

Tum porro varios rerum sentimus odores;
Nec tamen ad nareis venienteis cernimus umquam;
Necvalidos æstus tuimur, nec frigora quimus
Usurpare oculis; nec voces cernere suemus:

Ver. 342. Or sound thro' ether fleeting—] One of
the questions, observes Aulus Gellius, Noct. Att. v.
15, perpetually agitated amongst the most celebrated
of the ancient philosophers, was this: "Is sound a
substance, or incorporeal?" But substance, con-
tinues he, is that which either acts or suffers; or, as
As when a river, down its verdant banks
Soft-gliming, sudden from the mountains round
Swells with the rushing rain—the placid stream
All limit loses; and, with furious force,
In its resistless tide, bears down, at once,
Shrubs, shatter’d trees, and bridges, weak alike
Before the tumbling torrent: such its power!—
Loud roars the raging flood, and triumphs still,
O’er rocks, and mounds, and all that else contends.
So roars th’ enraged wind: so, like a flood,
Where’er it aims, before its mighty tide,
Sweeps all created things: or round, and round,
In its vast vortex curls their tortur’d forms.—
Tho’ viewless, then, the matter thus that acts,
Still there is matter: and, to reason’s ken,
Conspicuous as the visual texture trac’d
In the wild wave that emulates its strength.

Next, what keen eye e’er follow’d, in their course,
The light-wing’d odours? or develop’d clear
The mystic forms of cold, or heat intense?
Or sound thro’ ether fleeting?—yet, tho’ far

——

the Greeks define it, either the agent or patient:
which definition, he observes, Lucretius has endeavoured to express in these terms:

Vol. I.
Quae tamen omnia corporeâ constare necesse est
Naturâ; quoniam sensus impellere possunt:
Tangere enim, aut tangi, nisi corpus, nulla potest res.

Denique, fluctisrago subpensae in litore, vestes
Uvescunt; eadem, dispessae in sole, serescunt:
At neque, quo pacto persederit humor aquâi,
Visum est, nec rursum quo pacto fugerit aestu.
In parvas igitur parteis dissipargitur humor,
Quas oculei nullâ possunt ratione videre.

Quin etiam, multis solis redeuntibus annis,
Annulus in digito subter tenuatur habendo:
Stillicidii casus lapidem cavat: uncus aratri
Ferreus obtulce decrescit vomer in arvis:

curus. Aristotle observes, that "they believed what-
ever can be touched to be a body, στιγμα όντα ὅπως τοια υμνοι." And Laertius states it from Epicurus, as an
opposite principle, that void, the precise converse of
body, is possessed of a nature free from touch, lib. 10.
The philosophy of the senses, however, is given with
so much beauty and precision in the fourth book of
this poem, that no commentary is necessary to him
who attentively peruses it.

Ver. 356. — The dropping show'r
Scoops the rough rock.—] The instances
adduced by Lucretius are beautifully selected; and
nearly all of them, for anything we know to the
contrary, original. The present elucidation, how-
ever, is as old as the book of Job, in which the atten-
tive author observes, cap. xi. 19. "The rivulets
wear away the stones." But it is from Bion, in all
probability, that Lucretius has immediately derived
it; of whom the hand of time has yet spared us the
following fragment:


By ceaseless drops, like eloquence, that flow,
The rigid stone is hollowed.

In general, however, Lucretius has been rather
imitated than an imitator. Thus Sulpicius:

Decidens scabrum cavat unda tophum;
Ferreus vomer tenuatur agris
Splendet adtrito, digitos honorans,
Annulus auro.

Anthol. Lat. Burm. iii. 97.
From human sight remov'd, by all confess'd
Alike material; since alike the sense
They touch impulsive; and since nought can touch
But matter; or, in turn, be touch'd itself.

Thus, too, the garment that along the shore,
Lash'd by the main, imbibes the briny dew,
Dries in the sun-beam: but, alike unseen,
Falls the moist ether, or again flies off
Entire, abhorrent of the red-ey'd noon.
So fine th' attenuated spray that floats
In the pure breeze; so fugitive to sight.

A thousand proofs spring up. The ring that decks
The fair one's finger, by revolving years,
Wastes imperceptibly. The dropping show'r
Scoops the rough rock. The plough's attemper'd share

The tumbling torrent scoops the rugged rock;
The stern steel plough-share wastes beneath its toil;
And the gold ring the finger that adorns
Lessens by friction.

The same series of images is adopted by Ovid,
with a trifling inversion of the order:

_Gutta cavat lapidem, consumitur annulus usu_
_Et teritur pressa vomer aduncus humo._

_Pont. iv. 10._

Drops scoop the stone, much use the ring consumes,
And the curved share attenuates in the glebe.

Of these examples, that of Bion's is by far the most beautiful, as containing a moral reference. On which account, also, the following, which is the production of a poet of the present day, cannot be perused without a strong feeling of intrinsic merit. It occurs in a poem, entitled _Crombe Ellen_, by the Rev. M. Bowles, who has often favoured the world with proofs of truly poetic inspiration.

Scenes of retir'd sublimity that fill
With fearful extacy, and holy trance,
The pausing mind!—we leave your awful gloom.
And lo! the footway plank that leads across
The narrow torrent, foaming thro' the chasm
Below; the rugged stones are wash'd and worn
Into a thousand shapes, and hollows, scoop'd
By long attrition of the ceaseless surge,
Smooth, deep, and polish'd as the marble urn,
In their hard forms. Here let us sit and watch
The struggling current burst its headlong way,
Hearing the noise it makes, and musing much
On the strange changes of this nether world, &c.
Strataque jam volgi pedibus detrita viarum
Saxea conspicimus: tum, portas propter, ahena
Signa manus dextras obtendunt adtenuari
Sæpe salutantum tactu, præterque meantum.
Hæc igitur minui, quom sint detrita, videmus;
Sed, quæ corpora decedant in tempore quoque,
Invida præclusit speciem natura videndi.

Postremo, quæquamque dies naturaque rebus
Paullatim tribuit, moderatim crescere cogens,
Nulla potest oculorum acies contenta tueri;
Nec porro quæquamque ævo macieque senescunt:
Nec, mare quæ inpendent, vesco sale saxa peresa
Quid quoque amittant in tempore, cernere possis.
Corporibus cæcis igitur natura gerit res.
Nec tamen undique corporeâ stipata tenentur

Ver. 360. *Et in the gigantic forms of solid brass,*
These were statues of the tutelar divinities of particular cities, some part of which, but more especially the right hand, every passenger was accustomed to touch, and even at times to kiss, to ensure his prosperity. "There is a temple of Hercules," observes Cicero, (Orat. ad Verr.) "erected by the Agrigentines, not far from their public forum, held in such esteem and veneration, that both the mouth and chin of the statue, are considerably worn away by the frequency with which they have approached it with kisses as well as religious homage."

Thus Juvenal, Sat. xiv. 219:

_—Cereris tangens aramque, pedemque._
The altar touching, and the foot of Ceres.

Nothing, therefore, can be more obvious than the meaning of our poet, or form a more picturesque illustration of the doctrine he is enforcing.

tum portus propter obena
Signa manus dextras obtendunt adtenuari
Sæpe salutantum tactu, præterque meantum.
Decays: and the thick pressure of the crowd,
Incessant passing, wears the stone-pav’d street.
E’en the gigantic forms of solid brass,
Plac’d at our portals, from the frequent touch
Of devotees and strangers, now display
The right hand lessen’d of its proper bulk.—
All lose, we view, by friction, their extent;
But, in what time, what particles they lose,
This envious nature from our view conceals.
Thus, too, both time and nature give to things
A gradual growth: but never yet the sight
That gradual growth explor’d; nor mark’d their fall,
Still gradual too, by age, or sure decay:
Nor trac’d what portions of incumbent rock,
Loaded with brine, the caustic wave dissolves.—
So fine the particles that form the world.
Yet not corporeal is the whole produc’d

And yet the Baron de Coutures is not satisfied with
this common interpretation; and, in the true spirit
of French gallantry, translates it thus: “and even
the brass knackers affixed to the gates of our gran-
dees are worn by the hands of those who pass by,
or who enter to pay them their respects.” Et les
marcaxes d’airain qui sont aux portes des grands, se
trouvent enfin usées par les mains de ceux qui passent
ou qui viennent faire leur cour.
Superstition, as to its more prominent features, is
the same in all ages: and what Lucretius records as
the practice of Rome in his era, is the practice in the
same city at the present moment: the object of reli-
gious veneration alone having been changed. For the
bronze statue of St. Peter, in the celebrated church
that bears his name, has at this hour, its advanced
foot under which the pope daily places his head, ob-
viously marked and worn bright from the frequency
of the kisses impressed upon it by the multitudes of
devotees who throng towards it, from all quarters,
for a benediction. The same superstitious affection
was evinced towards the statue of Serapis; and still
continues to be exhibited by the Siamese, in the wor-
ship of their chief idol.
Omnia naturâ; namque est in rebus inane:
Quod tibi cognosse in multis erit utile rebus;
Nec sinet errantem dubitare, et quærere semper
De summâ rerum, et nostris diffidere dictis.

[Quapropter locus est intactus inane, vacansque.] 335

Quod, si non esset, nullâ ratione moveri
Res possent; namque, obficium quod corporis exstat,
Obficere atque obstare, id in omni tempore adesset

Ver. 376. Search where thou wilt, an incorporeal
void. The poet, in these verses, advances another axiom or principle of the Epicurean school. He has already established the existence and imperishability of solid bodies; and he now endeavours to demonstrate the existence of a void or space in which such bodies interact. These terms, space and void, and sometimes region, are, therefore, used in the prosecution of his observations, synonymously, and to gratify the ear with a rich interchange of expressions. This existence in the physical world, observes Empiricus, is denominated a void or vacuum, because it is destitute of body; a space, because it contains bodies; and a region, because bodies are moved in it.

The principle here advanced, the poet endeavours to establish by four beautiful and cogent illustrations; and which, with his casual reply to objections that had frequently been urged by other writers, extend to verse 479.—If there be no vacuum, or incorporeal space, the universe would be all and equally solid—and nothing could possibly move, because nothing could possibly give way to admit of motion. But even the common appearances of things convince us, in a vast variety of instances, that substances deemed the most solid and compact, are, nevertheless, possessed of some degree of vacuum. Were this not a fact, were all bodies equally solid and compact, every thing would be possessed of an equal weight. And with whatever speed the space, existing between the parts of bodies separated abruptly and by force, may be filled with air, prior to the arrival of such air there must have been a complete vacuum.

The Cardinal Polignac, who was a strong adherent to every doctrine of the Cartesian school, excepting, indeed, its vortices, has devoted almost the whole of the second book of his Anti-Lucretius to the consideration of this subject, and to the entire denial of all vacuum whatever.

The arguments of Lucretius, as well as those of more modern philosophers, as Spinoza, Gassendi, and Newton, pass in review before him, and he controverts them with no small dexterity; whilst he advances opposite arguments to support the Cartesian system of a plenum. Space, he observes, from the properties attributed to it by Lucretius, is, in reality, a God. For, if space be immutable and infinite, there is no reason why it should not be intelligent and almighty.—If, moreover, it be divisible, and by such division, admit bodies to pass through it, it cannot be infinite.—In this case, too, it must be composed of parts, and consequently corporeal. But that which is pure vacuum cannot be corporeal. Vacant space, therefore, is a mere chimera of the imagination; a thing that can have no real existence. But I must refer the reader, for further information, to the poem itself; as I must also to the works of Bayle, Euler, and other Anti-Cartesians, for the ratiocination by which this specious mode of arguing has been completely subverted.
By nature. In created things exists, an incorpoREAL VOID.
This mark, and half philosophy is thine.
Doubtful no longer shalt thou wander: taught
Th’ entire of things, and by our verse convinc’d.
And know this Void is space untouch’d and pure.

Were space like this vouchsaf’d not, nought could move:
Corporeal forms would still resist, and strive

Space, or void, is, in the present day, I believe,
universally assented to; and seems to be demonstrated
by the best chemical experiments. M. de la Place
has long asserted, that the molecules of bodies are
infinitely larger than the diameter of these mole-
cules; and, among other demonstrations, has appealed
to the extreme facility with which the rays of light
penetrate transparent substances in every direction.
And M. Hailiy, who espouses the same doctrine,
has advanced proofs still more decisive, from the
symmetrical arrangement of the molecules of various
natural bodies in a state of crystallization. See his
Traité Elémentaire de Physique, lately published at
Paris; a work well worth consulting by every one
who is attached to the science of natural philosophy.

Ver. 380. And know this void is space untouch’d
and pure.] The original of this verse,
which is certainly unnecessary, and in the original
strangely unconnected, has been condemned in strong
terms by Bentley and Wakefield. The latter has,
therefore, as will be found in the opposite page, in-
cluded it in brackets; and advanced a conjecture, that
it was at first nothing more than a mere marginal re-
ference of an ancient transcriber, which, at length,
forced its uncouth way into the text itself.

Ver. 381. Were space like this vouchsaf’d not, nought
could move? ] It was not the Epicureans alone,
but the Pythagoreans, and many other sects of phi-
losophers, who contended for the existence of a va-
cuum: a dogma first introduced among men of let-
ters, either by Democritus or Leucippus, the founders
of the atomic school. Laertius, therefore, speaking
of the former of these philosophers, asserts, δοκειν τοῦ
τυχόν και τὸν παγκόσμιον δίναν αὐτούς να καταλέγειν: “It appeared
to him, that atoms, and a vacuum, were the principles
of all things.” Epicurus, however, improved upon
the doctrine of Democritus; and though he allowed
and contended strenuously for the existence of a void,
he did not admit that void to be a principle of things,
maintaining it to afford nothing more than a mere
place for the principles of things, which were solid,
to exist in. He likewise added the property of weight
to those of magnitude and figure: and, conceiving
that the vortices, or regular routines of motion, in
which, according to Democritus, all material atoms
proceeded, constituted a necessity fatal to all moral
liberty, and indispensably reduced the human soul to
a mere machine, he discarded them from his creed;
and, to the perpendicular and reflexive motions al-
lowed by atomic philosophers in general, he intro-
duced a third; and supposed that atoms, or the seeds
of things, had an extraordinary power of declining
from a right line, and moving spontaneously, and
without collision or impetus, in an oblique or curvi-
linear direction. From which alteration, as will be more
fully explained in the second book of this poem, he ima-
gined he obtained a foundation for moral election.
Omnibus: haud igitur quidquam procedere possent, 340  
Principium quoniam cedendi nulla daret res.  
At nunc per maria, ac terras, sublimaque cœli,  
Multa modis multis variâ ratione moveri  
Cernimus ante oculos: quæ, si non esset inane,  
Non tam solitudo motu privata carerent,  
Quam genita omnino nullâ ratione fuissent:  
Undique materies quoniam stipata quiesset.  
Præterea, quamvis solidæ res esse putentur,  
Hinc tamen esse licet raro cum corpore cernas.  
In saxis, ac speluncis, permanat aquarum  
Liquidus humor, et uberibus flent omnia guttis:  
Dissupat in corpus sese cibus omnæ animantium:  
Crescunt arbusta, et fetus in tempore fundunt:  
Quod cibus in totas, usque ab radicibus imis,  
Per trunços ac per ramos diffunditur omnes:  
Inter sæpta meant voces, et clusa domorum  
Transvolitant: rigidum permanat frigus ad ossa.  
Quod, nisi inania sint, quà possent corpora quæque  
Transire, haud ullâ fieri ratione videres.  

Denique, quær alias alii præstare videmus  
Pondere res rebus, nihilō majore figurâ?  
Nam, si tantumdem est in lanæ glomere, quantum  
Corporis in plumbo est, tantumdem pendere par est;
With forms corporeal, nor consent to yield;
While the great progress of creation ceas'd.
But what more clear in earth or heav'n sublime,
Or the vast ocean, than, in various modes,
That various matter moves? which, but for space,
'Twere vain t' expect: and vainer yet to look
For procreative power, educing still
Kinds from their kinds through all revolving time.

True, things are solid deem'd: but know that those
Deem'd so the most are rare and unconjoin'd.
From rocks, and caves, translucent lymph distils,
And, from the tough bark, drops the healing balm.
The genial meal, with mystic power, pervades
Each avenue of life; and the grove swells,
And yields its various fruit, sustain'd alone
From the pure food propell'd thro' root and branch.
Sound pierces marble; through reclusest walls
The bosom-tale transmits: and the keen frost
E'en to the marrow winds its sinuous way.—
Destroy all vacuum, then, close ev'ry pore,
And, if thou canst, for such events account.

Say, why of equal bulk, in equal scale,
Are things oft found unequal in their poise?
O'er the light wool the grosser lead prevails
With giant force. But were th' amount alike
Corporis officium est quoniam premere omnia deorum:
Contra autem natura manet sine pondere inanis.
Ergo, quod magnum est æque, leviusque videtur,
Nimirum plus esse sibi declarat inanis;
Ut contra gravius plus in se corporis esse
Dedicat, et multo vacuum minus intus habere.

Est igitur nimirum id, quod ratione sagaci
Quærimus, admixtum rebus; quod inane vocamus.
Illud, in hiis rebus ne te deducere vero
Possit, quod quidam fingunt, præcurrere cogor.

Ver. 418. But some there are such doctrines who deny:] In the progress of this poem, we shall have abundant illustrations of the general truth of that apothegm of Solomon, that “there is nothing new under the sun.” The arguments adduced in favour of a vacuum, and which have the appearance of being unanswerable, by Democritus and Epicurus, were, nevertheless, controverted by Zeno and Aristotle; who contended that all nature was full of matter, and there was no vacuity in any point of creation. Lucretius, and other pupils of the Epicurean school, adhered to, and continued to advance the same doctrine at Rome: they were, opposed by Cicero and Seneca. The same arguments were adduced, and the same objections retorted. The world grew tired of the contest, and it subsided. At length Des Cartes and Newton arose, and the contest was revived: a material plenum was contended for by the former, and a vacuum as strenuously asserted by the latter. Like the revival of an old fashion, the dispute was once more new to the world; and all were anxious to become ontologists and mathematicians. Sir Isaac had, undoubtedly, the advantage of his adversary. His arguments, or rather those which had been formerly advanced, and were now advanced again, were by far the most cogent; and his proselytes the most numerous. But the world was not fully convinced on the death of both of them. The defence of a plenum was entailed on Leibnitz, and that of a vacuum on Euler. The same demonstrations were mutually advanced, and the same objections mutually urged. Am I doing injustice to the ingenuity of the moderns? Let, then, two or three examples suffice. More might easily be selected, but I will not so far trespass on the reader’s time.

“All bodies about the earth,” observes Sir Isaac Newton, in answer to the doctrine of Des Cartes, “gravitate towards the earth; and the weights of all bodies, equally distant from the earth’s centre, are as the quantities of matter in those bodies,” &c. Princip. lib. ii.
Of matter each contain'd, alike the weight
Would prove perpetual: for, from matter sole,
Flows weight, and moment, ever prone to earth:

While vacant space nor weight nor moment knows.
Where things surpoise, then, though of equal bulk,
There matter most resides: but where ascends
The beam sublime, the rising substance holds
A smaller share, and larger leaves the void.

Hence draws the sage his creed: in all produc'd
Finds vacuum still, and calls that vacuum space.

But some there are such doctrines who deny:
And urge in proof, deceptive, that the wave

Compare this axiom with that proposed by Lucretius, commencing with an interrogation at verse 403, and continued to verse 420.

Say why of equal bulk, in equal scale,
Are things oft found unequal in their poise?
O'er the light wool the grosser lead prevails
With giant force, &c.

For other instances, see the note that immediately follows; that on v. 510, v. 536, and v. 1028.

Ver. 419. And urge in proof, deceptive, that the wave, &c.] There may be a plenum, observes Des Cartes, but motion may, nevertheless, commence and continue: "every part of matter that is moved (to copy from the abstract of his doctrine on this subject, as given by the late ingenious Adam Smith) thrusting some other out of its place, and that some other still, and so on. But, to avoid an infinite progress, and harmonize with his own vortices, he supposed that the matter which any body pushed before it, rolled immediately backwards to supply the place of that matter which flowed behind it: as we may observe in the swimming of a fish, that the water, which it pushes before it, immediately rolls backwards to supply the place, of what flows in behind it; and thus forms a small circle, or vortex, round the body of the fish." Essays on Philosophical Subjects.

Whether or not Des Cartes knew at the time he adopted this illustration of his doctrine, he was only repeating what had been long advanced before, and what, in the verses in question, is admirably refuted by Lucretius, I cannot tell. But the Cardinal Pogignac, notwithstanding this refutation of our poet, still chose to continue the same plausible, but unfounded, illustration, in his Anti-Lucretius, though he was well acquainted with the reply that was already prepared for him. Anti-Lucre. lib. ii. 673.

Rem res dum pellit, quaeris quo pulsa recedit, &c.

Sir Richard Blackmore has borrowed the same image from our poet; but in opposition to the philosophy of Aristotle. Creation, b. i.

Nor could the fish divide the stiffen'd floods.

L 2
Cedere squamigeris latices nitentibus aiunt,
Et liquidas aperire vias, quia post loca pisces
Linquant, quo possint cedentes confluere undae:
Sic alias quoque res inter se posse moveri,
Et mutare locum, quamvis sint omnia plena.
Scilicet id falsae totum ratione receptum est.
Nam, quo squamigeri poterunt procedere tandem,
Ni spatium dederint latices? Concedere porro
Quo poterunt undae, quam pisces ire nequibunt?
Aut igitur motu privandum est corpora quaeque,
Aut esse admixtum dicundum est rebus inane;
Unde initum primum capiat res quaeque movendi.

Postremo, duo de concurso corpora lata
Si cita dissilient, nempe aer omne necesse est,
Inter corpora quod fiat, possidat inane.
Is porro quamvis, circum celerantibus auris,
Confluat, haud poterit tamen uno tempore totum
Conpleri spatium: nam primum quemque necesse est
Obcupet ille locum, deinde omnia possideantur.
Quod, si forte aliquis, quam corpora dissiluere,
Tum putat id fieri, quia se condenseat aer,

Ver. 433. When force mechanic severs, &c.—[1 am very much mistaken if there be any thing confused or obscure in the verbiage of this proposition. I am sure there is not in the original; and I have endeavoured there should not be in the translation.—It is obvious, however, that Creech did not enter.
Not through imagin’d pores admits the race
With glitt’ring scales—but yields at once, and opes
The liquid path; and occupies, in turn,
The space behind the aureat fish deserts.
Thus, too, that all things act: the spot possess’d
Exchanging sole, whilst each continues full.
Believe them not. If nought of space the wave
Give to its gilded tenants, how, resolve,
Feel they the power t’ advance? and if t’ advance
They know not, how can, next, the wave thus yield?
Or matter ne’er can move, then, or within
Some void must mix through all its varying forms,
Whence springs alone the pow’r of motion first.

When force mechanic severs, and, abrupt,
Drives two broad bodies distant, quick between
Flows the light air, and fills the vacuum form’d.
But ne’er so rapid can the light air flow
As to forbid all void; since, step by step,
It still must rush till the whole space be clos’d.
Nor credit those who urge such bodies sole
Can part because the liquid air, compress’d
To closer texture, gives the needed space.
Errat: nam vacuum tum fit, quod non fuit ante,
Et repletur item, vacuum quod constitit ante;
Nec tali ratione potest denserier aër:
Nec, si jam posset, sine inani posset, opinor,
Ipse in se trahere, et parteis conducere in unum.
Quapropter, quamvis caussando multa moreris,
Esse in rebus inane tamen fateare necesse est.

Multaque praeterea tibi possunt conmemorando
Argumenta fidem dictis conradere nostris:
Verum animo satis hæc vestigia parva sagaci
Sunt, per quæ possis cognoscere cætera tute.
Namque canes, ut montivagæ persæpe feraì
Naribus inveniunt, injectis frunde, quietes,
Quom semel institerunt vestigia certa viai;
Sic alid ex alio per te tute ipsæ videre
Talibus in rebus poteris, cæcasque latebras
Insinuare omnes, et verum protrahere inde.

Quod, si pigraris, paullumve recesseris abs re,
Hoc tibi de plano possum promittere, Memmi;

\[ \text{Ver. 453. For as the hound, &c.—}] \]
The same simile is adopted by Sophocles, in the opening of
his Ajax Flagellifer. It is thus Minerva addresses
Ulysses:

—\( \text{κύος Ἀακανχής ὃς τις πυμής} \) κατι, &c.
—like Sparta’s hound, of scent
Sagacious, do’st thou trace him, nor in vain.

\[ \text{Franklin.} \]

It is impossible to read either of these passages,
without being reminded of Homer’s lively description
of the faithful Argus that died partly of years,
and partly of joy, on the sudden return of Ulysses to
Ithaca: and it is probable Lucretius had it in his
recollection at the time of composing the simile.

\[ \text{Aρ ὕ κυος χελάντι τι καὶ εὐκατο κημεῖος} \]  
\[ \text{Ἀγγεῖος ὃδεισσὺς παλατιζόμενος, &c.} \]

\[ \text{Odyss. lib. xvii.} \]
Such feeble reas’ners, in opposing void,
A double void confess: for, first, perforce,
A void they own, where void was none before,
Betwixt the substance sever’d; and bring next
A proof surmountless that the air itself
Throng’d with a prior void: else how, to bounds
Of closer texture, could it e’er contract?

A thousand facts crowd round me: to the same
Converging all. But ample these, I ween,
Though but the footsteps of the mighty whole,
To fix thy faith, and guide thee to the rest.
For as the hound, when once the tainted dew
His nostrils taste, pursues the vagrant fox
O’er hills, and dales, and drags him from his lair;
So may’st thou trace from fact associate fact,
Through ev’ry maze, through ev’ry doubtful shade,
Till Truth’s bright form, at length, thy labours crown.

Nor tardy be the toil, for much remains.
So oft, O Memmius! from the sacred fount

With him the youth pursu’d the goat or fawn,
Or trac’d the mazy lev’ret o’er the lawn.—
Him no fell savage on the plain withstood,
None ’scap’d him bosom’d in the gloomy wood;
His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,
To wind the vapour in the tainted dew.

Pope’s Odyssey, b. xvii.

We recognise our own poet, however, in the following of his antagonist.

Ut canis occultam sylvis deprendere damam
Nare sagax, et odore sequi vestigia prædæ
Venari docuit. Antu-Lucr. vi. 50.

Thus learn we from the hound to hunt, of nose
Keen to pursue through tangled woods the deer,
Skulking from sight, and track his tainted steps.
Usque adeo largos haustus de fontibus amnis
Lingua meo suavis diti de pectore fundet,
Ut verear, ne tarda prius per membra senectus
Serpat, et in nobis vitaí claustra resolvat,
Quam tibi de quâ vis unâ re versibus omnis
Argumentorum sit copia missa par aureis.
Sed nunc, ut repetam cœptum pertexere dictis.
Omnis, ut est, igitur, per se, natura duabus
Constitit in rebus: nam corpora sunt, et inane;
Hæc in quo sita sunt, et quâ diversa moventur.
Corpus enim per se communis dedicat esse
Sensus: quoi nisi prima fides fundata valebit,
Haud erit, obscultis de rebus quo referentes
Confirmae animos quidquam ratione queamus.
Tum porro locus, ac spatium, quod inane vocamus,
By wisdom fed, so largely have I drank,
And such the dulcet doctrines yet untold,
That age may first unman us, and break down
The purple gates of life, ere the bold muse
Exhaust the boundless subject. Haste we, then,
Each pulse is precious, haste we to proceed.

Know, then, th' entire of nature sole consists
Of space and body: this the substance mov'd,
And that the area of its motive pow'r.
That there is body, ev'ry sense we boast
Demonstrates strong: and, if we trust not sense,
Source of all science, then the mind itself,
Perplex'd and hopeless, must still wander on,
In reas'ning lost, to ev'ry doubt a prey.

of the necessity of trusting to the external senses, and the superiority of their evidence over evidence of a different kind, forms the foundation of the philosophy of Dr. Beattie, Dr. Reid, and other pillars of "the Reflective School" of Scotland, as they lately seemed desirous of calling themselves; in opposition to the analogical school, which, generally speaking, might embrace almost all philosophers but themselves. The arguments adduced by these litterati may, in some degree, and as they were principally intended, attack the systems of Hume and Berkeley, who denied an external existence; but they must necessarily be feeble in controverting the doctrines of Spinoza, Hobbes, or Des Cartes. See note on verse 535 of this book, and verse 488 of book iv. as also the Appendix to the prefixed life of Lucretius.

This appeal of mankind at large to the testimony of the external senses, is noticed by Ariosto, in his Orlando Furtoso; who is fearful that, on account of the prevalence of such principle, his mysterious tales, so totally repugnant to all the experience they offer, will obtain but little credit with the world.

Il schiocco volgo non gli vuol dar fede
Se non le vede, e tocca chiare, e piane.
Per questo io so, che l'inesperienza
Fardi al mio canto dar pora credenza.

Cant. vii.

The herd unletter'd nothing will believe
But what their senses plainly can perceive.
Hence I shall never with common minds prevail,
And gain but trivial credit for my tale.

Hooft.
Si nullum foret, haud quâquam sita corpora possent
Esse, neque omnino quoquâm divorsa meare:
Id, quod jam supra tibi paullo obtendimus ante.

Præterea, nihil est, quod possis dicere ab omni
Corpore séjunctum, secretumque esse ab inani;
Quoi quasi tertia sit numero natura reperta.
Nam, quodquomque erit, esse aliquid debeat id ipsum
Augmine vel grandi, vel parvo denique, dum sit;
Quoi si tactus erit quam vis levis, exiguusque,
Corporis augebit numerum, summamque sequetur:
Sin intactile erit, nullâ de parte quod ullam
Rem prohibere queat per se transire meantem;
Scilicet hoc' id erit vacuum, quod inane vocamus.

Præterea, per se quodquomque erit, aut faciet quid,
Aut aliis fungi debeat agentibus ipsum,
Aut erit, ut possunt in eo res esse, gerique:
At facere, et fungi, sine corpore nulla potest res;
Nec præbere locum porro, nisi inane vacansque,
Ergo præter inane, et corpora, tertia per se
Nulla potest rerum in numero natura reliqui;
Nec, quæ sub sensus cadatullo tempore nostros,
Nec ratione animi quam quisquam possit apisci.
Nam, quæquomque cluent, aut hiis conjuncta duabus
And were not space, were vacuum not allow'd,
In nought could bodies, then, their powers display
Of various action: each compressing each
To motion fatal, as already sung.

Nor is there aught such vacant space besides,
And matter close-embodied, can be trac'd
A substance forming discrepant from each.
Search where thou wilt, whate'er occurs to view,
Of bulk minute, or large, tho' e'en its form
Change with the hour, if tangible it prove,
This stamps it matter, and forbids all doubt.
But if intangible, throughout if still
To matter pervious, act where'er it may,
'Tis, then, void space, and can be nought besides.

All things, moreo'er, a substance must evince
Acting, or suffering act; or, form the sphere
In which to act or suffer. But to act
Or suffer action, must be matter's sole;
While space alone that needed sphere admits.

Nought then, 'twixt space and matter can subsist
Of intermediate substance: nought be trac'd
By keenest efforts of th' external sense,
Or by the meditating mind deduc'd.
All else we meet with, or conceive but these
Are mere conjunctions, or events attach'd.
Rebus ea invenies, aut horum eventa videbis.
Conjunctum est id, quod numquam sine perniciali
Discidio potis est sejungi, seque gregari:
Pondus utei saxi est, calor ignis, liquor aquai,
Tactus corporibus cunctis, intactus inani.
Servitium contra, paupertas, divitiæque,
Libertas, bellum, concordia, cætera, quorum
Adventu manet incolomis natura, abituque;
Hæc solitei sumus, ut par est, eventa vocare.

Tempus item per se non est, sed rebus ab ipsis
Consequitur sensus, transactum quid sit in ævo;
Tum, quæ res instet, quid porro deinde sequatur:
Nec per se quemquam tempus sentire fatendum est
Semotum ab rerum motu, placidâque quiete.

Denique Tyndaridem raptam, belloque subactas
Troïegenas genteis quom dicunt esse, videndum est,

Ver. 510. E'en time, that measures all things,—]
Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and some other philosophers,
contended that Time was a substance; but the Stoics
believed it to be insubstantial, though not precisely
in the same manner as the Epicureans. The express
dogma of Epicurus himself is thus rehearsed by Gas-
sendi: "Time is merely an event of the imagination,
or an attribute given to things by the mind, while
contemplating them either as enduring, or ceasing;
as possessing a longer or a shorter existence; as en-
joying such existence, as having enjoyed it, or as
being about to enjoy it." It is a definition which,
for accuracy, may challenge that of any of the moderns;
and is altogether consentaneous with the opinion of
Mr. Locke: "To understand time and eternity
right," says this first of modern philosophers, "we
ought, with attention, to consider what idea it is we
have of duration, and how we came by it. 'Tis evident
to one who will but observe what passes in his own mind,
that there is a train of ideas which constantly succeed
one another in his understanding as long as he is
awake. Reflection on these appearances of several
ideas, one after another in our minds, is that which
furnishes us with the idea of succession: and the dis-
ance between the appearance of any two ideas in our
minds, is that which we call duration. Having thus
And know the learned by conjunctions name
Those powers in each perpetual that inhere,
And ne'er can part till void or matter cease.
Thus heat to fire, fluidity to streams,
Weight to the rock, to all of matter touch,
And want of touch to space. While Discord, Peace,
Oppression, Freedom, Poverty, and Wealth,
And aught that else, of matter, and of space
Lives independent, though engender'd hence,
Are termed, and justly, by the wise events.

E'en time, that measures all things, of itself
Exists not; from the mind alone produc'd,
As, link by link, contemplating minute,
Things present, past, or future: for, of time,
From these disjoin'd, in motion, or at rest
Tranquil and still, what mortal can conceive?

Thus spring events to birth. The rape renown'd
Of beauteous Helen, or the fall of Troy,

get the idea of duration, the next thing natural for
the mind to do, is to get some measure of this com-
mon duration, whereby it might judge of its different
lengths, and consider the distinct order wherein sev-
eral things exist; without which a great part of our
knowledge would be confused, and a great part of
history rendered very useless. This consideration of
duration, as set out by certain periods, and marked by
certain measures, or epochs, is that, I think, which most
properly we call time.'" Hum. Underst. b. ii. c.
14.

Ver. 516. Thus spring events to birth.—] Actions
can only be said to exist, speaking with logical pre-
cision, in consequence of the existence of the substra-
tum or body whence they issue. They could not
have existed of themselves; and without such sub-
stratum would never have existed at all. An illicit
amour can have no existence independently of the
persons consenting to it. The fall of a city supposes
the prior existence of such city, and cannot, as an
existence, be detached from the city itself.

Ver. 517. — beauteous Helen, or the fall of Troy.
] The story is so well known, as to require little or no
explanation. Helen, the grace and loveliness of
Ne forte hæc per se cogant nos esse fateri;
Quando ea secla hominum; quorum hæc eventa fuerunt,
Inrevocabilis abstulerit jam praeterita ætas.
Namque aliud terris, aliud legionibus ipsis,
Eventum dici poterit, quodquomque erit actum.

Denique, materies si rerum nulla fuisset,
Nec locus, ac spatium, res in quo quæque geruntur;
Numquam, Tyndaridis formæ conflatus amore,
Ignis, Alexandri Phrygio sub pectore gliscens,

whose form have been represented by poets and historians as perfect and unrivalled, and whose very name, derived probably from ἱέρα (latro, perlatro), implies seduction, is fabulously reported to have been the daughter of Leda by Jupiter. Theseus, we are told, eloped with her ere she had completed her tenth year: she was overtaken, however, before she appears to have reached the Cretna Green of Greece, by her brothers Castor and Pollux, and rescued from the hands of her unfortunate lover. At a more mature and proper age she received the addresses of Menelaus, king of Sparta, and was married to him. It was not long afterwards that the elegant Paris, son of Priam king of Troy, was presented to her at the Spartan court; and she consented to a second elopement. The Spartan monarch followed her, but in vain; and, stung by revenge and disappointed love, he excited the Greek States to declare war against Priam, for the countenance he seemed to afford his voluptuous son. The war, as every one knows, terminated in the subversion of Troy, and the destruction of Priam and his family. The wooden horse or machine, by which the utter ruin of this celebrated city was accomplished, with every attendant circumstance, is inimitably related by Virgil in his Æneid, b. ii. and Homer, in his Odyssey, b. 4.

Ver. 517. — or the fall of Troy,] Had Lucretius been a writer of the present day, he must have sought for other examples than those he has now adduced, or the fastidious pen of some modern critics would have been levelled against him. Le Bossu, in his Essay on the Epic, and Mr. Bryant, in an express Dissertation on the subject, and with a gigantic mass of erudition, have attempted to prove that there never was such a place as Troy, or at least on the plain of Ilium; and of course that the history our poet refers to never had an existence of any kind, either dependent or independent: and that the whole story of the Trojan war is a fable invented by Homer, and unfounded in fact. Their arguments are principally derived from the difficulty of determining the spot where, according to the geographic description of Homer, the city of Troy must have been erected, if it had ever been erected at all: from the very different situations in which different critics have placed it; from the entire want of all traces and remains of this celebrated city even in the time of Lucan; and from the uncertainty of intelligence possessed by the Greeks themselves prior to their olympiads, which did not commence till some centuries after the supposed conquest of Troy.

When a man of erudition once entertains an opi-
Book I. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Tho' deem'd existences, yet of themselves
Existed never: on material things,
On place and persons acting, or coerc'd,
Alone dependent. These revolving years
Have long th' irrevocable doom assign'd:
And rape and conquest, as events that claim'd
From these existence, now exist no more.

Had ne'er been form'd the matter, or the space,
Whose pow'r conjunctive gave those scenes to be;
No fire had e'er, from lovely Helen's eyes,
Glanc'd thro' the bosom of the Trojan youth,

nion different from that of the world at large, it is curious to observe with what facility he can muster up the whole phalanx of his learning in demonstration of the fancy for which he means to contend. And hence, Mr. Bryant, it must be confessed, has written with much plausibility upon this well controverted though heterodox subject. But he has been opposed several antagonists, who have all proved themselves worthy of the cause they have undertaken to defend. Mr. Wakefield has replied to him with an equal degree of classical erudition: and with the potent shield of a Hector, has maintained the classic towers of Troy against the intended overthrow of this literary Ajax. Mr. Dallaway has also, in his "Excursions to the Troad," &c. followed the footsteps of Mr. Wakefield, and exerted his abilities on the same subject with much critical learning, local accuracy, and desirable success. But Mr. Bryant appears to have met with a still sturdier champion in M. Chevalier, whose "Tableau de la Plaine de Troye" is a publication deserving of all praise; and replete with arguments so subversive of the observations of both Le Bossu and Mr. Bryant, that the latter gentleman could not refrain from a reply to this truly ingenious pamphlet: in which, however, he does not appear to me to have been more successful than in his first attempt. A concise account of this elaborate tableau of M. Chevalier, is given in vol. iv. of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, by Professor Dalzel; who, in corroboration of the truth of its statements, has also added many ingenious passages and illustrations from historians and subsequent travellers. To complete the triumph of Homer, Dr. Chandler and Mr. Gell have since satisfactorily, and from ocular observation, pointed out the very spot on which the city was built; and identified the site of its gates, its groves, and its rivers.

Ver. 527. No fire bad e'er, from lovely Helen's eyes, Glanc'd thro' the bosom of the Trojan youth.

The effect of love is variously described, as well as accounted for, by the poets. Generally, however, the instrument supposed to be employed, is either a dart from the eye, producing a wound, as in v. 36, of the present book; or else a species of subtle and irresistible flame, eroding and consuming the bosom, as in the present passage. In the opening of book iv. of the Æneid, Virgil introduces both these metaphors,

Vulnus alit venis, et cceo carpitur igni.
She feeds her wound, and pines with secret fire.
Clara ascendisset saevi certamina belli; 
Nec clam durateus Troianis Pergama partu 
Inflammasset equus nocturno Graiugenarum: 
Perspicere ut possis, res gestas funditus omneis 
Non ita, utei corpus, per se constare, neque esse:
Nec ratione clure eadem, quâ constat inane:
Sed magis ut merito possis eventa vocare
Corporis, atque loci, res in quo quæque gerantur.
Corpora sunt porro partim primordia rerum,
Partim concilio quæ constant principiorum.

Petrarc follows our poet's latter image alone in the ensuing description:
I cle l'esca amorosa al petto avea
Qual maraviglia se di subito arsi?
What wonder, that I burn and smart,
Since love's keen torch inflames my heart.

Solomon has beautifully and boldly introduced another system of imagery, the elegance, and indeed the meaning of which has seldom been sufficiently explained. Under his creative powers, the fascinating fair becomes the surrounding wall of a fortified city; which was often erected with consummate skill, beautified with all the ornaments of architecture, and over different parts of which were projected towers or turrets for the purpose of repelling the assailing foe; in whose construction and finish the taste of the artist was principally exerted, and which were hence frequently denominated towers of ivory or of silver. The triumphant fair being thus generally resembled to the beautiful and ornamental wall of a defensive city—her white and swelling bosom is next compared to the white and swelling turrets projected from its surface, to those elegant, but dangerous prominences, which were equally formed for the purpose of attack or repulsion, and which no man, in either case, can approach without extreme peril. With this introductory explanation the passage I refer to is equally exquisite and obvious.

Call her a wall—and' two towers of silver 
Will we build upon her.—
I myself am a wall, 
And my bosom resembles two towers.

For a still farther illustration, the reader may consult my version and notes upon this elegant simile, Sacred Idyls, p. 59 and 206.

Ver. 531. Pour'd forth at night,—] Hence Virgil,
Invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam:
Caduntur vigiles: portisque patentibus omnes
Accipiunt socios, atque agmina conscia jungunt.
Æn. ii. 265.

A nameless crowd succeed; their forces join 
T' invade the town, oppress'd with sleep and wine. 
Those few they find awake, first meet their fate, 
Then to their fellows they unbar the gate.

Dryden.

Ver. 535. Know too, that bodies, in their frame, consist,] The poet proceeds to develop another principle of the
And kindled the fierce flames of storied war:
No giant horse the fell Achaian throngs
Pour’d forth at night, subverting Priam’s realm.
Mark, then, how different facts exist and blend
From void or matter; and how justly term’d
Of place and body the deriv’d events.

Know, too, that bodies, in their frame consist,
Part, of primordial atoms uncombin’d,

Epicurean philosophy; and conceiving that he has
established the existence of matter and space, and demonstrated that no other principle whatever can be detected throughout the Universe, he next advances that matter is composed of two kinds, elementary atoms, impenetrably solid and compact, and substances compounded of such atoms with certain proportions of vacuum, consequently unsolid and porous. The elementary atoms of matter, he contends, must be solid, as being the precise converse of vacuum, and having no common property with it; that vacuum itself could not be proved to exist, or measured as to its extent, if it were not bounded by solid substances; and that, thus, they mutually demonstrate the existence of each other.

These primal or solid atoms are the ultima, as the poet afterwards endeavours to demonstrate, or smallest bodies of actual existence. The mind, undoubtedly, may conceive of bodies more minute, for it may conceive of these minutest substances of actual existence as divided, and as infinitely divisible. But our philosophic bard attempts to prove (ver. 675.) that if we admit the doctrine of an infinite physical divisibility, or, in other words, do not contend for an extreme into which bodies may be divisible, and beyond which they cannot be divided, the grossest absurdities must follow. Every thing would, in this case, be infinite alike, as possessed of infinite parts; and it would, as in a variety of instances it has been done in modern times, lead us to the total disbelief of matter of any kind; and to become pupils of Spinoza, Hobbs, Berkeley, or Hume, according as the collateral tenets of these philosophers principally influenced our judgment.

The supposition, that these primal atoms were the least or ultimate bodies of existing nature, was an improvement upon the system of Democritus, and a doctrine peculiar to the Epicurean school. Thus Dionysius observes, as quoted by Eusebius, Prepar. xiv. 7. τοσούτων διαφωτισάμενοι τον μίν δε χαλκίτας πάσας καὶ διὰ τούτου ακαταστάτους, ὃ δὲ Δημοκρίτου καὶ μεγάλοις εἰς τινὰς ατομοὺς υπελεῖπεν; “they disagreed in as much as the atoms of Epicurus were all least and ultimate, and therefore insensible; whilst Democritus conceived many of them to be of considerable magnitude.” And Heraclitus, therefore, who adhered to the old atomic school, has, occasionally, denominaed these latter ὑφόκως, tumid, or massy.

But atoms that are perfectly solid are indissoluble, and can never be separated. Such atoms, must, therefore, exist for ever, and without change: they must be eternal, and immutable. These properties of matter, properties I mean attributed to it by the Epicureans, our philosophic poet discusses at ver. 581 and 604.
Sed, quæ sunt rerum primordia, nulla potest vis Stringuere; nam solido vincunt ea corpore demum; Et si difficile esse videtur credere quidquam In rebus solido reperiri corpore posse: Transit enim fulmen coeli per sæpta domorum, Clamor ut, ac voces: ferrum candescit in igni; Dissiliuntque fere ferventi saxa vapore:

I have often been amused at the disputes in which men of extensive learning and profound speculation have engaged on the subject of matter; but more especially at beholding them, in the prosecution of their inquiries, arrive at a conclusion the very converse of that for which they at first contended. Dr. Priestley was denominated a materialist, and he thus acknowledged himself; and, in effect, fought more battles under the standard of materialism than any other champion in Christendom. Everything with him was matter in the Universe that was not space: there was no tertium quid, or third and different substance: consequently, the soul of man is material. But what is matter, or rather what is its definition? If I recollect aright, these are the Doctor’s words: “Matter is a solid and extended substance, endowed with powers of attraction and repulsion.”—With this definition, he enters into a controversy with his friend Dr. Price; and, nugatory as was its termination, the world is much indebted to these celebrated men for the controversy thus commenced. Can matter think? is the grand question proposed by the latter; a substance naturally inert, and which is only moved by collision or other violence? Matter, observes Dr. Priestley, in his reply to this question, may think, for matter is not inert; it is not impenetrable: it is not, logically speaking, solid. No bodies, at any time, come into immediate contact with each other, or influence each other by means of simple solidity. The earth is affected by the sun; the moon by the earth; the waters of the earth by the moon. Light is reflected from substances to which it directs its course, at a distance, and without impinging upon them. The particles of all bodies deemed the most solid and impermeable are, at any time, made to approach nearer, or recede farther from each other, by the application of different degrees of heat or cold. We can form no conception, therefore, of the beginning of perfect solidity; and it is not an improbable conjecture, that all the elementary matter employed in the formation of the solar system, might be comprised in the capacity of a nut-shell. It is, indeed, most probable, that there is no such thing as solidity in nature; and that matter, consistently with the theory of Boscovich, is nothing more than a compages of centers of various attractions and repulsions extending indeﬁnitely in all possible directions.—Hence then it was replied, the only powers or properties of matter are attraction and repulsion. But powers must be the powers of something: yet if matter have nothing but these powers, and be nothing but these powers,—then is it a non-entity, or rather becomes altogether immaterial.—Towards the termination, therefore, of this literary contest, it seems to have been agreed, that materialism and immaterialism were the same thing: and on the part of Dr. Priestley, that, provided there were but one substance admitted in the formation of man, and the creation of the Universe, he was totally unconcerned about the term; and was equally ready to denominate it a material, or an immaterial substance.

Our modern Idealists, whether of the school of
And part combin'd and blending: these alone
Pervious and rare; while those so solid form'd
No force create can sever, or dissolve.

Nor deem such solids doubtful: though so deem'd
By sages oft, who plausibly object
That sound, that thunder, that the voice itself
Breaks thro' domestic walls: that rigid steel
Admits the blaze, and whitens: vitreous rocks

Berkley or Hume, seem to have been influenced by
a similar train of reasoning, and probably the scepticism of the Pyrrhonic school was founded upon the
discrepant and incongruous maxims of Pythagoras,
Plato, and Aristotle, respecting the corpuscles of
matter; the first contending that they are infinitely
divisible, and of course terminate at last in absolute
nullity; and the other two, that, intrinsically, they
are destitute of quantity, quality, extent, or figure, and
consequently that they are equally null and non-existent.
The Sceptics, therefore, like the Idealists, thought
it necessary to prove the existence of an external
world, but, like the latter, they failed, and of course
doubted of every thing. The lesson we should hence
deduce is, that it is impossible to philosophise with- 
out a basis of first principles; that the utmost cir-
cumspsection is necessary in the choice we make of
them; and that, when once adopted, they should,
on no account, be departed from.

Ver. 536. — bodies, in their frame consist,
Part, of primordial atoms incombin'd,
And part combin'd and blending, &c.]

Compare this with the doctrine of Sir Isaac New-
ton; and it must be confess that even this philoso-
pher has been more indebted to the school of Epicu-
curus, than is generally conceived. I will quote his
own words: "All things considered, it seems pro-
bable, that God, in the beginning, formed matter in
solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles;
of such sizes, figures, and with such other pro-
properties, and in such proportion to space, as most
conduced to the end for which he formed them.
And that these primitive particles, being solid,
are incomparably harder than any porous body com-
pounded of them: even so very hard as never to
wear and break in pieces; no ordinary power being
able to divide what God himself made one in the
first creation."

Sir Isaac Newton found these opinions indeed, but
he built upon them, and a most noble superstructure
has he raised. To him are we indebted for the doc-
trines of attraction and repulsion, and the laws which
govern and regulate the Universe. Matter with him,
though primitively consisting of solid impenetrable
particles, is not eternal, though apparently indisso-
luble: it is a created substance, and speaks and proves
the existence of an immaterial and intelligent au-
thor.

Des Cartes, however, as he differed from our unriv-
alled countryman in his doctrine of a vacuum, differed
likewise from him in almost every other idea respect-
ing matter itself, excepting indeed as to its creation
by the Deity. According to Des Cartes, therefore,
matter was possessed of no such primitive particles as
those imagined by Newton and the Epicureans; un-
der every modification it was totally unsolid and infi-
nitely divisible: a doctrine which occupies the whole
of the fourth book of the Cartesian Anti-Lu-
cretius.
Conlabefactatus rigor auri solvitur æstu
Tum glacies æris, flammâ devicta, liquescit:
Permanat calor argentum, penetrâleque frigus;
Quando utrumque manu, retinentes pocula rite,
Sensimus, infuso lympharum rore superne:
Usque adeo in rebus solidi nihil esse videtur.
Sed quia vera tamen ratio, naturaque rerum,
Cogit, ades, paucis dum versibus expediamus,
Esse ea, quæ solido atque æterno corpore constant;
Semina quæ rerum, primordiaque, esse docemus:
Unde omnis rerum nunc constet summa creada.

Principio, quoniam duplex natura duarum
Dissimilis rerum longe constare reperta est,
Corporis, atque loci, res in quo quæque geruntur;
Esse utramque sibi per se, puramque, necesse est.
Nam, quàquamque vacat spatium, quod inane vocamus,
Corpus ea non est: quà porro quàmque tenet se
Corpus, quà vacuum nequaquam constat inane.
Sunt igitur solida, ac sine inani, corpora prima.
Præterea, quoniam genitis in rebus inane est,
Materiem circum solidam constare necesse est:
Nec res ulla potest verâ ratione probari
Corpore inane suo celare, atque intus habere,
Melt in the fierce volcano: gold and brass
Forego their icy hardness, and alike
Yield in the fiery conflict, and dissolve:
That e'en the silver chalice, fill'd with lymph
Fervid or cold, unlocks its secret pores,
And warms, at once, or chills th' embracing hand.
Hence deem they matter pervious all, and void
Of solid substance. But attend, benign,
And, since right reason, and the frame of things
Demand the verse, the muse shall briefly prove
The seeds, the principles of matter all
Both solid, and eternal, whence alone
Springs the stupendous fabric of the world.

Of space, of matter, as already sung,
Th' entire of things consists, by nature form'd
Distinct and adverse; and existing pure
Each uncontrol'd of each. Where matter dwells
Void space can ne'er be found, nor matter found,
Search where thou wilt, where space resides and reigns.
As space is vacant then, material seeds
Must solid prove, perforce, and free from void.

Thus, too, as vacuum dwells in all produc'd,
Some solid substance must that vacuum bound:
Nor aught of vacuum can created things
Be prov'd t' enclose, if solids not exist,
Si non, quod cohibet, solidum constare relinquas.
Id porro nihil esse potest, nisi materiai
Concilium, quod inane queat tectum cohibere.
Materies igitur, solido quæ corpore constat,
Esse æterna potest, quom caetera dissoluantur.

Tum porro, si nihil esset, quod inane vacaret,
Omne foret solidum: nisi, contra, corpora certa
Essent, quæ loca conplerent, quæquomque tenerent;
Omne, quod est, spatium, vacuum constaret inane.
Alternis igitur nimirum corpus inani
Distinctum; quonium nec plenum gnaviter exstat,
Nec porro vacuum: sunt ergo corpora certa,
Quæ spatium pleno possint distinguere inane.
Hæc neque dissolvi plagis, extrinsecus icta,
Possunt: nec porro, penitus penetrata, retexi;
Nec ratione queunt alia tentata labare:
Id, quod jam supra tibi paullo obtendimus ante.
Nem neque conclædi sine inani posse videtur
Quidquam, nec frangi, nec fundi in bina secando:
Nec capere humorem, neque item manabile frigus,
Nec penetralem ignem; quibus omnia confaciuntur.
Et, quo quæque magis cohibet res intus inane,
Tam magis hiis rebus penitus tentata labascit.
Ergo, si solida, ac sine inani, corpora prima
Sunt, ita utei docui, sint hæc æterna necessæ est.
Whose power alone can such enclosures form.
But solids must be matter; the prime seeds
Of all survey'd, harmonious in their act,
And undecay'd when all decays around.

Were there no space, th' entire of things would prove
One boundless solid: and were nought conceiv'd
Of viewless seeds, close filling, void of space,
Each spot possest, all then were vacuum blank.
Thus each from each, from matter space exists
Distinct and clear: since never all is void,
Nor ever full; but this from that preserv'd
By countless atoms acting though unseen.
These, as already sung, no powers can pierce:
O'er blows external, o'er each vain attempt
Of penetrative solvents, or aught else
Philosophy reveals, triumphant still.
For nought can break, of vacuum all devoid,
Or melt, or moulder, or within admit
Vapour, or cold, or power of pungent heat,
By which dissolves this fabric of the world.
'Tis vacuum lays the base: as this exists,
Augments, or lessens, things alone decay.
What then is solid, and from vacuum free,
Must undecay'd, and still eternal live.
Præterea, nisi materies æterna fuisset, 
Antehac ad nihilum penitus res quæque redissent; 
De nihiloque renata forent, quæquomque videmus. 
At, quoniam supra docui, nihil posse creari 
De nihilo, neque, quod genitum est, ad nihil revocari; 
Esse inmortalis primordia corpore debent, 
Dissolvi quo quæque supremo tempore possint, 
Materies ut subpeditet rebus reparandis. 
Sunt igitur solidæ primordia simplicitate, 
Nec ratione queunt aliæ, servata per ævom, 
Ex infinito jam tempore res reparare.

Denique, si nullam finem natura parasset 
Frangundis rebus, jam corpora materiae 
Usque redactae forent, ævo frangente priore, 
Ut nihil ex illis a certo tempore posset, 
Conceptum, summum ætatis pervadere finem; 
Nam quid vis citius dissolvi posse videmus, 
Quam rursus refici: quapropter longa diei 
Infinita ætas ante acti temporis omnis,

Ver. 599. Seeds there must be of ever-during date 
To which, perpetual, all dissolves, or whence 
Flowes the fresh pabulum that all repairs.

Akenside, in his Pleasures of Imagination, has been frequently and largely indebted to our poet for many of his most beautiful and sublime passages, although I do not recollect that any critic has hitherto pointed out such obligations. In the note on ver. 1014, the reader will find an express translation; and in that on ver. 1093, a most striking parallelism. The following verses have a strong reference to the system of Epicurus, and probably an allusion to the verses which have introduced this note.

Of atoms moving with incessant change 
Their elemental round; behold the seeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame. Book 1.
Were matter not eternal, ages since
All had return'd to nothing whence it sprang,
And from that nothing all again reviv'd.
But since from nothing nought can ever rise,
As prov'd above, nor aught to nothing shrink,
Seeds there must be of ever-during date,
To which, perpetual, things dissolve, or whence
Flows the fresh pabulum that all repairs.
But seeds thus simple must be solid too;
Else unpreserv'd through countless ages past,
And useless to recruit th' exhausted world.

Else friction, too, had injur'd: each by each
Through myriad years abraded, and reduc'd,
'Till nought conceptible had liv'd to rear,
Each in its time, the progenies of earth:
For all is wasted easier than renew'd.
And hence, had all been thus disturb'd, dissolv'd,
And fritter'd through the long anterior lapse
Of countless ages, future time in vain

Ver. 605. Else friction too had injur'd:—] It is the precise doctrine of our own accurate and comprehensive philosopher. These are Newton's words on the subject: "While the primitive and solid particles of matter continue entire, they may compose bodies of one and the same nature and texture in all ages: but should they wear away, or break in pieces, the nature of things, depending on them, would be changed. Water and earth composed of old worn particles, and fragments of particles, would not be of the same nature and texture now, with water and earth composed of entire particles at the beginning. And therefore that nature may be lasting, the changes of corporeal things are to be placed only in the various separations, and new associations, and motions of these permanent particles: compound bodies being apt to break, not in the midst of solid particles, but where those particles are laid together, and touch in a few points."
Quod fregisset adhuc, disturbans dissoluensque,
Numquam id reliquio reparari tempore posset:
At nunc nimirum frangundi reddita finis
Certa manet, quoniam refici rem quamque videmus,
Et finita simul generatim tempora rebus
Stare, quibus possint ævi contingere florem.

Huc adcedit, utei solidissima materiai
Corpora quom constant, possint tamen omnia reddi
Mollia, quæ fiunt : aër, aqua, terra, vapores,
Quo pacto fiunt, et quà vi quomque gerantur:
Admixtum quoniam semel est in rebus inane.
At contra, si mollia sint primordia rerum,
Unde queant validei silices ferrumque creari,
Non poterit ratio reddi : nam funditus omnis
Principio fundamenti natura carebit.
Sunt igitur solidâ pollentia simplicitate;
Quorum condensô magis omnia conciliatu
Artari possunt, validasque obtendere vireis.

Denique, jam, quoniam generatim reddita finis
Crescendis rebus constat, vitamque tenendi;
Et quid quæque queant, per foedera naturaï,
Quid porro nequeant, sancitum quandoquidem exstat;
Nec commutatur quidquam ; quin omnia constant
Usque adeo, variae voluces ut, in ordine cunctæ,
Obtendant maculas generales corporis inesse;
The Nature of Things. 99

Would strive the ruin'd fragments to repair.
But what more obvious than that bounds exist
To matter decompounding, primal seeds
To forms defin'd coercing; since again
All springs to birth, harmonious, kinds from kinds,
True to their times, and perfect in their powers?

Yet, though the principles of matter thus
Prove firm and solid, its component forms,
As air, earth, vapour, or translucent stream,
May still be soft and pliant, as combin'd,
E'en from their birth, with less, or larger void.
But had those principles themselves been rear'd
Pliant and soft, then whence the sturdy steel,
The close-compacted flint, or aught besides,
Of equal texture, trac'd through Nature's realm?
Thus simple solids must be still confest;
And all be soft, or rigid, as of these
In more or less concentrate mode compos'd.

To all has nature giv'n a bound precise
Of being and perfection; and promulg'd,
To ev'ry varying rank, her varying laws;
Urging to this, from that restraining firm.
Nought suffers change: the feathery tribes of heaven,
Bear, on their glossy plumes, through ev'ry class,
The same fixt hues that first those classes stamp'd.
Inmutabile materiae quoque corpus habere
Debent nimirum: nam, si primordia rerum
Conmutari aliquà possent ratione revicta,
Incertain quoque jam constet, quid possit oriri,
Quid nequeat; finita potestas denique quoque
Quà nam sit ratione, atque alte terminus hærens;
Nec totiens possent generatim secla referre
Naturam, motus, victum, moresque, parentum.

Tum porro, quoniam est extremum quoique cacumen
Corporis illius, quod nostri cernere sensus
Jam nequeunt; id nimirum sine partibus exstat,
Et minumà constat naturâ: nec fuit umquam
Per se secretum, neque posthac esse valebit;
Alterius quoniam est ipsum pars primaque, et ima:
Inde aliae, atque aliae, similes ex ordine partes
Agmine condenso naturam corporis explicant.
Quæ, quoniam per se nequeunt constare, necesse est
Hærere; unde queant nullà ratione revelli.

Ver. 638. Hence matter too, through all its primal seeds,
Is prov'd immutable;——] The doctrine of the
eternity and immutability of primitive atoms, according
to the system before us, flows from their simple solidi-
ity. Immutable indeed, and indissoluble Sir Isaac
Newton conceived them to be, as appears in the note
immediately foregoing. The only difference between
his opinion on this subject, and that of our poet is, that
the former imagined them to have been created by the
Divinity, and consequently denied their eternity.

Ver. 646. To each pursuit, each action of their
sires.] Hence, perhaps, Horace,
Hence matter too, through all its primal seeds,
Is prov’d immutable: for, if o’ercome
By aught of foreign force, those seeds could change,
All would be doubtful; nor the mind conceive
What might exist, or what might never live:
Nor why, decide, such variance in their powers,
And final terms of life, or instinct strong,
Through every age, still urging every race
To each pursuit, each action of their sires.

Know, too, each seed, each substance is compos’d
Of points extreme no sense can e’er detect:
Points that, perforce, minutest of themselves,
To parts can ne’er divide: not self-educ’d,
Nor, but as form’d, existing, else destroy’d.
Parts such can hold not: each the first, pure part,
Itself, of other substance: which, when join’d
Alone by kindred parts, in order due,
Forms, from such junction, the prime seeds of things.
But e’en such parts, though by the mind as parts
Conceiv’d, disjoin’d can ne’er exist; and thence
Adhere by firm, indissoluble bond.

Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis:
Est in juvencis, est in equis patrum
Virtus: nec imbellem feroces
Progenerant aquilje columbam. Od. iv. 4.
From brave and good the good man springs;
The horse, the heifer show their breed;
Nor can the dove, with timid wings,
Rise from the ravenous eagle’s seed.

Ver. 647. Know, too, each seed, each substance is
compos’d] See on this subject the note on
ver. 535 of the present book.
Sunt igitur solidâ primordia simplicitate,
Quæ minumis stipata cohaerent partibus arte;
Non ex illorum conventu conciliata,
Sed magis æternâ pollentia simplicitate:
Unde neque avelli quidquam, nec diminui jam,
Concedit natura, reservans semina rebus.

Præterea, nisi erit minumum, parvissima quæque
Corpora constabunt ex partibus infinitis:
Quippe, ubi dimidia partis pars semper habebit
Dimidiam partem; nec res præsintet ulla.
Ergo rerum inter summam, minumamque, quid escit?
Nihil erit, ut distet: nam, quam vis funditus omnis
Summa sit infinita, tamen, parvissima quæ sunt,
Ex infinitis constabunt partibus æque.
Quod, quoniam ratio reclamat vera, negatque
Credere posse animum, victus fateare necesse est,
Esse ea, quæ nullis jam prædita partibus existent,
Et minumâ constant naturâ: quæ quoniam sunt,
Illa quoque esse tibi solida, atque æterna fatendum.

Denique, ni minûmas in parteis cuncta resolvi
Cogere consuesset rerum natura creatrix,
Jam nihil ex illis eadem reparare valeret:
Propterea, quia, quæ nullis sunt partibus aucta,
Non possunt ea quæ debet genitalis habere
Thus seeds are simple solids, form’d compact
Of points extreme, that never can recede:
Not lab’ring jointly to produce some end,
But potent from simplicity alone,
And hence eternal: equally unprone
To waste or sever; and by nature kept
To feed the suffering fabric of the world.

Did no such points exist, extreme and least,
Each smallest atom would be, then, combin’d
Of parts all infinite; for every part
Parts still would boast, dividing without end.
And, say, what difference could there, then, subsist
'Twixt large, and small? for tho' th' ENTIRE OF THINGS
Should infinite be deem'd, each smallest speck
Still parts as infinite would hold embrac'd.
But since at this the reasoning mind revolts,
Then must it own, o'erpower'd, that points exist
Least by their nature, and of parts devoid:
And solid, hence, and of eternal date.

Hence seeds arise, the last, least parts conceiv'd
Of actual being: the extremest points
To which creative nature all resolves.
Which, if not least, if still of parts possest,
Could ne'er, with close exactitude, renew
The universal frame: all, all would rise
DE RERUM NATURA.

Materies, varios connexus, pondera, plagas,
Concursus, motus, per quos res quæque geruntur.

Porro, si nulla est frangundis redditâ finis
Corporibus, tamen ex æterno tempore quæque
Nunc etiam superare necesse est corpora rebus,
Quæ non dum clueant ullo tentata periculo.
At, quoniam fragili naturâ prædata constant,
Discrepat, æternum tempus potuisse manere
Innumerabilibus plagis vexata per ævom.

Quapropter, quei materiem rerum esse putarunt

Ver. 686. Yet should we grant—] The verse in the
original corresponding to this, together with the six
subsequent, are removed by Mr. Wakefield to a prior
station, occupying in the Latin from ver. 578 to 585,
and corresponding with the present version from ver.
631 to 638. For this alteration he has the authority
of several very respectable copies: but as the superior
weight of authority seems, nevertheless, to be in fa-
vour of the common editions, and no advantage ap-
ppears to result from the change, I have taken the li-
iberty of restoring the passage to its accustomed posi-
tion.

Ver. 693. Hence those who deem, &c.] The exis-
tence of elements, and their number, if they exist at
all, have been disputed in all ages; and even the pre-
sent state of chemistry is unable to determine the
question. Among the Moderns, therefore, as among
the Ancients, sometimes fire, sometimes air, some-
times earth, and sometimes water, has been considered
as the sole element, or primary source of all things.
Sometimes two, moreover, of the substances com-
monly denominated elements, sometimes three, but
generally, at least, till of late years, the whole four
have been regarded as equally entitled to the appella-
tion, and as equally simple and uncompounded: to
which a fifth and even a sixth have been incidentally
added, namely cold and oil, both of them having at
times been conceived of as simple and substantial ele-
ments. To these various opinions I shall have occa-
sion to revert in the progress of this commentary:
but at present our only concern is with fire.

Fire, in all probability, from its being the grand
agent in nature, and from the wonderful superiority
of its effects over the known properties of every
other element, was regarded amongst most na-
tions, in an early period of the world, either as the
creator and origin of all things, or, at least, the sub-
stance whence the Creator produced all things. Hence
the Persians, Ethiopians, Scythians and Carthagin-
ians in the Old World, and the Mexicans and Peru-
vians in the New, paid divine honours to fire itself,
or to the sun, which was esteemed the sublimest re-
presentation of this element; on the origin of which
worship see note on b. ii. 1167. Zoroaster ordained
the erection of Pyrea, or temples dedicated to fire,
through all Persia. And even the Hebrews imagined
fire to be the grandest proof of the presence of the
Deity. Under this symbol he appeared to Moses on
mount Horeb; and to the Hebrews at large on mount
Sinai, on the promulgation of the sacred law: and
under this symbol he evinced his protecting presence
every night, by assuming the form of a fiery pillar.
And, impressed with this idea, they were ever anxious
Of weight diverse, and ever-varying form,
Casual in tie, in motion undefin'd.
Yet should we grant that matter, without end,
For ever wastes; e'en then, from earliest time,
Some matter must have triumph'd undecay'd,
Cohering still: but what can thus cohere,
What brave th' unnumber'd repercussions felt
Through ages now evolv'd, can ne'er decay:
Alike the future conqu'ring as the past.
Hence those who deem the fabric of the world

to preserve it in a pure and active flame upon the
national altar. When, therefore, the Jews were
borne away in captivity to Persia, the priests took the
sacred fire of the altar and concealed it in a dry cave,
with which none but themselves were acquainted;
and where, on their restoration to liberty, the posteri-
	y of those priests found it on their return to Judæa.
(Maccab. 2. 1. 18.) Fire was regarded with an equal
degree of veneration throughout Greece and Rome.
Temples in every city were erected to the goddess
Vesta—a name importing fire, whether derived from the
Grecian Βαστα, or the Hebrew וְתֵּבָן, and in every
temple a lambent flame was perpetually burning over
the altar. And even so late as in the third century of
the Christian era, when Heliogabalus anticipated
his own apotheosis, and instituted the worship of
himself over all the Roman empire, having erected a
magnificent temple to his own divinity, he supplied
its altar with sacred fire from the temple of Vesta,
which he plundered for this purpose.
We cannot be much surprized, therefore, that a
belief so common among the people, should become
a frequent doctrine among the philosophers—and
that all things should be supposed to originate from
fire as an element, instead of from fire as a god. Such
was the opinion of Heraclitus, who rendered himself
more celebrated than any other sage of the Pyrean
school, by the eloquent, but obscure and dogmatic
manner with which he wrote upon this subject. In
modern times, the same tenet has been frequently
started afresh; and if not pressed to the full extent
to which it was carried by Heraclitus, exhibiting
such intimate marks of analogy and association as
perpetually to remind us of the Heraclitean system.
Buffon supposed the whole earth to have been at first a
complete body of liquid fire; and to have consisted of
a comet, and a portion of the sun's exterior limb car-
ried off by such comet, in consequence of its having
given the sun an oblique stroke in the course of its orbit.
At its first origin, therefore, the earth, upon this system,
was nothing more than a large vitreous mass in a state
of fusion. This state of fusion constituted the chaos of
which every nation has some tradition: and from the
chaotic mass, as it became gradually cool, the earth
in its present state was progressively developed. He
conceived this operation to have been the work of a
multitude of ages, and endeavoured to reconcile the
chronology of Moses with that of the Pundits of
Hindustan, by conjecturing that while the former
only begins his date from the period when the earth
first became habitable, the latter calculate from the
earliest origin of the globe in its state of liquid heat.
To detail the arguments which have been ad-
duced in opposition to this and similar systems, would
Ignem, atque ex igni summam consistere solo,
Magno opere a verâ labi ratione videntur.
Heraclitus init quorum dux prælia primus,
Clarus ob obscuram linguam magis inter inaneis,
Quamde graveis inter, Graios, quei vera requirunt.
Omnia enim stolidci magis admirantur, amantque,
Inversis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt;

engross too much time, as well as paper. I refer the
reader, therefore, to the works of Woodward,
Whitchurst, Howard, and Kirwan.

Dr. Hutton published a theory of the earth about
fourteen years ago, in the Edinburgh Philosophical
Transactions, in which, after contending for the exis-
tence of an immense subterraneous fire in its center,
he endeavours to prove that every substance in con-
tact, or nearly in contact with this fiery mass, is
fused by its operation; and when fused, raised by
the violence of its heat above the level of the sea:
that all the continents we have discovered, and the
most solid strata of which they consist, have been
thus formed: that new continents are perpetually
rearing in the same manner, from the wasting par-
ticles of those at present existing; and that these new
ones will ascend, and appear hereafter, when those
now existing shall have been entirely frittered away.
This theory, which is in no small degree confused
and inconsistent, has been attacked with ability and
spirit by M. De Lac and Mr. Kirwan, who attribute
all the phenomena of nature to aqueous solution, a
theory more minutely adverted to in various notes in
book v., where our poet gives his own system of cos-
mology.

M. de Mairan has attempted to prove that the
earth is infinitely more indebted, for the heat it re-
ceives, to its own central fires than to the rays of the
sun. He allows that this latter, by adding some
portion of heat to the surface of the earth, is the
immediate cause of the vicissitude of the seasons;
but asserts, that were it not for the continual ascent
of an immense quantity of subterranean heat, though
the sun were perpetually to illuminate two thirds of
the globe at once with a heat equal to that at the
equator, the entire orb would soon condense into one
general mass of solid ice. His reasonings on this
subject are too long and intricate for insertion. There
is, however, much ingenuity in them, and they are
to be found in the Hist. de l’Acad. des Sciences,
l’ann. 1765. See also note on b. v. ver. 425. It is
probably from this theory that Klopstock has drawn
his beautiful machinery of an interior world in the
earth’s center, in which reside the guardian spirits of
the globe, and the souls of departed saints; it is a
paradise where celestial breezes blow, eternal splendour
smiles, and the Almighty communicates, in an es-
pecial manner, the wonders of his providence and
grace to the beatified inhabitants. Here a sun, that
never sets or rises, shines with pure and uninterrupted
radiance, from the beams of which the surface of the
earth itself is perpetually nourished and rendered fertile.

—— Von ihr fliesst leben und wärme
In die adern der erd’ empor. Die oberste sonne
Bildet mit dieser vertrauten gehülfen den blumigen
frühling,
Und den feurigen sommer, von sinkenden halme
belastet,
Und den herbst auf traubengebirgen. In ihren
bezirken
Ist sie niemals auf, und niemals untergegangen.

Messias, Ges. i.
Educ’d from fire, itself the source of all,
Far wander from the truth. Thus deem’d the sage,
Chief of his sect, and fearless in the fight,
Fam’d Heraclitus; by the learn’d esteem’d
Of doubtful phrase, mysterious; but rever’d
By crowds of Grecians, flimsy, and untaught.
For such th’ obscure applaud; delighted most
With systems dark, and most believing true

From him through all the veins of upper earth
Life flows, and heat. The sun above by him,
His fixt associate, aided, decked with flowers
Rears the young spring, the fiery summer rears,
Loaded with fruits, and autumn’s vine-clad realm.
The bright horizon he for ever gilds,
Nor sets, nor rises.

Ver. 697. Fam’d Heraclitus; by the learn’d esteem’d
Of doubtful phrase, mysterious;—of Heraclitus, in common with some other philosophers, conceived all things to have originated from fire, we learn from the following assertion of Plutarch. Plac. Phil. i. 3.

Ver. 700. For such th’ obscure applaud; delighted most
With systems dark, &c. As to the same effect,
Battie, in his inimitable Minstrel:

And much they grope for truth, but never hit,
Still deeming darkness light, and their vain blunders wit.

So, Thomson:
The fond, sequacious herd, to mystic faith,
And blind amazement prone.

Hence the propriety of the advice given by Vida,

Verborum in primis tenebros fugae, nibilque atra;
Nam neque (si tantum fas credere) defuit olim,
Qui lumem juvandum ulter, lucemque perosum,
Obscuro nebulae sem circumfudit amictu:

Tantus amor noctis, luteae tam dira cupidis.

Potic. iii. 15.

In chief, avoid obscurity, nor shroud
Your thoughts and dark conceptions in a cloud;
For some we know affect to lose the light
Lost in forc’d figures, and involv’d in night;
Studious and bent to shun the common way,
They skulk in darkness, and abhor the day.

Ver. 701. —and most believing true
The silver sounds that charm th’ enchanted ear.

D’Avenant has imitated this verse of Lucretius, or has otherwise exhibited a singular parallelism both of idea and verbiage, in his description of the schoolmen:

With terms they charm the weak, and pose the wise.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Veraque constituunt, quae belle tangere possunt
Aureis, et lepido quae sunt fucata sonore.
Nam, quur tam variae res possent esse, requiro,
Ex uno si sunt igni, puroque, creatae.
Nihil prodesset enim calidum denserier ignem,
Nec rarefieri, si partes ignis eamdem
Naturam, quam totus habet super ignis, haberent.

Acrior ardor enim conductis partibus esset:
Languidior porro disjectis, disque supatis.
Amplius hoc fieri nihil est quod posse rearis
Talibus in caussis; ne dum variantia rerum
Tanta queat densis, rarisque, ex ignibus esse.

Id quoque, si faciant admixtum rebus inane,
Denseri poterunt ignes, rarique relinqui:
Sed, quia multa sibi cernunt contraria inesse,

The birth-place of Heraclitus was Ephesus. He
flourished in the reign of the last Darius, about the
59th Olympiad, and in the 5th century before the
commencement of the Christian era. He is reported
to have been much addicted to the study of philoso-
phy, and frequently to have wept over the miseries
and follies of mankind. He composed several philo-
sophic treatises, of which that on Nature was the most
esteemed, though, like his other works, it was lab-
oured with much intentional obscurity of style. Of
this essay Euripides sent a copy to Socrates, who
declared, with great liberality of mind, that what he
could comprehend of it was excellent, and he doubted
not that the rest, which he could not comprehend,
was equally so. Darius, after having perused this
work, invited him to the Persian court: but the
philosopher preferred the quiet of retirement to the
splendour of a palace, or the bustle of the busy world.
He lived in total seclusion from mankind; and died
in the 60th year of his age of a dropsy, said to have
been produced by his subsisting upon a vegetable
diet alone.

Ver. 703. But whence, I ask, &c.] Our poet pro-
ceeds to demonstrate, that fire could not be either
the origin of things, or the only substance employed
in their production. In support of this denial, he
advances five arguments.—Fire is a substance uniform
and homogeneous, but the phenomena of nature are
various and opposite. Fire may indeed produce oc-
casional changes in the appearance of things by rare-
ifying some bodies more than others; but if the parts
of a dense body recede, and become rare, a vacuum
must, of course, exist between the parts so receding:
The silver sounds that charm th' enchanted ear.
But whence, I ask, if all from fire proceed
Unmix'd and simple, spring created things
So various in their natures? Urge not here
That fire condenses now, and now expands;
For if the same, divided or entire,
Its parts condens'd a heat can only prove
More fierce; and less when rarefied, and thin.
Still all is fire. Nor canst thou e'er conceive
From fire that aught can spring but fire itself.
Much less, in fire made dense alone, or rare,
Trace the vast variance of created things.
Dense too, and rare a vacuum must imply,
As urg'd already: yet full well convinc'd
What straits surround them if a void exist,

yet Heraclitus, and his followers, deny a vacuum, and therefore ought to deny the possibility of rarefaction, for which they contend. If, however, it could be imagined that the particles of fire change their very nature by uniting together, when once a change of any kind has taken place, and the original nature of the substance is hereby destroyed, it must continue to change, it must persevere in wasting, till at length it perish altogether. Undoubtedly, there are substances in nature which are perfectly immutable, the essential seeds of whatever exists, and a change in the quantity or arrangement of which produces that variety which surrounds us; but it is certain that these primal seeds or substances cannot be fire, for then every thing would be fire, and there could be no variety whatever; while, to maintain such a theory, moreover, would be to oppose our system to our senses; our mental conjectures to those organs, whence all knowledge of facts and events must of necessity flow: nor is there any superior reason for a denial of the existence of other supposed elements in favour of fire, rather than for a denial of fire in favour of the existence of other supposed elements.

Ver. 705. — Urge not here
That fire condenses now, and now expands;

Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Heraclitus, informs us of the order by which the adherents to this hypothesis imagined all things were produced from fire. Fire, says he, according to their opinion, when condensed, becomes moist, and thus is changed to air; air, by compression, becomes water: and water, when condensed, becomes earth. See note on ver. 846, where the same tenet is more minutely discussed.
Et fugitans in rebus inane relinquire purum;  
Ardua dum metuunt, amittunt vera, viaä :  
Nec rursum cernunt exemptum rebus inane,  
Omnia denseri, fierique ex omnibus unum  
Corpus, nihil ab se quod possit mittere raptim,  
Æstifer ignis utei lumen jacit, atque vaporem ;  
Ut videas non e stipatis partibus esse.  
Quod, si forte ullâ credunt ratione potesse  
Igneis in coetus stingui, mutareque corpus ;  
Scilicet ex nullâ facere id si parte reparcent,  
Obcidet ad nihilum nimium funditus ardor  
Omnis, et ex nihiló fient quaequamque creantur.  
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,  
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante :  
Proinde aliquid superare necesse est incolôme ollis,  
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes,  
De nihilóque renata virescat copia rerum.  
Nunc igitur, quoniam certissima corpora quædam  
Sunt, quæ conservant naturam semper eamdem,  
Quorum abitu, aut aditu, mutatoque ordine, mutant  
Naturam res, et convortunt corpora sese ;  
Scire licet, non esse hæc ignea corpora rerum.  
Nihil referret enim, quædam decedere, abire,  
Atque alio adtribui, mutarique ordine, quædam,  
Si tamen ardoris naturam cuncta tenerent:
Such sages doubt, but, doubting, still deny:
Fearful of danger, yet averse from truth.
Such, too, reflect not that from things create,
Should void withdraw, the whole at once were dense,
One solid substance all, and unempower'd
Aught from itself t' eject, as light, and smoke
Flies from the purple flame; evincing clear
Its parts unsolid, and commixt with void.
But should it still, perchance, be urg'd, that fires
Perish by junction, and their substance change,
Then must that changing substance waste to nought;
And thus from nought th' entire of nature spring.
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.
But still, victorious, something must exist,
Or all to nought would perish; and, in turn,
From nought regerminate to growth mature.

Yet though most certain things there are exist
That never change, the seeds of all survey'd,
Whose presence, absence, or arrangement new
That all new models, certain 'tis, alike,
Those seeds can ne'er be fire. For what avails
Such absence, presence, or arrangement new
Of igneous matter, if the whole throughout
Alike be igneous? Change howc'er it may,
Ignis enim foret omnimodis, quodquamque crearet.
Verum, ut opinor, ita est: sunt quaedam corpora, quorum
Concursus motus, ordo, positura, figuræ,
Ecfcient ignes, mutatoque ordine mutant
Naturam: neque sunt igni similata, neque ullaæ
Præterea rei, quæ corpora mittere possit
Sensibus, et nostros aedictu tangere tactus.

Dicere porro ignem res omneis esse, neque ullaæ
Rem veram in numero rerum constare, nisi ignem,
Quod facit hic idem, perdelirum esse videtur.
Nam contra sensus ab sensibus ipse repugnat,
Et labefactat eos, unde omnia credita pendent;
Unde hic cognitus est ipsi, quem nominat ignem.
Credit enim sensus ignem cognoscere vere;
Cæteræ non credit, quæ nihilò clara minus sunt:
Quod mihi quom vanum, tum delirum, esse videtur.
Quo referemus enim? quid nobis certius ipsis
Sensibus esse potest? quï vera, ac falsa, notemus?

Ver. 743. Ask’st thou whence fire proceeds then? &c.]
The sentiment of Lucretius respecting fire is precisely that of Boerhaave, Homberg, Crawford, and most of the modern chemists. He contends strenuously, that it is a substance sui generis, reared from a definite combination of primordial atoms, like any other simple substance. This tenet of the Epicurean philosophy is supposed to have been derived from Democritus. It was controverted by Aristotle and the Peripatetics, who maintained, that there was no such thing as elementary fire, but that heat was in every instance produced by commotion of the minute particles of the heated body. This latter tenet, together with the general philosophy of Aristotle, descended to a very late period of European learning; and formed a part of the creed of Bacon, Boyle, Des Cartes and Newton. A more accurate chemical knowledge, however, has now almost entirely banished the peripatetic doctrine from the schools of Europe, and restored to general belief the doctrine of semina ignis, or elementary fire, so forcibly contended for by our poet in this place, but described
Through every variance all must still be flame.—
Ask’st thou whence fire proceeds then? As I deem
From certain seeds to certain motions urg’d,
Or forms, or combinations; which, when chang’d,
Change too their nature; and, though yielding fire,
Not fire resembling, or aught else perceiv’d
By human sense, or tangible to touch.

To hold, moreo’er, as Heraclitus held,
That all is fire, and nought besides exists
Through nature’s boundless fabric, is to rave.

T’ oppose the mental sense, erroneous oft,
To sense external whence all knowledge flows;
And whence himself first trac’d that flame exists.
To sense he trusts, when sense discloses fire,
And yet distrusts in things disclos’d as clear.

Can there, in man, be conduct more absurd!—
Where shall we turn us? Where, if thus we fly
Those senses chief that sever true from false?—

and defined more, still more minutely, in b. iii. v. 240,
and following, where he proves that it is a constituent part of the matter of life. This elementary fire,
or caloric of the Epicureans, extended, as it is admitted to do in the present day, through every possible
substance, but only became sensible in a concrete state, or when its particles were collected together.

In the cycle of human science, however, there seems to be but few theories advanced which do not
in turn yield to others, and which again are not successively restored to popular notice. Thus, notwith-
standing the general inclination of the philosophers
of the present day to the Epicurean doctrine of the separate existence of elementary heat, count Rum-
ford and Mr. Davy seem to be labouring with all their ingenuity, but perhaps without intending it, to
rebuild the hypothesis of Aristotle, that there is no such thing as elementary heat, upon the ruins of the
atomic philosophy.

Ver. 753. —sense external whence all knowledge
flows;] See note on ver. 471.
Præterea, quà re quisquam magis omnia tollat,  
Et velit ardoris naturam linquere solam,  
Quam neget esse igneis, summam tamen esse relinquant?  
Æqua videtur enim dementia dicere utrumque.  
Quapropter, quei materiem rerum esse putarunt  
Ignem, atque ex igni summam consistere posse;  
Et quei principium gignundis aëra rebus  
Constituere; aut humorem quiequomque putarunt

Ver. 765. —*those for air subo strive*] The same arguments urged against fire, as the principle of all things, will apply with equal force against every other simple and individual substance whatever. For one unigenous substance can produce but one unigenous substance, and not a diversity. Anaximenes, however, a philosopher contemporary with Alexander the Great, and who on his decease wrote his history, a work that has been long lost to the world, conceived differently. And since Heraclitus had entered the lists as champion for fire, Anaximenes threw down the gauntlet in favour of air; asserting, after the reasoning of the former philosopher, that all things were generated by a successive condensation and rarefaction of this element: and that the world was animated and held together by its operation, in the same manner as the body is animated and held together by the soul: which last substance he likewise conceived to be of aerial origin. Air, too, or ether, upon the same principle as fire, has had its mythologic as well as its philosophic supporters, with respect to its being the common origin of all things. Hence, Jupiter himself is generally represented by the poets under the symbol of this element: and the following language, figuratively employed by Lucretius on another occasion, is by them adopted in its literal sense:

All springs from heaven ethereal, all that lives.  
The sire of all is ether.

B. ii. 1000. *Nat. of Things.*  
Hence Cælum or *Oxyygenes,* in the chronology of Hesiod, is in like manner represented as the common father of all things, impregnating the earth by his embraces. Our author reverts to this opinion, and again opposes it in b. ii. 1167; to the note on which I refer the reader.

Air, according to the belief of Boerhaave, is not the origin of all things; but that in which all things are contained. It is the universal chaos or colluvies of created matters. Whatever fire can volatilize, the magnetic and electric fluid, and that which is ejected from the heavenly bodies, all, in his conception, combine in the composition of air.

In the Memoirs of the French Royal Academy, 1703, is a paper of M. Amontons, in which, after observing that air may be compressed so as to be rendered heavier than gold, platina, or any other substance we are acquainted with: after conjecturing, moreover, that the body of the earth is composed of strata of substances of different gravities, progressively taking their stations according to their gradation of weight, he asserts, that the centre of the earth, containing a sphere of 6451538 fathoms diameter, is composed of air, thus compressed to a density greater than that of any known substance besides: and from such elastic air, expanded by the heat of subterraneous fires, he deduces all the earthquakes that have ever agitated the globe.

Although it does not appear, then, that all things, in the opinion of M. Amontons, originated from air, yet by far the greater part is air, and nothing else.
Why, rather, too, should all that else exists
Be thus denied, and fire alone maintain'd,
Than fire denied, and all maintain'd besides?
Tenets alike preposterous and wild.
Hence those, in fire, who trace the rise of things,
And nought but fire; or those for air who strive
As source of all; or those the dimpling stream
Who fondly fancy; or the pond'rous earth,

The system, however, most consentaneous with
this of Anaximenes, of any I have met with in modern
times, is that of M. Humboldt, a German chemist,
of no mean reputation, as detailed in a treatise
published in 1800, entitled "Versuche über die Chemische Zerlegung des Luftkreises." In this publication,
the author supposes the solid parts of the
earth have been precipitated from a kind of gross
and feculent atmosphere during the existence of a
chaos. This idea is, indeed, fanciful; but the auth-
or's chemical facts and experiments are entitled
to serious attention; and particularly those which relate
to the quantity of carbon contained in common atmo-

cpheric air, here calculated at three-twentieths of
the whole, and which seem to support the doctrine
of the oxygenuity of light.

Ver. 766. — those the dimpling stream
Who fondly fancy?] Such was the opinion of
many philosophers, but particularly of Thales of
Miletus, the contemporary and intimate friend of Solon,
and who consequently flourished about five centuries
before the commencement of the Christian era. He
was the founder of the Ionic school, and the first who
attempted to calculate eclipses. His hypothesis of
the origin of all things from water, has been adopted
by some men of letters in every age, but particularly
among the earlier of the German chemists, as Para-
celus, and Van Helmont. It was the general belief
among the Hebrew sages, in consequence of the
Mosaic assertion, "that the Spirit of God moved upon
the face of the waters," (the only substance inti-
minated to exist) when engaged in the work of cre-
ation. And for the same reason it has formed a part
of the creed of Basil Valentine, and many of the fa-
thers of the Christian church in later periods. Thales,
however, in all probability, drew his hypothesis from
observing how very large a portion of even the hardest
and most solid substances is composed of water;
and from the cohesion which is produced in the driest
and most subtle earths and powders of every de-
scription upon its introduction.

Mythology has also adopted the element of wa-
ter as the great source and origin of all things, as
well as philosophy; and the espousers of this mytho-
logic tenet have been very numerous and plausible.
It is repeatedly admitted by Homer: and is, proba-
bly, in consequence herof, again controverted by
our poet in b. ii. 1169. Allegorically, indeed, Lu-
cretius himself, in the opening of the present book,
addresses Venus as the common parent of all things:
but the origin of Venus, or Dea-Mater (Δeα\(\mu\)\(a\)τερε), ac-

cording to the avow'd dictates of all ancient trad-
tion, was from the main; and it is highly probable
that Mr. Bryant is correct in considering her as a
mere type of the ark that floated over the immense
surface of water that covered the whole earth during
the general deluge, and contained within its womb
the radicals of all future animal and vegetable exis-
tence. See this idea enlarged upon in the note on
b. ii. ver. 1167.
Fingere res ipsum per se; terramve creare
Omnia, et in rerum naturas vortier omneis;
Magno opere a vero longei deerrasse videntur.
Adde etiam, quei conduplicant primordia rerum,
Aëra jungentes igni, terramque liquori;
Et quei quatuor ex rebus posse omnia rentur,
Ex igni, terrâ, atque animâ, procrecere, et imbri;

Ver. 767. —the pond'rous earth,] Pherecydes, the tutor of Pythagoras, is said to have taught the existence of three eternal beings, Jupiter, Time, and Earth; and to have believed that all material existences were derived from the last. Hesiod, however, conceived Earth to be the only eternal substance and element, and that Jupiter himself, as well as all the other gods, and the whole family of mortals, were produced by Earth, and out of its own primitive substance. Barnardin, Telesius, and some other philosophers of later periods, have indulged conjectures not very dissimilar. Employing the term generally as a whole, and not singly as an element, our poet himself regards the earth as the source of all being, animate and inanimate; thus a few lines further, he asserts,

Maternal, hence, is earth most justly named:
and the same observation is repeatedly made in b. v. where the doctrine of cosmology is discussed at full length. But in none of these instances does he regard the earth as a separate element; consequently, he deviates essentially from those writers, whether philosophers or mythologists, who contend for such an element, and trace the origin of all things from this individual element alone. It was from earth, as an element of this kind, that the Titans or giants of ancient tradition were conceived to have arisen. Thus Herodotus, μεθοδοχοί ταύτα ή τι Γαγαώνες Γαγαώνες γεγονός, εκ των ουράνων έκ του κατα τω σύμμεσο μελετε. “They asserted in their fables, that the giants were produced from the earth, on account of the excessive dimensions of their bodies.” And it is obvious that the terms, Γαγαώνες and Γαγαώνες, Giant and Earth-born, are nearly equivalent; the former having probably originated from the latter. In consequence of this prodigious size, they were compared to mountains or elevations, on which the sun first threw his earliest beams; and the term Titans, by which they were denominated, has no other meaning. Hence Mr. Allwood contends, but I think unwarrantably, that the Titans were mere temples or mountains dedicated to the sun, and never had any real existence.

Ver. 770. Nor wanders less the sage who air with fire.] As the individual elements have occasionally found supporters among the Greek philosophers, so have they at times in every variety of combination. Chonpides pretended to trace the rise of all things from an union of air and fire; Xenophanes, from an union of earth and water; Parmenides, from that of earth and fire; and Hippo of Rhegium, from that of fire and water; whilst Onomacritus, and, since his era, Descartes, and his disciples, admit three out of the four vulgar elements, the former rejecting air, and the latter fire.

Whilst I am upon this subject, I ought not to pass over the theory of that learned and acute geologist, the late Mr. Whitehurst, which has again been brought forwards and improved upon by Mr. Kirwan. Mr. Whitehurst supposes the whole planetary system to have been formed at the same instant; and that the earth, as well as the rest of the planets, was originally a large undivided pulp or chaos, uniformly suspended in this fluid state. He supposes, more-
For each has arm'd its champions in its turn,
Alike wide wander from unerring truth.

Nor wanders less the sage who air with fire
Would fain commix, or-limpid stream with earth;
Or those the whole who join, fire, ether, earth,
And pregnant showers, and thence the world deduce.

over, that the first efforts of this chaos, towards the production of order and harmony, consisted in the gradual separation of element from element, according to its comparative gravity: that air would therefore be superior in the scale of ascent, next water, and then earth. He again supposes, that this separation of element from element, was the work of a vast series of time, and that, consequently, no short period must have elapsed before the formation of animals or vegetables destined to inhabit the dry and continental parts of the earth. But as this was not necessary with respect to marine animals, he conceives these latter to have been the first race of beings produced in the order of creation: and he hence accounts for the frequency with which we meet with exuvies of such animals as also with fossil shells, and other marine relics on the highest mountains, and in a variety of places where we should not expect them. The operation of the sun and moon upon the agitated chaotic mass, by drawing the waters away from one part towards another, would allow, between every tide, a sufficient period for the upper points of land, not hurried away by the stream, to harden and resist the tide's return, or rise superior to its influx. These points or summits, which would be constantly increasing, would at length become proper habitations for man and beast, and vegetables; and to these elevations of land he gives the appellation of Primitive Islands.—This theory does not explain the origin of craggy rocks, profound valleys, and volcanic lavas. But, to account for such later phenomena, the ingenious author refers us to the universal deluge; which he conceives to have been produced by the expansive operation of a large body of subterranean fire, which bursting the solid contents of the globe to its surface, admitted, through a vast variety of chasms, immense quantities of water from the general bed of the ocean, which, rarefied, in its turn, by the subterranean heat to which it was exposed, concurred, by its elastic force, in the production of all the diversities of height and depth, of rough and smooth, that are exhibited in the variegated face of nature. M. de Saussure appears to have entertained very similar ideas. He was, therefore, in the language of the French philosophers, a Neptunian: and it was his intention at one time to have delivered his opinions upon the primitive state of the earth, in a full and explicit manner. But, notwithstanding all his geologic knowledge, and profound investigations, the more he meditated upon this subject, the more difficult, he declared, it appeared to him, to form a decided opinion; and he died without having accomplished the object he had in view.

Ver. 772. Or those the whole who join, fire, ether, earth,
And pregnant showers,—] The popular dogma, that all things are constituted of four elements, is derived from Ocellus Lucanus, a philosopher who flourished in the 100th Olympiad, about nine centuries anterior to the Christian era; from whom it appears to have descended in a direct line to Pythagoras, Hippocrates, and Aristotle.—This doctrine, however, as I have already had occasion to observe, has
Quorum Agragantinus cum primis Empedocles est:
(Insula quem triquetris terrarum gessit in oris;)

been often opposed in every age; yet, upon the whole, it has ever been the most popular of any among men of letters, till about the middle of the last century, or rather later; since which time, chemistry has been gradually assuming a scientific form, and with a daring, but steady eye, and an unsuspected success, has probed into the origin, not only of natural phenomena, but of nature herself. And what after all, is the result? Is the world produced from different elements or principles, or from one and the same infinite mass of indivisible, indestructible, and homogeneous atoms? From the system of Epicurus, corroborated by the weighty assent of Sir Isaac Newton, or from some one of the various opinions of other philosophers, who have radiated from this point in almost every possible direction?

To begin with the element of fire, caloric, or latent heat. Were this a substance distinct from the particles of a heated body; a something superadded to it, and not a mere re-arrangement and new modification of those particles; the greater the degree of heat, the greater we should necessarily expect to find the gravity of such body; and both Margraff and Lewis have brought forwards a few experiments ostensibly favourable to such a fact. These, however, are easily accounted for, upon the principle of calcination, and the absorption of carbonic acid gas; while others, of greater accuracy and precision, have concurred in determining either that there is no difference between the weight of a body heated to redness, and what it possessed when cold, or that the body in a cold temperature exhibits rather a greater degree of gravity than when red-hot. — For further information on this subject, I refer the reader to the experiments of Mr. Whitehurst and Dr. Roebuck, as stated in the Philosophical Transactions, Vol. LXVI, part ii. What then must necessarily be the result of such experiments and observations, but that, according to the opinion of our sagacious and philosophic poet, fire is not a primary material substance, but a mere motion, or new and peculiar arrangement of primary particles themselves?

Yet other elements have been canvassed as scrupulously as fire, and the same doctrine applies to each of them. Earth, it appears, is the production of water, and water of air: while air is, unquestionably, a compound, and perhaps a compound of compounds; for we know not, nor have any reason to believe that the gasses which form it, are any of them simple and ungenious: a few facts will be sufficient to illustrate this opinion. — It has long been suspected by philosophers, that there is not at present so much water in the world as there was formerly; while the quantity of earth, and consequently of continents and islands, has been increasing in an inverse ratio: it has hence been conceived, that water is continually converting into earth; and some experiments have very considerably favoured such an hypothesis. There is no water so pure and uncompounded, that it will not, if kept for three or four years, make an earthy deposit: rain water, distilled water, and snow, have all been tried for this purpose, but the same deposit, or transmutation into earth, has uniformly taken place. This phenomenon was long ago observed by Boerhaave, who declared, in consequence hereof, that there was no such thing as pure water to be obtained anywhere, or by any means. — The seeds of plants likewise, as the white-mustard seed, and some aquatic animals, as leeches, are known to increase in solid substance by the suspension of water alone; or, at least, without the intermixture of earth, properly so called. Earth, then, is the production of water, and not an original element; and hence we reduce the four elements, commonly so called, to two alone; to wit, water and air.

There are few persons of a liberal education, but are acquainted with some of the experiments upon water, of Mr. Cavendish, and the late M. Lavoisier. From these experiments, it should seem that water is no more a radical substance than earth; or, at least, that it is producible from a due intermixture of inflammable and dephlogisticated airs; or, according to the new, and more accurate nomenclature, of
oxygen and hydrogen. And, indeed, at the late aerostatic institute at Meudon, the balloons were all filled from hydrogen alone, obtained from the simple decomposition of water by means of an easy, and unexpensive process, discovered by M. Conti, for whom the truly scientific Guyton Morveau obtained the directorship of this establishment. These experiments then strike out air from the list of simple indestructible substances, as those I have just adverted to strike out earth and fire.

It is much doubted, however, by some philosophers, since water and air are convertible substances, whether water be not the radix of air, instead of air being that of water. Water, in its natural state, discovers but a small degree of elasticity; but when rarified into vapour in an eolipile, it will exhibit all the characters of genuine air, and stream out like a blast of rapid wind. Yet air, if not a composition of water, is, as already observed, a compound of various gasses, of which, it is probable, that every gas is a compound in itself.

Boerhaave regarded cold as an element, believing it to possess an existence sui generis; Linnæus oil; the Chinese philosophers, and Indian bramins, the ether, or materia subtillis, which the Cartesians suppose to exist throughout the immensity of space, or, at least a substance of a similar description, and which, among Oriental philosophers, constitutes their fifth element. See note on b. i. 846. But if a rigid adherence to an apparent homogeneity of structure, a stern inflexible defiance of all the powers of chemical ingenuity to produce a decomposition, be the test and criterion of elementary bodies, the acid and natron, or soda, which constitute the basis of common salt, have a better title to such an appellation than any substance whatever; for as yet we know of no process, whether of art or nature, by which either of them can be formed, or decomposed. And yet no one doubts that these are compound bodies, although they have hitherto eluded every analytic attempt. The magnetic aura has long been considered as nothing more than a modification of the electric; but the electric itself is a compound; and Dr. Grien, professor at Halle, has written an able treatise upon this subject, which has deservedly passed through, at least, three editions; in which he clearly proves that the electric aura is a combination of light and caloric, or elementary heat; that it may be compounded and depounded in bodies, and actually is so in the various processes of smelting, combustion, and evaporation. See his Grundriss der Natur. 8vo. printed at Halle 1797. The opinion of M. Haliy is not very different: he conceives the phenomena, both of magnetism and electricity, to be produced by the simultaneous action of two distinct fluids. See his very valuable Traité Élementaire de Physique. There are various animals endowed with organs, that seem to possess a power of secreting these auras, and perhaps there are no living animals altogether destitute of such organs: although in the torpedo, gymnotus electricus, and such domestic animals as cats and rats, this extraordinary power appears to exist in a greater degree than in others. It seems probable, moreover, that the electric fluid is secreted from a certain set of glands dispersed over the bodies of such animals, or from the brain itself. The secretion of a gas of any kind has not indeed been hitherto fairly detected; but air has been frequently found so largely combined with secreted substances, as to render it probable that the air itself has formed a part of the secretion. And if this be a fact with respect to air, it will equally apply with respect to the gasses of which air is a compound. The torpedo is endowed with organs which have a close resemblance to the voltaic pile; and if this structure be injured by the division of its nerves, the torpefying effect is lost. The galvanic and electric auras appear to be the same; at least, the difference is so minute as to elude all detection: it is almost reduced to a certainty, moreover, that this common aura constitutes the nervous fluid; and in man at least it should seem therefore to be secreted from the brain, and hence diffused over the body by the course of the nerves. In passing through different organs, how-
Quam fluitans circum magnis am fractibus æquir
Ionium glaucis adspargit virus ab undis,
Angustoque fretu rapidum, mare dividit undis
Æolias terrarum oras a finibus ejus.
Heic est vasta Charybdis, et heic Ætnæa minantur

ever, it submits to a variety of changes, which proves
obviously that such organs possess, of themselves, a
considerable power over it. While some parts of the
body abound with electricity, others are deficient in
proportion to their capacity. The experiments of
Buniva prove that the electricity of the blood is posi-
tive,—of the excrementitious fluids, negative; and
these have been since fully confirmed by M. Vassali-
Eandi. It is, perhaps, by a similar economy, that
the luminous matter exhibited in a concrete state by
the glow-worm and fire-fly, (lampyris Italica) is sepa-
rated from their food, or the atmosphere that sur-
rounds them. In the latter of these, it has been
sufficiently ascertained by M. Carradori (See Brug-
natelli’s Annali di Chimica), that the phosphorescent
fomes, when separated and collected, resides in the
cells of the abdomen between the rings; and that
the appearance and disappearance of the light, con-
sidered as voluntary, depend on the insect’s power of
opening and closing those cells.

If this solution be admitted, with respect to the
secretion or separation of light in living animals, we
easily extend the conjecture, and account, upon a
similar principle, for its separation and efflux from
putrescent animal and vegetable substances, sea-wa-
ter, and rotten timbers.

Upon the whole, it should seem then, consistently
with the doctrine developed in the poem before us,
that all things proceed from the same primary ele-
mental seeds, or atoms, and are convertible into all
things; and that the modification or arrangement of
such atoms alone, produces the difference between
substances and substances; or, to adopt the language
of Lucretius, that

—in alternate course
Each flows from each, th’ alternate form is seiz’d
Th’ alternate nature through perennial time. i. 828.

And from whom did Sir Isaac Newton derive his
hypothesis, but from the same school, when he as-
serted that it is probable God, in the beginning,
formed matter in solid, massive, hard, impenetrable,
and moveable particles, of such sizes and figures, and
with such other properties as were best proportioned
to the end they were to produce? and that the
changes of corporeal things are to be placed only to
the various separations, and new associations, and mo-
tions of those original and permanent particles?—See
on this subject our poet’s observations in ver. 980,
and following.

Ver. 774. Thus sunt Empedocles, &c.] Emped-
ocles was the scholar both of Pythagoras and Anax-
goras. He was, likewise, contemporary with Euri-
pides the poet, and of course flourished in the 84th
Olympiad, about four hundred years before the
Christian era. That he had imbibed the sentiments
here attributed to him, in common indeed with Py-
thagoras, and Ocellus Lucanus, Ovid informs us in
his Metamorphoses,

Quatuor aeternus genitalia corpora mundus
Continet.—
For this eternal world is said of old
But four prolific principles to hold. xv. 239.

Plutarch, however, has more fully recognised
him still. Empedokles Metonos Ἀγρειγεντος, τὸν εἰρη
μέν λογισμον τοῖς ἑλέσιν, σὺν αὐξη, ὑπὲρ, γνώντων δὲ ἀρχαῖα;
διόθεν, φιλοσοφεῖ φιλοσοφεῖ, ὡσεὶ μίαν εὐθυτώς, τὸ δὲ
διαφανείτης. de Plac. Phil. i. 3. “Empedocles of
Agrigentum maintained, that all things are pro-
duced from the principles of fire, air, water and earth;
into which they are all again eventually resolved.”
To these he added two other powers, Love and Dis-
cord; the former harmonizing and uniting, the latter
disjoining, and repelling. Empedocles is reported
In cloud-capt Sicily. Its sinuous shores
Th’ Ionian main, with hoarse, unwearied wave,
Surrounds, and sprinkles, with its briny dew:
And, from the fair Æolian fields, divides
With narrow frith that spurns th’ impetuous surge.

Ver. 776. In cloud-capt Sicily.] This description of Sicily is as geographically accurate, as it is poetically beautiful. The Ionian, or Mediterranean sea, by which it is principally surrounded, derives its appellation, according to Pliny, from Ionius, the son of Dyrribachius, who was slain by Hercules, and thrown into the Mediterranean, to perpetuate his memory. The frith, which the poet justly denominates narrow, is at present known by the name of the Straits of Messina. Its breadth between Italy and Sicily is not more than about half a league. The two countries, indeed, originally united, but were separated, according to Faber, about the era of the Hebrew chief Joshua, by a most violent hurricane and earthquake.

Ver. 781. Here wait Char[y]bdis waves.] Charybdis, according to the latitude in which the term is used by Thucydides, means the entire Straits of Messina; but in a more limited and common acceptance, it is a gulf, or vortex, on the immediate coast of Sicily, now denominated Calefaro, from the continual effervescence of its waters, and directly opposite the Scigla, Scylla, or pointed rock that rises off the promontory of Cosnis on the Italian side of the strait. The impetuosity of the current between Sicily and the rock Scigla, together with the force of the whirlpool of Calefaro, has been supposed to render this passage at all times dangerous to mariners. In stormy weather, indeed, there is still no small degree of hazard; but, at other periods, the natives of either country pass and re-pass with little apprehension, and very few accidents. It afforded the poets of Greece and Rome, however, an inexhaustible fund of picturesque and sublime imagery; and their descriptions of this impetuous passage are often grand and terrible. Thus Homer:

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{All' or' avacrhoi thelaxous almyron wder,} \\
\text{Pai' enoedi faineste koumphon' amphi de petra} \\
\text{Aiono eidothen, upetere de yiaia fainesti} \\
\text{Yammen koumno' tous de xlaron diei' perin.} \\
\text{Haios me' pros ton' apeler, diekantes olthron, &c.}
\end{aligned}
\]

\text{Odyssey, M.}

Now, all at once, tremendous scenes unfold;
Thunder'd the deeps, the smoking billows roll'd!
Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood:
All trembling, deafen'd, and aghast we stood!
No more the vessel plough'd the dreadful wave;
Fear seiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave.

Pope.

It is worth while to compare this passage with the beginning of that quoted from Camoëns, in the note to ver. 149 of this book. Many of the lines in that extract are a close copy. The parallel passage in Virgil is more: it is a translation.

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{Tum procul e fluctu Trimacia cernitur Ætna:} \\
\text{Et gemitum ingentem pelagi, pulsataque saxa} \\
\text{Audimus longe, fractasque ad litora voces;} \\
\text{Exultantque vada, atque Æstus miscentur arenae, &c.}
\end{aligned}
\]

\text{Æn. lib. 3.}

—Mount Ætna thence we spy,
Known by the smoky flames which cloud the sky.
Far off we hear the waves, with surly sound
Invoke the rocks; the rocks their groans resound:
The billows break upon the sounding strand,
And roll the rising tide, impure with sand.

Dryden.
Murmura, flammarum rursum se conligere iras,
Faucibus eruptos iterum ut vis evomat ignes,
Ad cœlumque ferat flammaî fulgura rursum.
Quæ, quom magna modis multis miranda videtur
Gentibus humanis regio, visundaque fertur,
Rebus opima bonis, multâ munita virûm vi;
Nihil tamen hoc habuisse viro præclarius in se,
Nec sanctum magis, et mirum, carumque, videtur.
Carmina quin etiam divini pectoris ejus
Vociferantur, et exponunt præclara reperta;
Ut vix humanâ videatur stirpe creatus)
Hic tamen, et, supra quos diximus, inferiores
Partibus egregie multis, multoque minores;
Quamquam, multa bene ac divinitus invenientes,
Ex adyto tamquam cordis, responsa dedere
Sanctius, et multo certâ ratione magis, quam
Pythia, quæ tripode ex Phoebi lauroque profatur;
Principiis tamen in rerum fecere ruinas,

Ver. 781. —_here AEtna rears_

_His infant thunders,] Of this celebrated mountain, known alike to ancients and moderns, from the dreadful effects of its volcanic eruptions, our poet treats more fully and philosophically, in his sixth book; to the notes on which passage I refer the reader for further information: observing only that Creech, in his translation of this description, has thought proper, without finding it in the original, or reflecting that Lucretius was superior to the vulgar superstitions of his time, and laboured to destroy them, to introduce the fable of the giants buried un-
der the immense weight of the mountain, and vomit-
Here vast Charbydis raves: here Ætna rears
His infant thunders, his dread jaws unlocks,
And heav’n, and earth with fiery ruin threats.
Here many a wonder, many a scene sublime,
As on he journeys, checks the traveller’s steps;
And shows, at once, a land in harvests rich,
And rich in sages of illustrious fame.
But nought so wond’rous, so illustrious nought,
So fair, so pure, so lovely, can it boast,
Empedocles, as thou! whose song divine,
By all rehears’d, so clears each mystic lore,
That scarce mankind believ’d thee born of man.
Yet e’en Empedocles, and those above
Already sung, of far inferior fame,
Though doctrines frequent from their bosoms flow’d
Like inspiration, sager and more true
Than e’er the Pythian maid, with laurels crown’d,
Spoke from the tripod at Apollo’s shrine;

Ver. 797. Than e’er the Pythian maid, with laurels crown’d,
Spoke from the tripod at Apollo’s shrine:]

The priestess of Apollo at Delphos was commonly de-nominated Pythia, from τυθημεθησα, to consult or advise upon a subject. She pronounced the oracle from a low stool or table supported by three feet, which was, in consequence, termed a tripod; and as the laurel was a tree consecrated to Apollo, her hair was usually braided with a bandeau of its leaves. The Delphic tripod was supported by an elegant and serpentine column, which, according to Mr. Dallaway, is even now in existence, and adorns, among other Grecian remains, the area of the Hippodrome at Constantinople.

Vide his Constant, ancient and modern
Et graviter magnei magno cecidere ibi casu:
Primum, quod motus, exempto rebus inani,
Constituunt, et res molles rarasque relinquunt,
Aëra, solem, ignem, terras, animalia, fruges;
Nec tamen admiscent in eorum corpus inane:
Deinde, quod omnino finem non esse secandis
Corporibus faciunt, neque pausam stare fragori:
Nec prorsum in rebus minumum consistere quidquam:
Quom videamus id extremum quoisique cacumen
Esse, quod ad sensus nostros minimum esse videtur;
Conjicere ut possis ex hoc, quod cernere non quis
Extremum quod habent, minumum consistere rebus.

Huc adcedit item, quoniam primordia rerum
Mollia constituunt, quæ nos nativa videmus
Esse, et mortali cum corpore funditus: atqui

Ver. 800. *And greatly wander'd in attempt so great.*] The iteration of the word great occurs in the original in the same manner as in the translation:

Et graviter magni magno cecidere ibi casu.

This playful recurrence of words forms a favourite figure with our poet, who has often enriched his verses with an indulgence in it. See note on ver. 877.

Ver. 801. *And, first, they deem'd, &c.—*] He opposes the hypothesis of the Ionic school, or the four elements, by six different arguments, each of them possessed of much elegant force and logical precision. They denied the existence of a vacuum, while they contended, that bodies might have motion, and dilate or contract in a perfect plenum: an absurdity already sufficiently commented upon in ver. 420, and following. They contended for an infinite divisibility of matter, and denied the possibility of its ever separating into ultimate and extreme atoms. They maintained, that the origin of things, instead of being impenetrably solid, are soft and pliable: the fallacy of all which has been sufficiently detected and exposed already. It cannot but be remarked, moreover, that the principles or
E'en these mistook the principles of things,
And greatly wander'd in attempt so great.
And, first, they deem'd that motion might exist
From void exempt: that things might still be rare,
Still soften, as earth, ether, fire, or fruits,
Or e'en the ranks of animated life,
Though void commix'd not with their varying frames.
Then, too, they held no final term ordain'd
To comminuting atoms: which, through time,
Still crumbled on, and never could be least.
Though from such points as sense itself surveys,
Extreme and least, conjecture we may form
Of points extreme, impalpable to sight,
Least in themselves, that never can divide.

With them, moreo'er, the seeds of things were form'd
Soft, and unsolid: but whate'er is soft,
Whate'er unsolid, as at first they spring

elements of things for which Empedocles contended,
were substances, in their very nature, hostile and opposite to each other; and of course, whenever they meet, must reciprocally annihilate each other, or else be irregularly scattered abroad by a mutual repulsive force. If, however, things could be created from the junction of such jarring and discordant elements, why should fire, water, earth, and air, be termed principles of other substances, rather than other substances principles of these? Every thing is constantly changing into every thing, and arising from every thing: and there is no more propriety in denomiating one thing an element than another. But if the elemental atoms of Nature could be separated and combined afresh; if their solidity could be once destroyed, from the change in the motion or arrangement of which, every substance takes its different form and appearance: if these could be to-day pure elemental fire, to-morrow water equally unmixed and simple, then must they long since have completely perished, and disappeared: for every substance must inevitably waste, and eventually perish, that is liable to change. And it is to the solidity of primal seeds, or atoms alone, that Nature is indebted for the unvaried regularity of her powers and phenomena.
Debeat ad nihilum jam rerum summa reverto,
De nihiloque renata vigescere copia rerum;
Quorum utrumque quid a vero jam distet, habebas.
Deinde, inimica modis multis sunt, atque venena
Ipsa, sibi inter se; quâ re, aut congressa peribunt,
Aut ita diffugient, ut tempestate coactâ,
Fulmina diffugere, atque imbreis, ventosque, videmus.

Denique, quatuor ex rebus si cuncta creantur,
Atque in eas rursus res omnia dissoluntur:
Qui magis illa queunt rerum primordia dici,
Quam contra res illorum, retroque putari?
Alternis gignuntur enim, mutantque colorem,
Et totam inter se naturam, tempore ab omni.
Sin ita forte putas ignis terræque coire
Corpus, et æérias auras, roremque liquorum,
Nihil in concilio naturam ut mutet eorum;
Nulla tibi ex illis poterit res esse creata,
Non animans, non exanimo cum corpore, ut arbos:
Quippe suam quidque in cœtu variantis acervi
Naturam obtendet, mixtusque videbitur aër

---

Ver. 828. — in alternate form, 
Each flows from each, &c.—]
Thus Dr. Darwin, with equal elegance and ac-
curacy:
From other substance, must perforce decay.
So all to nought would perish, and again
From nought regerminate to growth mature:
Doctrines the muse already has disprov'd.
Such seeds, too, must be foes; created each
To each adverse; and hence can never meet
But sure perdition waits: or, chance, they part,
Disperst abrupt, as, in contending storms,
Wind, rain, and thunder scatter, and are lost.

But, from such four-fold foes, could all things spring,
And, sprung, to such dissolve—why rather term
Those jarring powers the primal seeds of things
Than things of them? since, in alternate course,
Each flows from each: th' alternate form is seiz'd,
Th' alternate nature, through perennial time.
Yet could'st thou deem such powers adverse might blend,
And earth with fire, with ether lymph commix,
And still retain their natures unimpair'd;
Whilst thus retained, no living form could rise
'Trac'd through creation, animate, or void,
As springs the verdant shrub, of reasoning soul.
For each its nature, through the varying mass,
Would still evince, and earth with air commix,

Organic forms with chemic changes strive,
Live but to die, and die but to revive;
Immortal matter braves the transient storm,
Mounts in the wreck, unchanging but in form.

Temp. of Nat. ii. 42.
Cum terrâ simul, et quodam cum röre, manere:
At primordia gignundis in rebus oportet
Naturam clandestinam, cæcamque, adhibere;
Emineat ne quid, quod contra pugnet, et obstet,
Quo minus esse queat proprie, quodquomque creatur.

Quin etiam repetunt a coelo, atque ignibus ejus;
Et primum faciunt ignem se vortere in auras
Aëris: hinc imbre gigni, terramque creari
Ex imibri; retroque a terrâ cuncta revorti,
Humorem primum, post aera, deinde calorem:
Nec cessare hæc inter se mutare, meare
A coelo ad terram, de terrâ ad sidera mundi:
Quod facere haud ullo debent primordia facto.
Inmutabile enim quiddam superare necesse est;

Ver. 846. —that fire drawn hence

Converts to ether, &c.—] The order of creation, which was introduced by Heraclitus, was adhered to, with little alteration, by every other teacher of philosophy. From fire, when moist, is produced air; from condensed air, water; from water contracting and concreting, earth; from earth rarefying and diffused, water; from rarefied water, air; from air highly expanded, fire. Thus Laer-
tius: Πυκναμον το τω εξημασθαι, και αερα γωσθαι;
συνακριμεν αερα γυωσθαι 'υδωρ: πυκναμον το 'υδωρ ει την
τριπτοια, και ταυτω ρωδ ει τω χατω ειναι* Παλιν δε
αυτω την γην κιεβαι, ει·'το ρωδ γωσθαι* ικ δε ταυτω
τα λυπα ομως αυτω ει ειναι την εινω ρωδ.

This common system and opinion of the elementary philosophers was intimately known to many of
the poets as well. Hence the following verses of Ovid:

In liquidas rorescit aquas: tenuatus in auras
Aeraque humor abit: demto quoque pondere
rursus
In superos aëri tenissimus emicat ignes:
Inde retro redeunt; idemque retexitur ordo;
Ignis enim densum spissatus in aëra transit;
Hic in aquas; tellus glomerata cogitur aqua.

Metamor. xv. 246.

Earth rarefies to dew: expanded more
The subtile dew in air begins to soar;
Spreads as she flies, and weary of her name
Extenuates still, and changes into flame.
Thus having, by degrees, perfection won,
Restless, they soon untwist the web they spun:
And fire begins to lose her radiant hue,
Mixt with gross air, and air descends to dew;
In ceaseless strife,—and fire with crystal lymph.
But primal seeds, whene’er the form of things
Mutual they gender, must, perforce, assume
An unobtrusive nature, close conceal’d,
Lest aught superior rise, of power adverse,
And thus th’ harmonious union be destroy’d.

Such sages, too, from heav’n, and heaven’s bright fires
Maintain that all proceeds: that fire drawn hence
Converts to ether, ether into showers,
And showers benign to earth: and hence again,
That all from earth returns: first liquid dew,
Then air, and heat conclusive; changing thus,
In ceaseless revolution, changing thus
From heav’n to earth, from earth to heav’n sublime:
A change primordial seeds could ne’er sustain.

And dew condensing does her form forego,
And sinks a heavy lump of earth below.

DraBen.

The whole of which opinion appears to have been
derived from the Hindus, probably through the
medium of Egypt; but with this difference, and
ostensible advantage on the part of the Greeks,
that the Hindus instead of deriving air from fire,
and water from air, derive water from fire, and fire
from air. The cosmogony of the Hindus is as fol-

dows: They first suppose a Supreme Deity or Be-
ing of beings; then, that this Divinity created Eter-
nity; that Eternity brought forth Tchiwen; Tachi-
wen, Tchaddy; and in this manner, that a regular
succession of divinities was created, till at length,
we arrive at Bruma, or Bremah, being the twelfth
in the order of successive generation. Bremah was
the productive principle of the soul, and created
(13) the heaven, or that vast expansion between
heaven and earth which makes up the fifth element,
or is rather the receptacle of the other four; and
seems, as already observed, to be a species of
the ether of the ancients, or the materia sub-
tilis of Des Cartes: (14) the heaven or ether begat
the air: (15) the air begat the fire: (16) the fire
begat the water: (17) the water begat the earth.

Lettres Curieuses et Edifiantes, Tom. iv. See
also Asiatic Researches, Vol. iv. Art. ii., in which
the above fifth element is denominated, by Sir Wil-
liam Jones, a subtle spirit, and is said to be so
styled both in the Vedas, and the works of the
Sufis.
Ne res ad nihilum redigantur funditus omnes.
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante.
Quapropter, quoniam quae paullo diximus ante,
In conmutatum veniunt, constare necesse est
Ex aliis ea, quae nequeant convertier usquam:
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes.
Quin potius, tali naturâ prædita, quædam
Corpora constituas; ignem si forte crearint,
Posse eadem, demptis paucis, paucisque tributis,
Ordine mutato, et motu, facere æris auram:
Sic alias aliis rebus mutarier omnes.

At manifesta palam res indicat, inquis, in auram
Aërit e terrâ res omnes crescere, alique:
Et, nisi tempestas indulget tempore fausto
Imbribus, et tabe nimborum arbusta vacillant;
Solque suâ pro parte foveat, tribuitque calorem;
Crescere non possint fruges, arbusta, animantes.
Scilicet; et, nisi nos cibus aridus, et tener humor,
Adjuvat, amissâ jam corpore, vita quoque omnis
Omnibus e nervis atque ossibus exsoluatur.
Adjutamur enim dubio procul, atque alimur, nos
Certis ab rebus, certis aliaæ atque aliaæ res:
Nimirum, quia multimodis communia multis
So something still must, void of change, exist;
Or all would perish, all to nought return;
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.
Since, then, as sung above, these all commute
Each into each, some seeds must still be own'd
That ne'er can change, or all to nought would waste.
Hold rather, then, such seeds exist, endow'd
With powers so curious that, as now combin'd,
If fire they form, combine them but anew,
Add, or deduct, give motion, or subtract,
And all is air; and changing thus, and chang'd
That things from things perpetual take their rise.

Nor urge, still sceptic, that each hour displays
All life protruded from the genial earth:
Fed by the balmy air; by heaven's own fire
Matur'd; and sav'd from pestilence, and death
Alone by showers benignant: and that hence
Man, beast, and herbs alike exist, and thrive.
The fact we own: we own from solid food,
And crystal streams, man draws his daily breath,
Of nerve, of bone, of being else depriv'd:
But, owning, add, the compounds meet for man,
For brute, for herbage, differ in their kinds,
By different tastes discern'd: and differ thus,
Multarum rerum in rebus primordia multa
Sunt; ideo variis varie res rebus aluntur.

Ver. 877. — differ in their kinds,
By different tastes discern'd; and differ thus, &c.

The anaphora, or playful iteration adopted in this translation is still fuller in the original:

—— multimodis communia multis
Multarum rerum in rebus primordia multa
Sunt; ideo variis varie res rebus aluntur.

Of this sportive figure Lucretius appears to have been extremely fond, and it is hence frequently to be traced in the course of his poem. Our English interpreters, however, have none of them attempted to preserve it in their versions; but it would be an injustice to the labours of Marchetti not to mention that, as usual, he has been more attentive to this characteristic mark of Lucretian versification:

Ch' essendo molti primi semi e molti
Communi in molti modi a molti corpi
Mescolati fra lor : forz' è ch' il vitto
Da varie cose varie cose prendano.

In the same manner, a few lines only above, we meet with a passage which I have endeavoured as faithfully to translate.

—— in alternate course
Each flows from each, th' alternate form is seiz'd,
Th' alternate nature. Ver. 828.

Dr. Johnson, if I rightly remember, in his life of Gray, strenuously objects to the use of alliterations of every kind, as stiff, cumbersome, and mechanical. But it should be recollected, that all metre is mechanism; and that even the style of all prose writers, who have acquired any degree of celebrity, and especially that of Johnson himself, is mechanism reduced to habit. The

Double, double toil and trouble,
therefore, of which, parodying upon a line of Shakespeare, he accuses all poets who indulge in this species of ornament, will apply to all reputable prose writers as well; but to none more, or even perhaps so largely as to the accuser. Much true taste, however, and nice discrimination, I am ready to allow, is peculiarly requisite in the use of the anaphora; and it certainly has, occasionally, been most grossly abused in the hands of poetasters and punning epigrammatists. At the same time, all ages and all nations afford us instances of its adoption by poets the most classical and refined. In our own language it is well known to be a decoration so common in the writings of Gray, that to quote him would be altogether an act of superfluity: Mason, who was his intimate friend and copyist, and who approaches, perhaps, more nearly to the elegant and impressive simplicity of Lucretius than any other didactic poet of whom we can boast, has also introduced this ornament, as he has many other decorations of the Roman bard, and even the contour of those decorations into his English Garden with no unsparring hand. Thus in a passage where the author is proving the frequent necessity of calling in mechanic skill to our assistance in improving the plan we have decided upon;

And where we bid her move, with engine huge,
Each ponderous trunk, the ponderous trunk there move.

A work of difficulty, and danger tried,
Nor oft successful found. But if it fail
Thy axe must do its office. Cruel task,
Yet needful. Trust me, tho' I bid thee strike,
Reluctantly I bid thee: for my soul
Holds dear an ancient oak, nothing more dear,
It is an ancient friend. B. i. v. 328.

Thus in a similar manner, Spenser:

Glad of such luck, the lucky luckless maid
A long time with that savage people staid.

In the following passage of Milton, as well as in a vast variety of other places, we meet with an instance of both literal and verbal alliteration: and Lucretius was equally attached to each.

—— So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die,
And dying rise, and, rising, with him raise
His brethren ransomed.

Par. Lost. iii. 294.
The glittering poetry of Dr. Darwin affords numerous instances of the same decoration; pursued, in some cases, to excess. The following couplet, and I have no room for more, offers us an elegant and unexceptionable example:

Organic forms with chemic changes strive,
Live but to die, and die but to revive.

TEMP. OF NAT. ii. 48.

Perhaps no poet, however, of real talents, in our own language, has carried this figure to so blameless an excess, as Dr. Young in his Night Thoughts, where it certainly makes its appearance too frequently, and is pursued, in most instances, too far.

Let us now examine a few foreign poets of acknowledged ability, both ancient and modern, in confirmation of the taste of the poet before us. And first, the eulogies of Virgil are full of the anaphora,—full, I mean, without producing disgust. Let us take an example from his Pollio:

Pan etiam, Arcadia mecum si judice seret,
Pan etiam, Arcadia dicat se judice victum.

The following passage is a judicious Vida has referred, as a proof of the beauty of the iterative figure, and its employment by poets of unrivalled reputation. These are his words, and this his own imitation of this very couplet:

Quid sequar ulterior quanta dulcedine captus
Detineant aures, vocem cum rursus candoi
Ingeminent, modo non verburum cogat egestas?
Pan etiam Arcadia neget hoc si judice praesens,
Pan, etiam Arcadia dicam te judice vanum.

POET. iii. 142.

But now to mention farther 1 forbear
With what strong charms they captivate the ear;
When the same terms they happily repeat,
The same repeated seem more soft and sweet.

This, were Arcadia judge, if Pan withstood, Pan's judge, Arcadia, would condemn her god.

Homer himself furnishes us with almost as many instances as Virgil. Let the following suffice:

Φησί, ὑπαρχόντας δην διαρεῖ, βακχοῖς βακχο προσδολομήσαν.
Ἀστία τοι ακτιν ετειδῆ, κοντή κορός, νείρα τοι ανθρ.

Il. N. 130.

This passage has been happily imitated by Statius, and without swelling the present note unnecessarily, with quotations from the poets of Greece and Rome, I will confine myself to this instance alone:

Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,
Ens ex minax ensis, pede pes, et cuspidie cuspis.

THEB. viii.

Pope has been equally fortunate in his version of the above passage in Homer, and it will serve as a translation of either extract:

An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,
Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields;
 Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,
Helm sticks to helm, and man drives man along.

In an Ode on Painting, by Frederic Staüdlin, a German poet of no small merit of the present day, the same description and figure is so precisely introduced as to require no additional translation.

Hier, wie im grausen schlachtgefühl
An panzer panzer hallt,
Und helm an helm, und schild an schild,
Und dampf von leichen wallt.

An alliteration of the same kind is to be met with in the twelfth Canto of the Jerusalem Delivered:

L' onta iritta lo sdegno alla vendetta;
E la vendetta poi l' onta rinnova;
Onde sempre al ferir, sempre alla fretta
Stimol novo s' aggiunge, e cagion nova.

Alternate furies either breast inflame,
Alternate vengeance, and alternate shame;
No pause, no rest th' impatient warriors know,
But rage to rage, and blow succeeds to blow.

HOOLE.

Sir John Fanshaw has introduced a beautiful alliteration into his version of the second canto of the
Atque eadem magni refert primordia sæpe
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contineantur;
Et quos inter se dent motus, adципiantque.
Namque eadem coelum, mare, terras, flumina, solem,
Constituunt; eadem fruges, arbusta, animanteis:
Verum, aliis alioque modo connixta, moventur.
Quin etiam passim nostris in versibus ipsis
Multa elementa vides, multis communia verbis;
Quom tamen inter se versus, ac verba, necesse est
Confiteare, et re, et sonitu distare sonanti:
Tantum elementa queunt, permutato ordine solo!

Lusiad of Camoëns; which, indeed, does not exist in the Portuguese, and is, therefore, entitled to the additional merit of originality. Speaking of the altar, he says:

On it the picture of that shape he plac'd,
In which the holy Spirit did slight;
The picture of the dove, so white, so chaste,
On the blest virgin's head, so chaste, so white.

Camoëns, however, was by no means inattentive to this figure, although it does not form the basis of the above translation. In the sixth canto, we meet with the following instance of it:

---eu deseo
Ha muito ja de andar terras estranhas,
Por ver mais agoas que as do Douro, e Tejo,
Varias gentes, e leis, e varias manhas.
Long have I hop'd thro' foreign climes to stray,
Where others trees than Douro wind their way;
To note what various shares of bliss and woe
From various laws, and various customs flow.

Mickle.

See also extract from the same poet in note on book ii. ver. 606.
But even prose writers, and public orators, have not always neglected the cultivation of this rhotorical flower. It would be easy to select instances from Demosthenes and Cicero, were it necessary. Passing these, I shall merely observe, that St. Paul himself has adopted it, 2 Cor. ix. 8. id est pauci paucis etiam paucis eceetes permittet eos pan agado: "that, having an all sufficiency at all times in all things, ye may abound in all that is good." It would swell this note to an unnecessary length to cite instances of the same kind from the Hebrew poets. I refer the reader therefore to note on B. iv. v. 1. where the subject is resumed.

Ver. 887. *Thus, though the lines,*—] This comparison is exquisitely apposite and illustrative; and our poet recurs to it, and makes a still ampler use of it in ver. 971 of the present book, which see, as likewise the note on ver. 974. In the second, and some of the succeeding books, he also introduces the same illustration.

The argument itself is founded on strict and philosophic fact: and our modern metaphysicians have often availed themselves of it. Thus Dr. Clarke, almost in the words of our poet: "Every thing by composition, division, or motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in whole or
Combin'd, and fitted to each rising want.
Nor small of import are the modes diverse
In which those seeds approach, recede, or blend:
Since heaven, and earth, and suns, and seas immense,
Herbs, instinct, reason, all are hence deriv'd:
The mode but chang'd, the matter still the same.
Thus, though the lines, these doctrines that recite,
Flow from the same fixt elemental types,
Yet line from line, in sense, in sound compar'd,
Egregious differs. Re-arranged alone,
Such the vast power by graphic types posset!

by parts, or in different place or order. When two
triangles, being put together, make a square, that
square is still nothing but two triangles; or when a
square cut in half makes two triangles, those two
triangles are only the two halves of a square; or
when a mixture of blue and yellow powder makes a
green, that green is still nothing but blue and yel-
low intermixed, as is plainly visible by the help of
microscopes.” Demonstration of the Being, &c. of
God, 8vo. edit. p. 58.

Nothing can afford a stronger proof of the very ex-
traordinary manner in which the same substance, un-
der one arrangement or modification of its primary
particles, may differ from the same substance when
under another, than some late experiments of Mr.
Chevenix, upon a supposed new metal, entitled Pallad-
ium; in the course of which he discovered that
platinum, whose specific gravity is more than 22, com-
bined with mercury, whose specific gravity is nearly
14, produced a mass whose gravity was not more
than about 11. These experiments are stated in a
paper inserted in the Philosophical Transactions for
1803; and they lead to an additional remark, which
is too much in point to be omitted: “A no less ex-
traordinary degree of irregular density is daily before
our eyes; yet it has not so much as attracted our at-
tention. It is true that it is taken from among the
gases. But, if we suppose that we have attained ac-
curacy in experiments upon these subjects, I see no
reason to refuse their evidence in this instance. The
density of oxygen gas to that of water is as 1 to 740;
and the density of hydrogen gas, as 1 to 9792. The
mean density of that proportion of oxygen and hy-
drogen gases which constitutes water, is to that of
water as 1 to 2098; or, in other words, water is
2098 times heavier than the mean density of its ele-
ments in the gaseous state. But water is only 1200
times heavier than steam, or water in the state of va-
pour. Therefore there is a variation in \( \frac{1}{1200} \), of 898,
or nearly half, between the density of water and its
elements, when both are in the aeriform state. This
fact, however, regards bodies only as they remain in
the same state, whether of solidity, liquidity, or fluid-
ity. The anomaly is much greater, if we contem-
plate them as they pass from one of these states to
the other. Yet we must not omit the consideration
of such a change, in the instance of mercury alloyed
with platinum; for the former metal, before liquid,
becomes solid as it enters into the new combina-
tion.”
At, rerum quæ sunt primordia, plura adhibere Possunt, unde queant variæ res quæque creari.

Nunc et Anaxagorae scrutemur ὄμοιομερείαν,

Quam Graii memorant, nec nostrâ dicere linguâ

Concedit nobis patrii sermonis egestas:

Sed tamen ipsam rem facile est exponere verbis,

Principium rerum, quam dicit ὄμοιομερείαν.

Ossa videlicet e pauxillis atque minutis

Ossibus, sic et de pauxillis atque minutis

Visceribus viscus, gigni; sanguenque creari

Sanguinis inter se multis coëuntibus guttis:

Ex aurasque putat micis consistere posse

Auram, et de terris terram concrescere parvis;

Ignibus ex igneis, humorem humoribus, esse,

Cætera consimili fingit, ratione, putatque;

Nec tamen esse ullâ parte idem in rebus inane

Concedit, neque corporibus finem esse secandis.

Ver. 897. From sapient Anaxagoras.] This philosopher, concerning whose origin there is some dispute among the critics, was a native of Clazomene in Ionia. Metaphysics, and natural philosophy, were the continual subjects of his studies; and he travelled far with a view of benefiting himself by the observations of others. He died at the age of 62, about three centuries and a half before the Christian era, at Lampsaecus; to which place he was banished by the Athenians, in consequence of the aberration of his philosophic opinions from the popular creed of the day. His chief preceptors were Anaximenes and Pherecydes; of whom some account will be found in the notes on v. 765, 766, and 767, of this book. Plato introduces Socrates as speaking in high commendation of a work written by Anaxagoras on Physiology; and it is probable, that the tenets here attributed to him were first communicated to the world in that publication, and that it was hence our poet imbibed a knowledge of his hypothesis. Plutarch, however, i. 13, has informed us, that he was also the author of a book on The Nature of Things, which opens with an assertion, that the divine mind had produced and arranged every phenomenon in nature at one and the same time. Όμων παντα χρηματα τω, νους δ' αυτια ἄνευ και δινομενων. Laertius reports, that he held the original atoms of matter to be possessed of the different powers and properties pre-
Start not when told, then, that the seeds of things
Boast powers superior, and can all create.
From such mistakes, detected and expos’d,
Now turn we: and in order next survey
Those doctrines first the Græcian schools imbib’d
From sapient Anaxagoras, by them
Term’d Homeœomy; a phrase ourselves,
In tongue deficient, never can translate.
But these its institutes: that bone from bones,
Minute, and embryo, nerve from nerves arise,
And blood from blood, by countless drops increas’d.
Gold, too, from golden atoms, earths concrete
From earths extreme; from fiery matters fire,
And lymph from limpid dew. And thus throughout
From primal kinds that kinds perpetual spring.
Yet void he granted not in aught create,
Nor points extreme that never can divide.
Quà re in utrâque mihi pariter ratione videtur Errare; atque illis juxta, quos diximus ante.

The atomic rudiments of Anaxagorae are, moreover, too feeble and insignificant for his purpose. If large masses of any substance, as of flesh, for example, be from their nature subject to corruption and dissolution, the nature of the minute and original particles, whence these are derived, being the same, such particles must also be equally subject to dissolution, and can never re-produce, by conjunction, the same masses again. Animals, again, who are a composition of antagonist qualities and powers, of bony hardness, and adipose softness, of dry tendons, and liquid blood, are often nourished by a single species of food. But if the system of Anaxagorae be true, every individual species capable of nourishing an animal, must, in itself, be composed of adverse, and opposite qualities; it must be, at the same time, hard and soft, moist and dry. And to prove the absurdity of such an opinion in a manner still more obvious, he proceeds to observe, that as smoke, flame, and ashes, are all and equally educeable from timber, each of these primary and opposite substances must have existed in the timber at the same time, prior to their separation; and that each of them, moreover, must have been perpetually imbribed from the earth, as the tree increased in its dimensions.

This hypothesis of Anaxagorae has seldom been embraced in its utmost latitude by modern philosophers and physiologists, but there are many opinions which evince a strong assimilation to it. Such is the doctrine of convertible and sympathetic medicines, which, less than a century ago, was universally assented to by the first physicians in every country; who, like Anaxagorae, appear to have imagined, that every part of the human frame received its nutriment, and recovered its health, from a digestion of the same parts of other animals, or from herbs of parallel or assimilating qualities. Thus the testes of the wild boar, reduced to powder, were esteemed an antidote in cases of barrenness; the lungs of a lamb, employed in the same manner, in pulmonic diseases; the medulla of all animals, in disorders of the nerves; and sperma eeti, or the fat of the whale, an infallible remedy in cases of marasmus, or general loss of fat from any internal disease, a remedy which has not even yet lost its good name with many practitioners, who still continue to believe, that ---the sovereign'st thing on earth, Is parmaceti for an inward bruise.

Thus, too, in the botanic productions of the earth, nothing, about a century ago, was esteemed of such infallible utility for diseases as the herb in our own language denominated Eye-bright; for a pain in the side as Stich-wort; for ruptures as Solomon's-seal; for lascivious ideas as the Agnus Dei, or Chaste-tree; for disorders of the bladder as Kidney-beans; and even in the present day, Scurvy-grass, among the vulgar, is held of paramount advantage in scorbutic complaints. Those who are acquainted with the writings of Etmüller, and Cole, published towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, will easily recall to mind a thousand such instances of sympathy and conversion, which uniformly seem to imply a general belief in some such doctrine as the homœomoria of Anaxagorae. M. Bonhomme's theory of the operation of calcareous phosphat, and its great advantage in the disease of the rickets, though far better founded, and of the date of the present day, is not very dissimilar in its origin.

But there are other systems which bear a still stronger resemblance to this doctrine. A few years ago, the female ovarium was supposed to be filled with cysts, and every cyst was conceived to be a perfect egg, with a complete human embryo in its interior; such was the doctrine of Harvey, Haller, and Bonnet. It was afterwards contended, that every animaleule in the male semen was a rudimentum homunculi; and that thousands of them existed in every drop. Such was the opinion of Rysch, De Graaf, and Leuwenhoek; who, moreover, asserted that the human, or any other animal fetus was produced by a deposit of some one of these animaleules of the
In both erroneous, and with those deceiv'd
Class'd in our numbers, and oppos'd above.

male in the ovarium or uterus of the female; which
was a mere nidus for its evolution and perfect
growth. In either case, however, the rudimen-
tum homunculi, or the minute embryo, was sup-
posed to be possessed of every limb and feature, or
the rudiments of every limb and feature, that the
human frame exhibits when in a state of perfection.
It was in allusion to this last doctrine, to which
indeed he appears to have been a complete prose-
lyte, that Sir R. Blackmore wrote the following
lines in his "Creation:"

When the crude embryo careful Nature breeds,
See how she works, and how her work pro-
ceeds;
While thro' the mass her energy she darts
To free and swell the complicated parts,
Which only does unravel and untwist
Th'investop'd limbs that previous there exist. B. 6.
Perrault advanced far beyond this doctrine of
evolution; and maintained that, strictly speaking,
there is no such thing as new generation in any order
of beings: that the Almighty created all things in
the beginning; and that what we term generations
are only augmentations or expansions of the minute
parts of the bodies of seeds. So that every order,
class, and species of every thing that has existed,
does exist, or will exist hereafter, were all really
formed at first, and inclosed in such seeds, to be
brought forth and unfolded to view at definite times,
and according to definite arrangements. Perrault
appears, completely, therefore, to have imbibed the
old philosophy of Anaxagoras, without knowing it;
or, if he knew it, at least, without acknowledg-
ing it.

Whilst upon this subject, I cannot avoid noticing
the resemblance of this opinion of Perrault with that
of the primordial egg of the Bramins, of which the
Ordinances of Menu give us the following account,
as translated from the original Sanscrit by Sir Wm.
Jones. "He whom the mind alone can perceive,
having willed to produce various beings from his
own divine substance, first, with a thought, created
the waters, and placed in them a productive seed.
That seed became an egg bright as gold, blazing
like the luminary, with a thousand beams; and in
that egg he was born himself, in the form of Brahma,
the great forefather of all spirits. In that egg the
great power sat inactive a whole year of the creator,
at the close of which, by his thought alone, he
caus'd the egg to divide itself; and from its two
divisions he framed the heaven above, and the earth
beneath; and in the midst he placed the subtle ether,
the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters." Vol. iii. p. 66.

Much of this doctrine was afterwards introduced
into Greece, probably by Orpheus, through the medium
of Egypt, and was, for many centuries, regarded as sa-
cred and indisputable.

Among modern theories of generation, that of
Dr. Darwin has lately excited the greatest degree
of attention. It supposes the human frame to ema-
nate from a fibril of the male, uniting with seminal
molecules of the female. But his view of the origin
of plants appears to be different, and bears a closer
approximation to the theory of Ruyssch and De
Graaf. If my memory fail me not, he has asserted,
both in his Botanic Garden, and his Phytologia,
that the seeds of all plants contain in their substance,
not only the germ or rudiment of the future plant,
but the whole of its leaves and branches; as does,
likewise, the bud of the pedicularis and hepatica;
and the hybernacle of the hyacinth, and most other
plants propagated from bulbous roots.

The very accurate Spalanzani has indeed disco-
vered in these bulbous roots different races of the
same plant to the fourth generation; and has
traced the same appearance in a variety of animals as
well as vegetables. In the female volvox, an insect
found chiefly in infusions of hemp-seed and tremella,
and the putrid water of dunghills, some naturalists
of his acquaintance, he tells us, observed the future
fetus in the womb extending to the fifth generation.
He has himself traced it to the third, even through
Adde, quod inbecilla nimis primordia singit;
Si primordia sunt, simili quæ prædita constant
Naturâ atque ipsæ res sunt; æqueque laborant,
Et pereunt; neque ab exitio res ulla refænat.
Nam quid in obpressu valido durabit eorum,
Ut mortem ecfugiat, leti sub dentibus ipsis?
Nihil, ut opinor; ubi ex æquo res funditus omnis
Tam mortalis erit, quam quæ manifesta videmus
Ex oculis nostris, aliquâ vi functa, perire.
At neque recidere ad nihilum res posse, neque autem
Crescere de nihilò, testor res ante probatas.

Præterea, quoniam cibus auget corpus, alitque;
Scire licet, nobis venas, et sanguen, et ossa,
'Et nervos, alienigenis ex partibus esse :
Sive cibos omnis conmixto corpore dicent
Esse, et habere in se nervorum corpora parva,
Ossaque, et omnino venas, parteisque cruoris;
Fiet, utei cibus omnis et aridus et liquor ipse
Ex alienigenis rebus constare putentur,
Ossibus, et nervis, venisque, et sanguine, mixta.

the diaphonous membrane of the mother; and when isolated, he has described a regular series to the thirteenth generation: and perhaps, as he observes, even this, was not the last. In many other instances, says he, we have found one egg within another, and some osseous part of a fetus within another fetus. In like manner, the butterfly is included in the shell of the chrysalis, and the chrysalis in the skin of the caterpillar.

The theories founded upon these appearances are all of them so many approximations towards the Homœoméria of Anaxagoras. The generative
Too feeble, too, the rudiments he chose,
If rudiments they be, that hold, at once,
The powers of things, and form the things themselves.
All toil alike, and perish void of aid:
For, when the hour of dissolution draws,
Say, which can baffle the dread fangs of death?
Can ether, lymph, or fire? can nerve, or bones?
In each the strife were vain: since all produc'd,
Survey'd, or viewless, impotent alike,
Must yield to fate, and perish unredeem'd.
But things produc'd to nought can never fall,
Or fall'n, regerminate, as prov'd above.

Food rears the body, and its growth sustains:
But well we know its tendons, nerves, and blood,
Hence all matur'd, are foreign and unlike.
If, then, each food be compound, if commixt
With miniatures of all, of blood and nerve,
Of bone, and veins; each food compact, or moist,
Of parts unlike must then itself consist;
Of bone, of blood, of tendon, vein, and nerve.

---

system of Buffon has an equal assimilation. It sup-
poses an intermixture of the seminal fluid of both
sexes in the uterus necessary to produce the future
fetus; and asserts, that this fluid consists of organic
molecules, secreted from every limb and organ of the
parent bodies, which arrange themselves in the
formation of the fetus into the same limbs and
organs as those from which they were secered.
See a further account of this theory in note on
b. iv. 1264.
Præterea, quæquomque e terrâ corpora crescunt,
Si sunt in terris, terram constare necessæ est
Ex alienigenis, quæ terris exoriantur.
Transfer item, totidem verbis utare licebit:
In lignis si flamma latet, fumusque, cinisque,
Ex alienigenis consistant ligna, necessæ est;
Ex alienigenis, quæ lignis exoriantur.

Linquitur heic quædam latitandi copia tenuis,
Id, quod Anaxagoras sibi sumit; ut omnibus omneis
Res putet inmixtas rebus latitare, sed illud
Adparere unum, quois sint plurima mixta,
Et magis in promptu, primâque in fronte, locata:
Quod tamen a verâ longe ratione repulsæ est.
Conveniebat enim fruges quoque sœpe, minaci
Robore quom in saxi franguntur, mittere signum
Sanguinis, aut aliquid, nostro quæ corpore aluntur:
Quom lapidem in lapidem terimus, manare cruorem:
Consimili ratione herbis quoque, sœpe decebat
Et laticis dulcis guttas, similique sapore
Mittere, lanigeræ quales sunt ubere lactis:
Scilicet; et glebis terrarum sœpe friatis

Ver. 937. But here, the ready answer, from dost you;] This reply of Anaxagoras and his disciples has been noticed by Aristotle, in the following observation, as translated by Gassendi: Res et apparet et denominari invicem differentes aiunt, ab eo quod in infinitorum mistura maxime abundat. Non enim esse totum pure aut album, aut nigrum, aut dulce, aut carnem, aut os; cujus autem amplius unumquodque habet, cum tali rei naturam videri: “they contend, that things actually appear, and derive their different de-
Thus all things spring from earth: but if in earth
All lurk invelop'd, earth of forms consists
Strange, and discordant, panting for the day.
Change still the picture, and the same still flows:
In timbers, thus, if smoke, flame, ashes blend,
Then, too, those timbers hostile parts comprise.

But, here, the ready answer, fram'd of yore,
By him, the founder of the system, springs:
That, though in all things all things lurk commixt,
What most prevails, what boasts the largest share,
Lies superficial, and is notic'd chief.
Fruitless remark, unsolid, and untrue.
For still, at times, when crush'd to dust minute
Beneath the pond'rous mill-stone's mighty orb
The crumbling corn with human blood must weep,
Or aught besides of fluid found in man,
And stain with hues obscene: and still, at times,
Each herb unfold the balmy milk so sweet,
That swells the fleecy flock, or odorous kine.
The furrow'd glebe, the lab'ring plough beneath,

nominations from those atoms which principally abound in the general mass. For the entire substance is never universally either white, or black, or sweet, or flesh, or bone; but which properties soever of these it possesses in the largest degree, the nature and name of those properties it seems principally entitled to.

To this observation, Lucretius replies with much logical force and precision. His argument is clear and demonstrative, and requires no comment.
Herbarum genera, et fruges, frundeisque videri, Dispartita, ac in terram latitare minute: Postremo, in lignis cinerem fumumque videri, Quom præfracta forent, igneisque latere minutos. Quorum nihil fieri quoniam manifesta docet res, Scire licet, non esse in rebus res ita mixtas; Verum semina multimodis inmixta latere Multarum rerum in rebus communia debent.

At, særpe in magnis fit montibus, inquis, ut altis Arboribus vicina cacumina summa terantur Inter se, validis facere id cogentibus austris, Donec flammaï fulserunt flore coorto: Scilicet; et non est lignis tamen insitus ignis; Verum semina sunt ardos iris multa, terendo

Ver. 958. But shouldst thou urge, &c.] This phenomenon, of the tops of forests suddenly taking fire from the violent collision of branch against branch, has been adverted to by Thucydides, and many later historians. They are still frequent in the immense forests of Finland, and are noticed, but differently accounted for, by M. Acrbi, in his journey from Yervendale to Wasa. "Partial fires," says he, "conflagrations and tempests had committed frightful ravages in the bosom of this forest, which presented us, here and there, with exhibitions highly surprising and impressive. Every body has heard of the conflagrations so frequent in Sweden, and in the countries of the North in general. Entire mountains, and tracts of several miles, covered with woods, are liable to be devoured by flames. Much has been said, and written, in order to explain the origin of those fires. Some have attributed them to the rays of the sun, which continue so long above the horizon;—but this is fabulous, and unworthy of notice." He then, generally, ascribes them to two common causes: the peasants smoking their pipes as they travel through the woods, together with their cooking their food as they proceed; and a right granted to them by their political constitution, of cutting down and carrying away from the crown lands all trees and fragments of trees that have been injured by fires: to obtain which privilege they often purposely excite them. "I saw," continues he, "in this forest, the disastrous wreck of one of those conflagrations which had devoured the wood through an extent of six or seven miles, and which exhibited a most dismal spectacle. You not only saw trunks and large remains of trees lying in confusion on the
须，太，发育，在其秘密的子宫中，
植物、果实、和叶脉，常分散着，和隐匿着：
而且，对木匠，这劈开的树干披露
与灰烟，和烟与火相混。
这些，事实否定：在事物中，事物从不存在；
但事物的种子，在各种方式中布置，
在他们自己：所以所有被观察的。

但你是否应该敦促，那常在风暴下，
当被许多的回响粗鲁地摇动时，
树枝对树枝，森林的最顶端的高度
已经从树木到树木；这个事实我们承认：
不是，随每一根树干，那些原生火结合；
而是那个持续的摩擦迅速地收集
他们的种子分散着；因此聚集着十倍的力。

地面，和被减少到炭的状况，但
也树木直立，他们，尽管他们已经逃避了毁灭，
已经被可憎地烧伤：
其他是黑色，和弯曲到一边，而，在中间的木头和树枝，
似乎被引导着滋养他们。” Acerbi’s Travels, 1. p. 229. 231.

Ver. 960. —— the forest’s topmost height
Has blaz’d——] The description of the forest
in flames, in the Aeneid, is not widely different from
the present, in several of its bearings.

Vol. I.

Correptis subito mediis, extenditur una
Horrida per latos acies Vulcania campos:
Ille sedens victor flammas despectat ovantes.
L. x. 405.

As when, in summer, welcome winds arise,
The watchful shepherd to the forest flies,
And fires the midmost shrubs; contagion spreads,
And rushing flames infest the neibh’ring heads:
Around the forest flies the burning blast,
And all the leafy nation sinks at last,
And Vulcan rides in triumph o’er the waste.
The pastor, pleas’d with his dire victory,
Beholds the satiate flames in sheets ascend the sky.

Dryden.

Ver. 964. Their seeds dispers’d; —] The “seeds of
fire,” or “flame,” is a common expression among the
poets. Thus Homer,
Quæ quom confluxere, creant incendia sylvis.
Quod, si facta foret sylvis abscondita flamma,
Non possent ullum tempus celarier ignes:
Confacerent volgo sylvas, arbusta cremarent.

Jamne vides igitur, paullo quod diximus ante,
Permagni referre, eadem primordia sæpe
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contingantur;
Et quos inter se dent motus, adципiantque?
Atque eadem, paullo inter se mutata, creare
Igneis e lignis? quo pacto verba quoque ipsa
Inter se paullo mutatis sunt elementis,
Quom ligna atque igneis distinctâ voce notemus.

Denique, jam quæquomque in rebus cernis apertis,
Si fieri non posse putas, quin materiaï
Corpora consimili naturâ praedita fingas,

---

Σεμεία τυροί σαλβο— Odyssey. E. 490.
The seeds of fire preserving—

So Pindar, in his Olympics,

Untended by the seeds of fire,
Still to the temple pressed they.—

Hence Virgil,

Abstrusa in venis silicis— Aeneid. vi. 6.
the seeds of flame
Hid in the harsh flint's veins—

But the following, from Manilius, is a copy from
our own poet,

Sunt autem cunctis permixti partibus ignes;
Ac silicic in dura, viridicque in cortice, sedem
Inveniunt, cum sylva, sili collis crématur:
Ignibus usque adeo natura est omnis abundans.

Fire lurks, commixt, in all things:—the tough flint
Grants it a seat; and e'en the verdant bark,
When flames the forest, branch abrading branch:
From scene to scene so nature swells with fire.

Ver. 974. As fuee and fuel, terms of different sound,] The mode of reasoning adopted by
our poet in verse 887 is here recurred to; and it is
sufficiently strong and apposite, to warrant a repeti-
tion. The terms employed in the original are
And flame engend'ring. For could fire itself
A part constituent of the forest form,
No hour could hide the mischief; ev'ry tree
Would blaze, and burn till boundless ruin reign'd.

See, then, as earlier sung, how much imports
Th' arrangement, motion, magnitude, and form
Of primal seeds combin'd: and how the same,
Transpos'd but little, fuel quick convert
To flame, bright blazing up the swarthy flue:
As flue and fuel, terms of different sound,
Of different sense, their letters but transpos'd,
Each into each converts with magic speed.

But should'st thou urge that all things still may flow
From primal seeds, and yet those seeds possess
The form, the nature of the things themselves;

_ligna_ and _igneis_, or wood and fire; but as these, in
our own language, by no means convey the poet's
orthographic illustration, I have found it necessary
to introduce a slight change, which, in every re-
spect, answers and elucidates his intention. The
version of Evelyn and Creech, as well as that of
Guernier, who has followed the two former, retain
the Latin terms _lignum_ and _ignis_, but with extreme
awkwardness in lines that pretend to give a trans-
lation. Marchetti has endeavoured to avoid this
evil; but, in his escape, has introduced one quite
as considerable, by the adoption of terms, which,
though orthographically expressive of our poet's in-
tention, have no kind of connexion with his metaphors.

_E puono gli stessi variati alquanto_
_Far le legne e le fiamme appunto come_

Puongli gli elementi variati alquanto
Formare ed arme ed arme e rame e rame.

Coutures has been more unhappy than any of the
translators; for without daring, like Marchetti, to
introduce new terms, he has given those of the ori-
ginal literally translated into his own language,
where they make a more awkward, and inapposite
appearance than even the Latin terms preserved in
the three English versions. Rendered by Coutures,
the Latin _lignum_ and _ignis_ become _bois_ and _feu_; but
by what means these words, which have not a
single letter in common, can be orthographically
transposed into each other, or how they can pos-
sibly explain the poet's meaning, it is not easy to
determine.
Hac ratione tibi pereunt primordia rerum:
Fiet, utei risu tremulo concussa cachinnent,
Et lacrumis salsis humectent ora, genasque.

Nunc age, quod super est, cognosce, et clarius audi: 920
Nec me animi fallit, quam sint obscura; sed acri
Percussit thyrso laudis spes magna meum cor,
Et simul incussit suavem mí in pectus amorem
Musarum: quo nunc instinctus, mente vigenti
Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo: juvat integros adcedere funteis,

Ver. 980. *The scheme falls self-destroy'd.*——]
Nothing can be more ridiculous than to suppose
the possession of opposite qualities in compound sub-
stances, derived from the possession of such opposite
qualities in the elemental atoms of nature. And yet,
if the system of Anaxagoras be true, this absurdity
must be true likewise; and as in the case of sudden
joy, or violent agony, persons of irritable habits,
when thrown into an hysteric paroxysm, are ac-
customed, not unfrequently, to laugh and weep at
the same moment; the same extravagant effects
ought to be exhibited, with equal frequency, in many
of the atoms of which the human frame is composed.

Ver. 983. *Come, now, and mark perspicuous what
remains.*] The whole of this apòstrophe to
Memmius is beautiful beyond expression; and has
been imitated, in almost every line, by a variety of
the most elegant and accomplished of ancient and
modern poets.

Thus Virgil, in his address to his patron:
Nec sum animi dubius, verbis ea vincere magnum
Quam sit, et angustis hunc addere rebus honorem.
Sed me Parnassi deserta per ardua dulcis
Raptat amor: juvat ire jugis, qua nulla priorum
Castaliam molli devertitur orbita clivo.
Geo. iii. 289.

I, conscious of the toil, will strive to raise
The lowly theme, and grace with labour'd
lays:
Tranc'd by sweet love o'er unfrequented heights,
Where no smooth trace to Castaly invites,
I pierce the wild by mortal foot untrod,
And lonely commune with th' Aonian god.

Thus also Akenside:
——but the love
Of nature and the muses bids explore
Through secret paths, erewhile untrod by man,
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,
And shade my temples with unfading flowers,
Cull'd from the laureat vale's profound recess,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.

Thus too, the abbé De Lille, alluding to our poet by name, in the following address to his muse:
Toi donc, qui, mariant la grâce et la vigueur
Sais du chant didactique animer la langueur,
O Muse! si jadis, dans les vers de LUCRÈSE
Des austères leçons tu polis la rudesse,—
Viens orner un sujet plus riche, plus fertile,
Dont le charme autrefois avoit tenté Virgile.
The scheme falls self-destroy'd.—For then, must seeds hold pow'rs adverse; and laugh, and shake their sides, while tears of anguish down their cheeks distil.

Come, now, and mark perspicuous what remains. Obscure the subject: but the thirst of fame burns all my bosom; and through ev'ry nerve burns the proud love of letters, and the muse. I feel th' inspiring power; and roam resolv'd through paths Pierian never trod before. Sweet are the springing fountains with nectar new;

N'emprentons point ici d'ornement étranger;
Viens, de mes propres fleurs mon front va s'ombrager.

Les Jardins, Chant i.

Thou, who, to vigour marrying sprightly grace,
In nervous verse didactic truth canst trace,
O Muse! of yore who, when Lucretius sung
Didst smooth his subject, and sublime his tongue,
Now o'er a richer theme exert thy pride,
A theme by Maro's magic numbers tried:
Come, let no borrow'd ornaments be mine,
With my own flowers my shadowy brows entwine.

Horace has a passage in his Epistles so extremely in point with this of Lucretius, that it is either a designed imitation, or affords a striking parallel:

Libera per vacuum posui vestigia princeps:
Non aliena meo pressi pede.

I my free footsteps in a path untried,
First fix, and tread in regions all my own.

Manlius has a few verses to the effect:

Aggredior, primusque novis Helicona movere
Cantibus, et viridi mutanties vertice sylvas;
Hospitala sacra ferens, nulli memorata priorum.

The Heliconian streams, and nodding groves
I first approach, with numbers unessay'd,
Oblations bearing, borne till now by none.

Lambinus has recorded the following verses from Oppian, as bearing a striking resemblance to a part of our poet's address:

Ἐγγενός και τριχειαυ ὑποτιθήμητον
Τὴν μεροτὴν ου πετι τῆς ἑως επαθησθεν αἰώνας. v. 20.

Come, let us tread the rugged path,
By poet never trod before.

Nor can we be otherwise than reminded of Milton's elegant address to the heavenly muse, in the opening of his first book of Paradise Lost, which most of his annotators refer to this common source:

—— I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That, with no middle flight, intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

He had before read an address of the same kind in Cowley's Davideis:

Guide my bold steps——
In these untrodden paths to sacred fame.

Thus also Armstrong, Art of preserving Health,

Come now, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead!
Now let me wander thro' your gilded reign:
I turn to view th' enthusiastic wilds,
By mortal else untrod.
Atque haurire; juvatque novos decerpere flores,
Insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam,
Unde prius nulli velarint tempora Musae.
Primum, quod magnis doceo de rebus, et artis
Religionum animum nodis exsolvere pergo:
Deinde, quod obscurâ de re tam lucida pango
Carmina, Musaeo contingens cuncta lepore:
Id quoque enim non ab nullâ ratione videtur;

Ver. 991. Those flowers to pluck, and weave a roscat wreath.] The translation of Crecch has metamorphosed this flowery wreath of our poet into a chaplet of laurel:
——none of all the mighty tuneful Nine
Shall grace a head with laurels like to mine.
His commentator on this passage, however, candidly observes, that in the original no mention is made of laurel; and that garlands and wreaths of ivy seem to have been the first ornament of poets, and other learned men, and laurel the decoration of conquerors. Thus Horace:

"Me doctarum Hedera premia frontium
Dis misceunt superis."
Yet it is very uncertain whether the me in this address of Horace ought not to be te, and refer to Mecenas, the poet's patron, agreeably to the ingenious conjecture of Rutgers, who has since been followed by a variety of able critics of all countries. Be this, however, as it may, it is obvious, that Lucretius has no allusion either to the ivy or the laurel in the passage before us, for he expressly employs the term flores, or flowers, which will not conveniently apply to either of them:
——juvatque novos decerpere flores,
Insignemque meo capiti petere inde coronam.
Sweet the new flowers that bloom, but sweeter still
These flowers to pluck, and weave a roscat wreath.

The custom of adorning with crowns, or chaplets of flowers interwoven with foliage, those who had peculiarly distinguished themselves in the arts of war, of music, or of poetry, is almost as ancient as those arts themselves. It was occasionally forbidden, under severe penalties, by the more zealous of the Roman emperors, after their conversion to Christianity, as being supposed to partake of the superstitions of paganism. Petrarch, however, to a certainty, even so late as the middle of the fourteenth century, was fortunate enough to enjoy this honour of poetical coronation, conferred with every possible degree of publicity and splendour, and attended upon by the senators, and many of the council, at the Roman Capitol: a detailed account of which transaction is inserted in Tiraboschi's Storia della Letteratura Italiana. There is great reason also to believe, notwithstanding the doubts which have been entertained on the subject—by some persons, that Ariosto, a full century afterwards, was admitted to a similar distinction, and was even crowned by the hands of the emperor Charles V. Such, at least, is the declaration of the monument now in existence in the church of the Benedictines at Florence, erected to his memory in the year 1612, by Ludovico Ariosto, a collateral branch of his family.

Of all the Grecian poets, Anacreon is the most frequent in his reference to this custom of decorating the temples with flowery chaplets; and his flower is,
Sweet the new flowers that bloom: but sweeter still
Those flow'rs to pluck, and weave a roseat wreath,
The muses yet to mortals ne'er have deign'd.
With joy the subject I pursue; and free
The captiv'd mind from superstition's yoke.
With joy th' obscure illume; in liquid verse,
Graceful, and clear, depicting all survey'd:
By reason guided. For as oft, benign,
The sapient nurse, when anxious to enforce

on almost every occasion, the rose. Thus, Od. xv.
edit. Barnes:

Ωυ μοι μελι Γυασο
Του Σαρδεω ανακτο;
Εμοι μελι ροδιωι
Καπασειφοι χαρια
I care not for the idle state
Of Persia's king, the rich, the great!
But oh! be mine the rosy braid,
The fervour of my brows to shade.

In like manner, the sentimental Sadi, in his Gulistan:

'Τις not the nightingale alone
That, seated mid the rose's sweets,
Talks of her charms in tenderest tone;
For every thorn the theme repeats.

The custom was probably of Asiatic origin, yet
the Persian poets seem to have been fonder of strewing
roses around them, than of entwining them in
their hair; at least, the latter fashion is by no means
so frequently referred to as the former. Thus, Hafiz, in one of his most beautiful gazels:

Come, jovial, to the garden lead,
Let noise, and mirth, and madness vie;
Like nightingales, from anguish freed,
In nests of roses let us lie.

Moore.

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the Persian poets seem to have been fonder of strewing
roses around them, than of entwining them in
their hair; at least, the latter fashion is by no means
so frequently referred to as the former. Thus, Hafiz, in one of his most beautiful gazels:

For as oft, benign,
The sapient nurse, when anxious to enforce

Sai che la corre il mondo ove piu versi
Di sue dolcezze il lusinghier Parnasso;
E che il vero condito in molli versi,
I più schivi allattando ha persuaso.
Così all' egro fanciul porgiamo aspersi
Di soave licor gli orli del vaso:
Succhi amari ingannato intanto ei beve,
E dall' inganno sua vita riceve.
Sed, velutei pueris absinthia tetra medentes
Quom dare conantur, prius oras, pocula circum,
Contingunt mellis dulci flavoque liquore,
Ut puerorum aetas improvida ludificetur
Laborum tenus; interea perpotet amarum
Absinthii laticem, deceptaque non capiatur,
Sed potius, tali facto recreata, valescat:
Sic ego nunc, quoniam hae ratio plerumque videtur
Tristior esse, quibus non est tractata, retroque
Volgus abhorret ab hac; volui tibi suaviloquenti
Carmine Pierio rationem exponere nostram,
Et quasi Musae dulci contingere melle;
Si tibi forte animum tali ratione tenere
Versibus in nostris possem, dum perspicis omnem
Naturam rerum, quâ constet compta figurâ.
Sed, quoniam docui, solidissima materiaë
Corpora perpetuo volitare, invicta per ævom;

Thou know'st the world with eager transport
trough
Where sweet Parnassus breathes the tuneful
song;
That truth can oft, in pleasing strains convey'd,
Allure the fancy, and the mind persuade.
Thus, the sick infant's taste disguised to meet,
We tinge the vessel's brim with juices sweet;
Meantime the bitter draught his lip receives;
He drinks deceiv'd, and so deceiv'd, he lives.

A copy of this same passage is, likewise, to be
met with in the orations of Themistius. Without
swelling this note unnecessarily, by citing it, the
reader may find it, if he please, by turning to that
addressed ad Nicomedienses.

Ver. 1005. — in honey'd phrase,

Turn'd by the muse, — Our poet, in this
verse, appears to have had his eye turned to the fol-
lowing passage of Pindar, which I copy. I will give
it with an emendation approved by Mr. Wake-
field:

HOOLE.

πασσεί χρόνον ἔχοντι δ' ἐπικρατεῖ.
Book I. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

On the pale boy, the wormwood’s bitter draught,
With luscious honey tints the goblet’s edge,
Deceiving thus, while yet un-us’d to guile,
His unsuspecting lip; till deep he drinks,
And gathers vigour from the venial cheat:
So I, since dull the subject, and the world
Abash’d recoils, would fain, in honey’d phrase,
Tun’d by the muses, to thine ear recite
Its vast concerns; if haply I may hope
To fix thine audience, while the flowing verse
Unfolds the nature, and the forms of things.

Taught, then, already that material seeds
Are solid, and o’er time triumphant live,

The dulcet reed thy glory sings,
The soft-tun’d lyre responsive rings;
And all th’ Aonian maids renown’d
Spread through the world, th’ exulting sound.
I, too, amidst the festive strains
That glad the fam’d, the Locrian plains,
Plains with liquid honey flowing,
Luscious draughts to Locrians dear,—

I too, fond youth! with rapture glowing,
Will pour thy praise thro’ every ear.

Our scientific poet, in the following verses, proceeds
to develop another principle of Epicurean philosophy,
and endeavours to demonstrate, that the Universe is not,
as was maintained by many of the disciples of Zeno,
bounded either as to its vacuum or its matter,
but uniformly immense, and infinite. Many
of his arguments are forcible; and if they do not produce conviction,
must at least be admitted to be highly ingenious.

X
Nunc, age, summae quaedam sit finis eorum,  
Necne sit, evolvamus: item, quod inane repertum est,  
Seu locus, ac spatium, res in quo quaeque gerantur,  
Pervideamus, utrum finitum funditus omne  
Constet, an inmensum pateat, vastaeque profundum.  

Omne quod est, igitur, nullâ regione viarum  
Finitum est; namque extremum debebat habere:  
Extremum porro nullius posse videtur  
Esse, nisi ultra sit quod finiat; ut videatur,  
Quo non longius hæc sensus natura sequatur.  

Nunc, extra summam quoniam nihil esse fatendum,  
Non habet extremum; caret ergo fine, modoque:  
Nec refert, quibus adsistas regionibus ejus:  
Usque adeo, quem quique locum possedit, in omnis  
Nec refert, quibus adsistas regionibus ejus:  
Usque adeo, quem quique locum possedit, in omnis  

Usque adeo, quem quique locum possedit, in omnis  
Tantundem parteis infinitum omne relinquit.  

Præterea, si jam finitum constituatur  
Omne, quod est, spatium, si quis procurat ad oras  
Ultimus extremas, jaciatque volatile telum,
Attend, benignant, while we next decide
Their number, or if infinite; and tell,
Since void throughout exists, assigning space
For place and motion, if th' entire of things
Be bounded, or unfathom'd, and immense.

Th' entire of things, then, bounds can never know:
Else parts possess of farthest and extreme.
But parts can only be extreme, beyond
Where other substance springs, those parts extreme
Binding, though sense the limit ne'er can trace.
If, then, some other substance rise, the first
Forms not th' entire of things. Whate'er it be
That other substance still must part compose.
Vain too is distance: the vast whole alike
To all extends, embracing, and embrac'd.

Yet grant th' entire of things of bound possesst.
Say, to what point shall yon keen archer, plac'd
E'en on its utmost verge, his dart direct?

Ver. 1028. Say, to what point shall yon keen archer,
place'd
E'en on its utmost verge, his dart direct?] This
perplexing appeal of our poet has been immediately
noticed by the Cardinal Poligac in his antagonist
poem. The following is his copy of it, and his
reply:
At si materiam claudunt circumundique fines
Illam ultra, quæris, quo sit ventura sagitta
Quam bonus arcitëns valido contorserit arcu.
Ex errore tuo dubium tibi nascitur illud.

Ultra materiem nihil est: mittesne sagittam
In nihilum? nihil non est locus: ergo resistet,
Nec poterit telum vetitos erumpere fines,
Et vires frustra effusas mirabitur arcus.

Anti-Luck. lib. 3.
Here should'st thou ask, if matter still have
bounds,
Where shall yon arrow, on those bounds extreme,
Loos'd from the tortur'd bow, direct its flight?
The question springs from error: for beyond
Lies nothing: into nothing wouldst thou urge
Id validis utrum contortum viribus ire,
Quo fuerit missum, mavis, longeque volare;
An prohibere aliquid censes, obstareque, posse?
Alterutrum fatearum enim, sumasque, necesse est:
Quorum utrumque tibi ecfugium præcludit, et omne
Cogit ut exemptâ concedas fine patere.
Nam, sive est aliquid, quod prohibeat, ecficiatque,
Quo minus, quo missum est, veniat, finique locet se;
Sive foras fertur, non est a fine profectum.
Hoc pacto sequar; atque, oras ubi quomque locaris
Extremas, quæram quid telo denique fiat.
Fiet, utei nusquam possit consistere finis;
Ecfugiumque fugæ prolatet copia semper.

Th' adventurous dart? those bounds would still resist,
And the keen arrow urge its force in vain.
But if nothing lie beyond this bounded material system, then it is bounded by nothing; and if it be bounded by nothing then, again, has it no bounds whatever; and of course there would be nothing to resist the farther flight of the arrow. So that the force of our poet's appeal still remains uninvalidated. The learned Bruno, indeed, in his first Dialogue, Dell' Infinito Universo, to which I have just referred, introduces this argument as altogether irrefragable. In reality, there seems to be no more impiety in attaching the idea of immensity to space, than of endless duration to eternity; and, according to Mr. Locke, we acquire both ideas in the same manner, and at the same time. Whilst I am appealing to this celebrated philosopher, I cannot avoid quoting an illustration of his own in confirmation of this very doctrine; and which has such a strange coincidence with his example of an archer placed on the imaginary confines of creation, that it is difficult to avoid conceiving Mr. Locke had Lucretius in his recollection at the time of writing it. "If body, observes he, be not supposed infinite, which I think no one will affirm, I would ask, whether, if God placed a man at the extremity of corporeal beings, he could not stretch his hand beyond his body? If he could, then he would put his arm where there was before space without body: and if there he spread his fingers, there would be still space between them without body. If he could not stretch out his hand, it must be because of some external hindrance: and then I ask, whether that which hinders his hand from moving outwards be substance, or accident, something, or nothing?" Hum. Und. b. ii. ch. 13.

M. Cabanis, however, is a bolder man than any of the philosophers I have yet adverted to. He derives his idea of every species of existence from self-motion; and he is not afraid of Mr. Locke's question, if indeed, which I much doubt, he ever met with it. "That which opposes me," says he, "when I move, I
Book I.  

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Shall aught obstruct it, or the path be clear?  
Take which thou wilt: some substance chuse, possest  
Of pow’r t’ impede, and check its rapid race:  
Or let it fly unconquer’d, nor restraint  
E’en once encounter: thou must still confess  
Th’ ENTIRE of nature nought of limit knows.  
Throughout the dart I’ll chase; and when, at length,  
Th’ acceded bound is gain’d, I’ll still demand  
What yet obstructs it; still new proofs adduce  
That the vast whole is boundless; and that flight  
Still beyond flight for ever might be urg’d.

1030

1035

1040

denominate an obstacle, a body. If this body, or  
obstacle, did not exist, I should be able to persevere  
in my motion. Hence, from that which does not  
preserve me from moving, and from that which does,  
from nothing, and from body, I derive the idea of  

space. I call it void if I find nothing, and full if I  
meet with bodies. It is therefore impossible to know  
whether space be a substance or a quality; for it is  
not, strictly speaking, either the one or the other:  
it is an abstract idea, compounded of those of body  
and non-entity, considered with relation to my sense  
of motion. If any one inquire of me, whether space  
exist beyond the bounds of the Universe, I reply,  
that beyond the bounds of the whole, there exists no-  
thing; and that, if I were there, I should certainly  
not be incommode’d in moving.” Mem. de l’Instit.  
Nat. Phys. et Mor. I. M. Cabanis is, however, in  
as great a dilemma as the cardinal: to move into no-  
thing, is precisely the same thing as not to move at all.  
How is he to know that he moves, or what is to mea-  
sure his progress? How would he, as a human being  
at least, derive a support for his feet, or air for his  
lungs? I may safely say, that he would not move far.  
It is highly probable, Virgil had his eye directed  
to this passage of our poet in composing the verses  
that follow, although I do not find that the resem-  
bance has been hitherto noticed by any of the com-  
mentators on either poet. Admitting the imitation,  
the passage, I think, will assume a new beauty, and  
acquire an illustration that it wants.

Quid referam——  
——quos oceano proprior gerit India lucos,  
Extremi sinvis orbis? ubi aëra vincere summum  
Arboris hanc ullæ jactu potuère sagittæ?  

GEORG. ii. 118.

Say, shall I mark what woods gigantic wave  
O’er Indian seas, that earth’s last bound’ry lave,  
Where the spent shaft, from skilful Indians  
sped,  
Turns e’er it strikes the tree’s aërial head?

SOTHEBY.
Præterea, spatium summæ totius omne
Undique si inclusum certis consisteret oris,
Finitumque foret; jam copia materiae
Undique ponderibus solidis confluxet ad imum;
Nec res ulla geri sub coeli tegmine posset;
Nec foret omnino coelum, neque lumina solis:
Quippe, ubi materies omnis cumulata jaceret
Ex infinito jam tempore, subsidendo.

At nunc nimirum requies data principiorum
Corporibus nulla est; quia nihil est funditus imum,
Quo quasi confluere, et sedes ubi ponere, possint:
Semper in adsiduo motu res quæque geruntur
Partibus in cunctis, infernaque subpeditantur,
Ex infinito cita, corpora materiae.

Postremo, ante oculos res rem finire videtur:
Aër dissæpit colleis, atque aëra montes;
Terra mare, et contra mare terras terminat omneis:
Omne quidem vero nihil est quod finiat extra.
Est igitur natura loci, spatiumque profundi,
Quod neque clara suo percurrere flumina cursu

Ver. 1061. *From age to age resplendent lightnings urge,*] The whole passage is inimitably beautiful, both as to sublimity of thought, and splendour of diction. The context will apply with equal propriety to *flumina, fulmina, or luminas, “rivers, lightnings, or light:”* and different editions give us each of these readings. Mr. Wakefield has chosen the first: this I have rejected, however, for the second, which is that adopted by Havercamp, from an old Gottenburg fragment of much celebrity among the critics; and is supported by a Cambridge copy, and one of the codices preserved in the British Museum. It affords,
Book I. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Were, too, th' entire of nature thus confin'd,
Thus circumscrib'd precise, from its own weight
Long since, all matter to th' extremest depth
Had sunk supine: nor aught, the skies beneath,
Nor skies themselves, with countless stars adorn'd
And sun's unsuffering splendour, had remain'd.
Down, down th' accumulated mass had fall'n
From earliest time, devoid of power to rise.
But nought of rest supine material seeds
Evince through nature; since no depth exists
Extreme, and fathomable where those seeds
Might fix collected in inert repose.
All, all is action: the vast whole alike
Moves in each part; and, from material seeds,
Draws, undiminish'd, its eternal food.

Things, to the sense, are circumscrib'd by things.
Air bounds the hills, and hills the liquid air:
Earth ocean, ocean earth: but the vast whole
What fancied scene can bound? O'er its broad realm,
Immeasur'd, and immeasurably spread,
From age to age resplendent lightnings urge,
Perpetuo possint ævi labentia tractu;
Nec prorsum facere, ut restet minus ire, meando:
Usque adeo passimi patet ingens copia rebus,
Finibus exemptis, in cunctas undique parteis.

Ipsa modum porro sibi rerum summa parare
Ne possit, natura tenet: quia corpus inani,
Et, quod inane autem est, finiri corpore cogit;
Ut sic alternis infinita omnia reddat.

Aut etiam, alterutrum nisi terminet alterum eorum
Simplice naturâ, ut pateat tamen immoderatum;
Nec mare, nec tellus, neque coeli lucida templâ,
Nec mortale genus, nec divôm corpora sanctâ,
Exiguum possent horaï sistere tempus.

Nam, dispulsa suo de coetu, materiai

In vain, its flight perpetual; distant still
And ever distant from the verge of things.

Cowley has a strong and sublime idea, in some
measure approaching this of Lucretius and Akenside,
in his Davideis; and which Johnson has inserted in
his Life, as an instance of vigorous conception.

He is descanting on the kingdom of the Messiah:

Round the whole world his dreaded name shall sound,
And reach to worlds that must not yet be found.

Such are the casual resemblances, the parallel scin-
tillations of men of bold and energetic genius.

Ver. 1068. Void must perforce bound matter,
matter void;] This additional argument ad-
duced against the Stoics, who denied the infinity of mat-
ter, although they allowed the infinity of space in which.
In vain their flight perpetual; distant, still,  
And ever distant from the verge of things.  
So vast the space on opening space that swells,  
Through every part so infinite alike.  

Ask thy own reason. It will prove at once  
Th' entire of nature never can have bounds.  
Void must perforce bound matter, matter void;  
Thus, mutual, one illimitable whole  
Forming for ever. For were each of each  
Free and unshackl'd, uncombin'd, and pure  
In their own essence, not one short-liv'd hour  
Could earth, or ocean, the refulgent fane  
Of heav'n sublime, or mortal forms, or those  
The gods themselves inhabit, then subsist.  
Freed from all order, disarrang'd, and rude,  

matter moves, is entirely copied from the writings of Epicurus; and occurs in his Epistle to Herodotus:  

E'v't  

Ver. 1073. — the refulgent fane  
Of heav'n sublime—] Thus Polignac:  

Ver. 1074. — or mortal forms, or those  
The gods themselves inhabit,] The commentator  

on Creech's translation intimates, that in these verses,  
which relate to the deities, Lucretius subverts his own system, by supposing them subject to the same dissolution with other component and material bodies.  

This is an obvious mistake. Our poet uniformly contends for their immortality. Like Milton, he endows them with a vehicle and figure of existence; but maintains, that they are freed from the law of dissolution, which prevails throughout every terrene substance. He attributes to them also the properties of solidity as well as figure. But were it possible, says he, for substances essentially possessed of these properties to be for one moment destitute of them, then even the gods themselves could subsist no longer, but must submit to the common fate of inferior and material beings.
Copia ferretur magnum per inane, soluta;
Sive adeo potius numquam concreta creasset
Ullam rem, quoniam cogi disjecta nequisset.
Nam certe neque consilio primordia rerum

Ver. 1080. For never, doubtless, from result of thought,]
It is surprising to perceive how excessively mistaken all the critics and commentators upon this passage have hitherto been, while nothing, if they had really understood our poet, can be more obvious. All the Grecian schools of philosophy alike maintained the eternity of matter: but they differed as to the mode in which motion, and the present appearances of things first began. Anaximander maintained, that the infinite and primary matter, whence even the gods themselves were formed, was the first intelligent source of all things. The Stoics, not in any respect, more philosophic, represented the world as in itself a rational being; and pretended that by the operation of an interior soul or spirit, it had produced and continued to sustain the beauty and order universally exhibited. Such also, with little variation, was the opinion of Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Trimegimus: and Virgil has given us their creed, as the quintessence of wisdom and truth. It is thus Anchises addresses his son:

Principio colum, ac terras, casposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum Lunae, Titanique astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem et magnum se corpore mistet.

An. 1074.

Know, first, that heaven and earth's compacted frame,
And flowing waters, and the starry frame,
And both the radiant lights, one common soul
Infires; and feeds, and animates the whole.
This active mind, infus'd through all the space,
Unites, and mingles with the mighty mass.

Dryden.

Plato, indeed, endeavoured, in some measure, to avoid the absurdity which, in a large degree attaches to the rest, but more especially to the Cyrenaics, by supposing, that there was another divinity besides the world itself, by whom the divinity of the world was first put into motion: by conceiving this extrinsic divinity to be both eternal and supreme, and by asserting that the souls of all intelligent and rational beings are created by him, from slips or particles of the divinity of the world, and continue scattered, like cuttings, or seeds of vegetables, through the sun, moon, and planets, ready to unite themselves with the young embryo on its first evincing a principle of vitality. Democritus, however, advanced farther than any of these sects: he not only supposed the world, in its congregate state, to be an animated being, but that many of the elementary atoms themselves were intelligent and percipient in their own simple and uncompounded state; and that the sublime work of creation was produced from the joint counsel and determination of this order, when assembled in a kind of synod; a doctrine which, in modern times, appears, in some measure, to have been supported by Leibnitz and Hobbes, with this simple difference, that whereas Democritus divided his elemental atoms into a percipient and an impercipient class, Hobbes maintained, that no argument could disprove that all the atoms of matter were not only endowed with figure, and a capacity of motion, but also with an actual sense or perception; and that they merely require the organs and memory of animals to express their sensations. Seio fuisse philosophos quosdam, coddemque viros doctes, qui corpora omnium sensu pridita esse substantur; nec video, si natura sensiosis in reactione sola collocarentur, quomodo refutari posint, &c. Physic. c. xxv. I. 5.

Against all these absurd doctrines and hypotheses, our poet is here entering his rational protest. He tells us, that they are equally made up of incongruities, if not of contradictions:

For, never, doubtless, from result of thought,
Through boundless vacuum the drear mass of things
Would quick be borne: or, rather, nought had ris'n
From the crude chaos, joyless, and inert.
For never, doubtless, from result of thought,
Or mutual compact, could primordial seeds

Or mutual compact, could primordial seeds
First harmonize, or move with powers precise.
Who is there, indeed, in the present day, that
can suppose they could thus harmonize? And yet,
strange to relate! this very passage, including se-
veral of the verses that follow, has been adduced
against Lucretius, as a proof of unpardonable impiety:
and Lactantius has chosen to assert, that “he has
hereby reached the utmost point of insanity, and
could not possibly go beyond.” Implovis, says
he, numerum perfecte insanize, ut nihil uteros ad-
jici possit. De Ira. Such are the unmerited scan-
dals to which our much injured and highly deserving
hard has for ages been condemned! Having exposed
these opinions of his mistaken antagonists, he adven-
tures to give us his own:—and what is it?

But ever changing, ever chang'd, and vext,
From earliest time, through ever-during space,
With ceaseless repercussion, every mode
Of motion, magnitude, and shape essay'd;
At length th' unwieldy mass the form assum'd
Of things created.

The Mosaic cosmogony itself cannot be more con-
sistent with the existence of a Supreme First Cause.
It supposes a chaos; and it supposes the gradual de-
ervation of all things from this chaos, put into mo-
tion, and necessarily labouring, without any intel-
ligence of its own, for the gradual evolution of all
things. On the actual existence of this chaos upon
the system of our elaborate poet, see B. vi. of this
work, where the whole series of the production
of the world is most minutely, and elegantly discussed.
But there is no mention here made of any intelligent and
extrinsic Being, whom we can conceive as the Eternal
First Cause of this motion: true, there is no such
mention made, nor do I know that there is any such

necessity; it is the physical effect alone we are con-
templating, and upon the proofs and principles I
have advanced in the prefixed Life of Lucretius,
such an intelligent Being is doubtless implied, though
he be not immediately adverted to in the passage
before us. And with such an implication nothing
can be more consistent, more rational, or more pious.
Even Des Cartes himself, upon this principle, has
rescued, as far as he was able, the character of Epici-
curus, from every charge of impiety and irration-
ality. See note on v. 168 of this Book. Of all our
modern geologists, Mr. Kirwan has taken most pains
to reconcile the theory of Moses with modern dis-
coversies and experiments; or rather, to demonstrate
that it is the only true system of geology that a phi-
losopher can, or ought to admit. But Mr. Kirwan
himself is under the necessity of conceiving, that
many ages elapsed, after the first existence of the
dearth in a state of chaos, before it was fit for the
habitation of animals and vegetables, and that the
great work of creation was gradually advancing du-
ing the whole of this period of time; in conse-
quence of which, he supposes also, that the days of
the Hebrew historian are not to be understood literally,
but more comprehensively, and that they comprise
so many distinct eras of the events that occurred.
The system of geology at present most fashionable
in France is that of La Metherie: but La Metherie
also supposes the same fact as to the period of cre-
aton, and its division into distinct epochs; as he
does also, that the world was originally submerged in
a primitive ocean, forming hereby an universal and
liquid chaos. Many of the positions of La Metherie
are opposed by the fanciful Bertrand, in his
Nouveaux Principes de Geologie; but even Bertrand
himself adheres to this doctrine of the progressive cre-
ation or evolution of the earth, as it exists at present.
Ordine se suo quæque sagaci mente locarunt,
Et, quos quæque darent motus, pepigere profecto:
Sed, quia multa, modis multis, mutata, per omne,
Ex infinto, nexantur percita plagis;
Omne genus motus, et coëtus, experiundo,
Tandem deveniunt in taleis disposituras,
Qualibus hæc rerum consistit summa creata:
Et, multos etiam magnos servata per annos,
Ut semel in motus conjecta est convenientieis,
Ecfcit, ut largis avidum mare fluminis undis
Integrent amnes, et solis terra vapore
Fota novet fetus; summâ quoque gens animantum
Floreat, et vivant labentes ætheris ignes:
Quod nullo facerent pacto, nisi materiai
Ex infinto suboriri copia posset,
Unde amissa solent reparare in tempore quoque.
Nam, velutei, privata cibo, natura animantum
Diffíuit, amittens corpus; sic omnia debent
Dissolví, simul ac defecti subpeditare
Materies, aliqüâ ratione aversa viai.
Nec plagæ possunt extrinsecus undique summam
Conservare omnem, quæquomque est conciliata:
Cudere enim crebro possunt, partemque morari,
Dum veniant aliae, ac subpleri summa queatur;
Interdum resilire tamen coguntur, et unâ
First harmonize, or move with powers precise.
But ever changing, ever chang'd, and vext,
From earliest time, through ever-during space,
With ceaseless repercussion, every mode
Of motion, magnitude, and shape essay'd;
At length th' unwieldy mass the form assum'd
Of things created. Persevering, thus,
Through many an age, unnumber'd springs the deep
Feed with perpetual tides: by the warm sun
Sustain'd, and cherish'd, earth renews her fruits,
And man, and beast survive; and ether glows
With living lights innum'rous: scenes throughout
'Twere vain t' expect, from all eternal time,
Had no primordial seeds, in stores immense,
Been ever nigh to renovate the world.
For as, of food depriv'd, the languid frame
Of man must perish, so th' entire of things
Must instant cease, should once primordial seeds
Their aid withhold, or deviate in their course.
Nor deem from mutual impulse, things with things
Can sole their forms preserve; th' eternal seeds
May, hence, be oft restrain'd, and e'en purchance,
Their flight delay'd, till, from th' exhaustless store,
Fresh seeds arrive the fainting frame to feed:
But from concussion, frequent, they rebound,
Principiis rerum spatium tempusque fugi
Largiri, ut possint a coetu libera ferri.
Quà re etiam atque etiam suboriri multa necesse est:
Et tamen, ut plagæ quoque possint subpetere ipsæ,
Infinita opus est vis undique materiaï.
Illud in hiis rebus longe fuge credere, Memmi,

Ver. 1612. But fly, O Memmius, fly the sect deceived.] The Stoics, who uniformly contended for the spherical figure of the earth and planets, contended, at the same time, for the spherical figure of the universe itself; and, indeed, appear to have advanced the spherical figure of the universe as a reason why the stars and planets should partake of a similar configuration; believing that the same kind of gravitation existed through the universe at large, which they contended did exist throughout individual planets; by which the universe was kept in perpetual action, and the earth, and every other orb, was continually tending towards one common centre. When asked how it occurred, allowing this to be a fact, that the particles of earth, water, and air, attracted by such common centre, did not fly off from their own proper orbits, and, passing through the vacuum of space, approach that centre, and rest there, to the total subversion of order, and the regeneration of chaos? they replied, that such would assuredly be the effect, were it not for a certain elastic or contractile power possessed by the atmosphere of every orb, which compresses its particles together, and thus prevents such a dissolution. This atmosphere, or elastic ether, is denominated by Ennius, Virgil, and Manilius, as well as by our own poet, menia mundi, or “the walls of the world;” the Stoics believing that the world at large, as well as every orb contained within its circumference, was surrounded by the same elastic substance.

This doctrine of the Stoics was strenuously opposed by the Epicureans, on many accounts. For the latter believed that matter, as well as space, was infinite; and that they had no other limit than what they reciprocally afforded each other. Hence again they denied a central point in the universe; for that which is infinite can have no centre; and of course, they denied the existence of central attraction. But they carried their opposition still farther; and denied, at the same time, that either the earth or the heavenly bodies were perfectly spherical; conceiving the former to approximate gradually, in its lower regions, to the nature of air, on which it rests, and of course, that it is totally destitute of antipodal inhabitants. This doctrine of the Epicureans was assented to for many ages after the epoch of our poet, by sages of the highest reputation, both Christian and anti-christian; among the former of whom, indeed, to entertain a different opinion, was to be guilty of heresy. And, in effect, till the general laws and principles of gravitation were developed and understood, I question whether there were not more reason discovered in denying the perfectly spheroidal figure of the earth, and the possibility of an antipodal habitation, than in contending for such theories. At least, the objections urged against them by our poet, and others of the same school, are extremely forcible, and must, till the discovery of the above general principles, have been unanswerable. Lucretius has endeavoured to prove, that the universe is infinite; but, if this be true, there cannot possibly be a central spot; for that which is infinite can have no centre. Yet, allowing a centre, whether in the universe, or in the earth, what reason can be assigned for the supposition, that bodie press towards such centre, rather than to any other part; and that here, and here alone, they lose the
Dissolve all tie, and leave to transient rest
The common matter whence each substance springs,
Hence must incalculable seeds exist
Ceaseless in act; and the vast whole derive
Alone from boundless matter impulse due.

But fly, O Memmius, fly the sect deceiv'd,

property of weight and gravitation? Whence comes it to pass, moreover, if it be a general law, that all material bodies must press to such central point, that air and fire oppose this general law, and fly off in stubborn disobedience? more especially, whence proceeds it, that fire should be able to pierce through every stratum of the incumbent and elastic atmosphere itself, and defy its constrictive bond? for such was the opinion of the Stoics, who imagined that the sun, moon, and stars, were fed by this perpetual and lambent pabulum.

These are the questions with which our poet perplexed his adversaries, and the objections he urges to their system. And though a deeper investigation of the laws of nature have, at present, rendered some of his queries nugatory, and afforded us ample means of replying to others; yet the opponents of Lucretius were without these advantages, and do not appear to have been possessed of any power of rebutting the difficulties with which he presses them, or of extricating themselves from the dilemmas into which they must have been perpetually thrown,

The opinion of the Stoics, however, respecting both the universe and the solar system, as to their moving around, and tending towards some common centre, is corroborated by modern observations. The common centre of universal nature, in the opinion of Dr. Herschell, consists of a mass of opake and chaotic matter. Philos. Trans. Vol. LXXXIV. from which he thinks it probable that all the systems of the Universe have been emitted by some strong projectile force, not dissimilar to the sudden explosions which frequently take place in volcanos and earthquakes. See note on b. ii. 1170, and b. v. 425.

This doctrine of the Stoics is of considerable antiquity. Homer alludes to it, and represents the common centre of the universe as the place of punishment for the disobedient deities. Here he fixes his Tartarus, or Hell; and, in the name of Jupiter, declares to every refractory god, that

—πέτατεν ης Ταρτάρου περιοδοι
Τηλις μηλ' ἵνα Ἐλευθερος ὑπὸ Τοιοῦτος
Εἶδε στερεόν τε τεῖχος καὶ Κχαλίδος οὐχος
Τεσσεράνθρ' αίδιον ἀθυμον συμπαυας ἀπ' ἀπο γαῖας. \_I. 3. \_

—he, far from steep Olympus thrown,
Low in the dark Tartarian gulf shall groan;
As deep beneath th' infernal centre hurl'd,
As from that centre to th' ethereal world. \_Pope. \_

This passage has been imitated by Virgil; but, as a story seldom loses any thing either by report or transcription, the latter has taken care to double the distance between heaven and hell; and in the Aeneid it runs thus:

—tum Tartarus ipse
Bis patet in preceps tantum, tenditque sub umbras,
Quantus ad æthereum cali suspectus Olympus.
\_Æ. vi. 577. \_

The gaping gulph low to the centre lies;
And twice as deep as earth is distant from the skies. \_Dryden. \_

We cannot be surprized, therefore, at Milton's beating both the Greek and Roman poets; and informing us that the regions appointed for Satan were

As far remov'd from God and light of heaven,
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost Pole. \_Par. Lost. i. \_
In medium summæ, quod dicunt, omnia niti;
Atque ideo mundi naturam stare sine ullis
Ictibus externis, neque quoquam posse resolvi
Summa atque ima, quod in medium sint omnia nixa:
Ipsum si quidquam posse in se sistere credis;
Et, quæ pondera sunt sub terris, omnia sursum
Nitier, in terrāque retro requiescere posta;
Ut per aquas quæ nunc rerum simulacra videmus:
Et similī ratione animalia suppā vagari
Contendunt, neque posse e terris in loca cōeli
Recidere inferiōra magis, quam corpora nostra
Sponte sua possint in cōeli templam volare:
Illeī quom videant solem, nos sidera noctis
Cernere; et alternīs nobiscum tempora cōeli
Dividere; et noctēs parileis agitare diebus.
Sed vanus stolidis haec omnia finxerit error,
Book I. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Who teach that things, with gravitation firm,
To the vast centre of th' entire, alike,
Unerring press: the world who fain would prove
Void of external impulse, may subsist,
And nought its post desert, profound, or high,
Since of such gravitating power possest.
For can'st thou deem that aught may thus sustain,
And poise itself? that aught of solid weight,
Plac'd at earth's utmost depth, could upwards strive
Revers'd; and to the surface—in the stream
As spreads the downward shadow)—still adhere?
For thus such sages hold: thus man, and beast
Subsist, they teach, inverted, earth beneath:
From their firm station, down their deeper skies
As unexpos'd to fall, as towards the heav'ns
Ourselves to mount sublime: by them the sun,
When night to us unfolds his stars, survey'd;
And equal measuring, in alternate course,
With us, their months, their darkness, and their day.
Such are the specious fancies error feigns,

\[\text{Aut redit a nobis Aurora, diemque reducit;}\]
\[\text{Nosque ubi primus equis orient afflavit anhelis;}\]
\[\text{Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper.}\]

\[\text{V. 247.}\]

There night, eternal night, and silence sleep,
And gathering darkness broods upon the deep;
Or from our clime, when fades the orient ray,
There bright Aurora beams eternal day;

\[\text{Ver. 1132. Such are the specious fancies error feigns,}\]
\[\text{In idle hour, to minds perverse and vain.] It is}\]
\[\text{truly astonishing to behold the obloquy and contempt}\]
\[\text{which men of enlightened understandings, of taste}\]
Amplexei quod habent perverse prima viaï.  
Nam medium nihil esse potest, ubi inane locusque 
Infinita: neque omnino, si jam medium sit,  
Possit ibei quidquam hac potius consistere caussâ,  
Quam quà vis alîa longe regione manere.  
Omnis enim locus, ac spatium, quod inane vocamus,  
Per medium, per non medium, concedat oportet  
Æquis ponderibus, motus quaquamque feruntur.  
Nec quisquam locus est, quo corpora quom venere,  
Ponderis amissâ vi, possint stare in inani:  
Nec, quod inane autem est, ulli subsistere debet,  
Quin, sua quod natura petit, concedere pergat:  
Haud igitur possunt tali ratione teneri  
Res in concilium, medii cupedine victæ.

and elegance will frequently cast upon those who 
differ from them in opinion, and merely on account 
of such difference. According to the discoveries of 
modern, and more accurate philosophy, the oppo-
nents of Lucretius were, in the present instance, 
much nearer the truth than himself. But they had 
imbibed a contrary system to his own; and what fol-
lows? the system they had imbibed must be false 
and fancifil, and they had only imbibed it from 
vanity or perversity of mind. How much is it to 
be lamented that men, in other respects most liberal 
and praise-worthy, should so frequently indulge in 
reflections so uncharitable and disingenuous, upon 
subjects of but speculative consideration alone; and 
thus discover, where we should least expect to find 
it, so large a portion of the pride and rancour of 
the human heart? 

But what was merely deemed idle, extravagant, 
or perverse, in the days of Lucretius, on the intro-
duction of the Christian religion, and for many cen-
turies afterwards, was regarded as a high crime and 
heresy: and the punishment of imprisonment, con-
fiscation, and death, was scarcely severe enough to 
alone for the diabolical dogma. In the note on 
Book ii. v. 1065, I have stated with what terror 
Copernicus at length consented to disclose to a few 
friends the principles of that system which is now 
universally accredited throughout Christendom, after 
having concealed it from public notice for at least 
 thirty years. Yet so much did he dread a prose-
cution for heresy, even after he had divulged it, 
that it is generally believed he fell a sacrifice to this 
apprehension alone. For asserting the same system, 
to wit, that the sun is in the centre, and not the 
earth; and that the latter has a diurnal motion, and 
is inhabited in its antipodal regions, Galileo was im-
In idle hour, to minds perverse and vain.
Where all is infinite, what spot precise
Can e'er be central? or were centre own'd,
Why towards such spot should matter rather tend,
Than elsewhere more remote, and deeper still?
For vacant space, through every part alike,
Central or not, must yield to things compact,
And pond'rous, as their varying weight compels;
Nor through the boundless void one point exists
Where things may rest, as if of weight depriv'd.
No power it boasts t' uphold; but still recedes,
As nature prompts, and opes the needed path.
Hence, by the love alone of centre struck,
Th' harmonious frame of things could ne'er be form'd.

prisoned even so late as the days of Milton, who visited him in his confinement: his works were publicly burnt, and he was at length only released upon making a public recantation, and submitting to the penance of repeating once a week, for three years, the seven penitential psalms. Virgilius, bishop of Saltzburg, during the papacy of Zachary, was reduced to the same dilemma; and when Boniface, archbishop of Mentz, accused him of maintaining the erroneous and blasphemous doctrine of the antipodes, this enlightened head of the church ordained, that if he should be convicted of holding so abominable an error, which he had uttered against the Lord, and against his own soul, that there are other worlds, other men under the earth, other suns, and other moons, a consistory immediately be convened; that he be degraded from the honour of the priesthood, and be excommunicated from the church. It was, indeed, the same principle that condemned, in our own country, that first, and most indefatigable philosopher of his age, Roger Bacon, to an imprisonment for ten years; his chemical discoveries being attributed to dealings with the Devil. During the zenith of the papal power, there are but few instances to be traced of a successful opposition to such frivolous and superstitious tenets as philosophy then exhibited: but I ought not to forget that of Ferdinand of Spain, who, on the offer of Columbus to engage in a voyage into the southern hemisphere in quest of the antipodes, instead of imprisoning him for heresy of doctrine, although opposed by the decrees of the church, by the opinion of the Christian fathers, and of all his own ecclesiastical counsellors, adopted the belief of the enterprising navigator, and shortly afterwards reaped an ample reward for his liberality and strength of mind.
Præterea, quoniam non omnia corpora fingunt
In medium niti; sed terrarum, atque liquores,
Humorum ponti, magnasque e montibus undas,
Et quasi terreno quæ corpore continecantur:
At contra teneuis exponunt aëris auras,
Et calidos simul a medio differrier igneis;
Atque ideo totum circum tremere æthera signis,
Et solis flammam per cœli cærula pasci,
Quod calor, a medio fugiens, ibi conligat omnis:
[Quippe etiam vesci e terrâ mortalia secla;]
Nec prorsum arboribus summos frundescere ramos
Posse, nisi a terris paullatim quoique cibatum
Terra det: at supra circum tegere omnia cœlum;
Ne, volucris ritu flammarum, møenia mundi
Diffugiant subito magnum per inane, soluta;
Et, ne cætera consimili ratione sequantur:
Neve ruant cœli tonitralia templá superne,

Ver. 1160. And all envelop'd, volatile as flame,
Burst every bond, and dissipate, and die:] It
is impossible to peruse this sublime and exquisite
passage of Lucretius, without recalling to me-
memory a passage of well-known, and equal subli-
mity in Shakspeare; and though I dare not as-
sert that the latter was indebted for the idea to
the former, yet, in the prosecution of this poem,
the reader will meet with sentences and sentiments
so strikingly parallel, particularly in b. v. and vi. that
he will be disposed to attribute more learning to
the English bard than has generally been conceded
to him, and believe him to have been no stranger to
Lucretius:

——the great globe itself,
Yea, all, which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.
Language cannot easily convey a stronger picture
of utter extinction, than either of the above images.
Lucretius tells us, that the whole would “fly off,
volatile as flame?”—Shakspeare, “as an insubstantial
pageant,” or “vision?”—Lucretius, “that it would
dissipate, or utterly vanish away;”—Shakspeare, that
Moreo’er such sages urge not that the whole
Strives towards the centre equal; but terrene
Alone, and fluid matters; the deep main,
The mountain cat’ract, and the forms produc’d
From earth Dedalian: while the breezy air,
And the light flame, far from such centre stray,
Through ether trembling, and, with lambent fire,
Feeding, through time, the sun’s refulgent blaze;
As feeds maternal earth the myriad forms
Of herbs, and trees, and animated life,
From her own bosom nurtur’d, and sustain’d.
Thus, too, they teach that heav’n, with bound sublime,
Encircles all things, lest the world’s wide walls,
And all envelop’d, volatile as flame,
Burst every bond, and dissipate, and die:
Lest heav’n in thunders perish, and below
The baseless earth forsake us, downward urg’d:

it would “dissolve, without leaving a rack behind;”
without the slightest vestige of its evanescent existence. Mr. Wakefield, however, with his usual acumen, has traced out a similar image, and one of equal grandeur and sublimity, in the Apocalypse, cap. xx. 11. καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ θρόνον λαυκοὶ μεγάς, καὶ τὸν καθήμενον εἰς αὐτόν ὁ θεός προσέφευξεν ἡ γῆ, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ τοῖς σύν οὐράνιοι αὐτῶι. “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it; from whose presence the earth and the heavens vanished away, and no place could be found for them.”

An idea not foreign from either of the above, but more immediately parallel with ver. 1165, and 1166, occurs in the following passage of Klopstock’s Messiah, in which he gives a terribly sublime picture of the descent of the Almighty, and the final judgment of mankind:

Er ruhet
Hoch auf Tabor, und hält den tiefer zitternden erdkreis
Dass der staub nicht vor ihm in das Unermessliche stäube.

High rested he o’er Tabor, and the globe
Deep-trembling, held; or all its mighty mass
Had crumbled at the sight through space profound.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Lib. I.

Terraque se pedibus raptim subducat; et omnes, Inter permixtas rerum caeleque ruinas, Corpora solventes, abeant per inane profundum; Temporis ut puncto nihil exstet reliquiarum, Desertum praeter spatium, et primordia caeca. Nam, quaquomque prius de parti corpora deesse Constitues, hæc rebus erit pars janua læti:

Hac se turba foras dabat omnis materiai.

Hæc si pernosces, parvâ perductus opellâ; Namque alid ex alio clarescet; nec tibi caeca Nox iter eripiet, quin ultima naturæ Pervideos: ita res ascendent lumina rebus.

Ver. 1170. —the doors of death are ope,] Thus Virgil: —patet isti janua leto.
Æn. ii. 661. xxxviii. 17.

the door of Death stands open.
So in the tremendously grand, and highly figu-
rative address of the Almighty to the patriarch Job,
And loose, and lifeless, man's dissev'ring flame,
Mixt with the rushing wreck of earth, and skies,
Waste through all space profound; till nought remain,
Nought, in a moment, of all now survey'd,
But one blank void, one mass of seeds inert.
For once to act, when primal atoms fail,
Fail where they may, the doors of death are ope,
And the vast whole unbounded ruin whelms.

These subjects if, with trivial toil, thou scan,
Each, each illumining, midnight shall no more
Thy path obstruct; but nature's utmost depths
Shine as the day: so things irradiate things.

Have the doors of Death been disclosed to thee?
The doors of the shadow of Death hast thou beheld?
The Poet describes the pleasures that result from the study of philosophy, and a mind satisfied with a little, and estranged from the passions and pursuits of the busy world. He then resumes his subject, and attempts to prove a perpetual motion in primordial atoms; and that this motion is of various kinds, direct, curvilinear, and repercussive. He asserts, that primordial atoms are not all of the same figure; some being globular, others polygonal, and others jagged: that these figures vary not to infinitude; but that the atoms under every separate figure are infinite in number. The formation of compound bodies from the combination of atoms of different figures, and the variation of their solidity or fluidity, their roughness or rotundity, from the different atoms of which they are compounded; and the degree of force and affinity, or connexion with which they adhere to each other. Prismatic hues, and their origin; refraction of colours, and its cause. Neither these, nor any other qualities of bodies, reside in primordial atoms themselves, but only in their peculiar arrangements and combinations. The origin of irritability, sensation, and apprehension: the immensity of creation, from the immensity of its materials—and, consequently, the existence of other systems, and systems of systems of worlds. No compound material being eternal—whence no system of material atoms can be eternal; and whence, again, the progression, senescence, and decay of every existing world, the ruins, or disorganised corpuscles of which will be employed in the generation and maturity of other worlds. Proofs, that the earth is already in a state of decline and comparative infertility; and hence, that it must, eventually, perish from senility alone.
DE RERUM NATURA.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

SUAVE, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem:
Non, quia vexari quemquam est jocunda voluptas,
Sed, quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.
Per campos instructa, tua sine parte pericli,

Ver. 1. How sweet to stand, when tempests tear the
main.] Nothing truly valuable is to be acquired without severe application and labour. The pursuit of riches, honours, or fame, demands incessant exertion, and is accompanied with perpetual anxiety; an anxiety that frequently poisons every enjoyment, and too dearly purchases the object of our toils, even if it be purchased at last. But the pursuit of knowledge differs essentially from every other exertion: it, too, has its difficulties and its labours, its briars to clear away, and its precipices to surmount: but its path is free from anxiety and disappointment; and the man who gains possession of its summit, feels himself elevated above the world, and may well look with pity on the crowds that are struggling below him. Impressed with this sentiment, our poet opens the book before us: and the beauty and elegance of his imagery have produced a host of imitators; not one of whom, however, to the best of my knowledge, has, by any means, equalled himself. For the idea contained in the first two verses Lucretius, however, seems, in some measure, to have been indebted to Isidorus. "Nothing is more pleasant," says this writer, "than to sit at ease in the harbour, and behold the shipwreck of others!"

Pelus. Lib. ii. Ep. 240. The following description of Akenside will here perhaps arise in the mind of every reader; and it is not unlikely that Lucretius was the original from which he drew: we have already traced him occasionally turning his eye to the poem before us:

---ask the crowd
Which flies impatient from the village walk,
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below
The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
Some hapless bark: while sacred Pity melts
The general eye, or Terror's icy hand
Smites their distorted limbs, and horrent hair:
While every mother closer to her breast
THE NATURE OF THINGS.

BOOK THE SECOND.

How sweet to stand, when tempests tear the main,
On the firm cliff, and mark the seaman's toil!
Not that another's danger soothes the soul,
But from such toil how sweet to feel secure!
How sweet, at distance from the strife, to view

Catches her child; and pointing where the waves
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud.

PLEASE OF IMAG.

Whether, however, this picture were, or were not, derived from the Nature of Things, there can be little doubt that Dryden, who was much better acquainted with Lucretius than Akenside, and had translated a variety of detached parts of his work, intended the following as an express copy:

No happiness can be where is no rest:
Th' unknown, untalk'd-of man is only blest:
He, as in some safe cell, his cliff does keep,
From thence he views the labours of the deep:
The gold-fraught vessel, which mad tempests beat,
He sees how vainly make to his retreat:
And when from far the tenth wave does appear
Shrinks up in silent joy that he's not there.

TYRAN. LOVE.

Beattie has caught the same idea, and introduced it, with his accustomed elegance, into his Minstrel:

And oft the craggy cliff he lov'd to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of water tost
In billows length'ning to th' horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd.

But perhaps the figure is nowhere better preserved than in the following lines from an old song, quoted by B. Johnson in "Every one out of Humour:"

I wander not to seek for more:
In greatest storm I sit on shore,
And laugh at those that toil in vain
To get what must be lost again.

Ver. 5. How sweet, at distance from the strife, to view] Nothing was more common, before the invention of the science of artillery, than for persons
Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri:
Sed nihil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere,
Edita doctrinâ sapientum, templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ;
Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,
Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.
O miseras hominum menteis! o pectora cæca!

who, from the importance of their station, were not allowed to be actively engaged in the battle, to mark its progress from the summit of some neighbouring hill; a post, however, which, from the nature of modern tactics, would be no longer free from danger, nor, from the volumes of smoke with which the combatants are covered, competent to a survey of what is transacting. It was from a windmill, on such an eminence as this, that Edward III. surveyed the heroic exploits of the Black Prince in the celebrated battle of Crescy: and Seneca, in his Train, has a reference to a similar fact:

Est una magna turris e Troja super
Adsueta Priamo; cuius est hastigio
Summisque pinnis, arbiter bellī sedens
Regebat acies: turre in hac, blando sinu
Fovens nepotem, cum metu, versos, gravi,
Danaos fugaret Hector et ferro et face,
Paterna puero bella monstrat senex.

Sought oft by Priam, swells a spacious tower
High from the Trojan walls; o'er whose bold cope
Whose ramparts seated, arbiter of fate,
He rul'd the fight: here to his fost'ring breast
Straining his grandson, while with fire and sword
Victorious Hector chas'd th' affrighted Greeks
He show'd the boy where former fields were fought.

Not widely different, Cicero in the following passage to Atticus:

Nunc vero, cum cogar exire de navi, non abjectis,
sest receptis gubernaculis, cupio istorum naufragia
ex terra intueri; cupio ut ait amicus tuus Sophocles,

—καὶ ὑπὸ στήγης

But now that I am compelled to quit the vessel not with lost, but recovered tackle, I wish to behold these shipwrecks from the strand; I wish, as says thy friend Sophocles,

— from a cliff to hear
The dashing spray swell frequent o'er the soul.

Ver. 7. But sweeter far on Wisdom's heights serene,
To watch the giddy crowd that, deep below,
For ever wander, &c.—] Ovid is under many obligations to Lucretius; and the following extract, borrowed from the passage before us, is an instance in point:

—juvat ire per alta
Astra : juvat, terris et inerti sede relicitis,
Nube vehi, validique humeris insistere Atlantis;
Palentisque animos passim, ac rationis egentes,
Despectare procul. Met. xv. 147.

'Tis pleasant mid the stars to soar sublime;
Pleasant, from earth, and earth's gross region freed,
Book II. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Contending hosts, and hear the clash of war!
But sweeter far on Wisdom's heights serene,
Upheld by Truth, to fix our firm abode;
To watch the giddy crowd that, deep below,
For ever wander in pursuit of bliss;
To mark the strife for honours, and renown,
For wit and wealth, insatiate, ceaseless urg'd,
Day after day, with labour unrestrain'd.

O wretched mortals!—race perverse and blind!

Wrapt in a cloud, on Atlas propt secure,
To watch far off, the busy throng that toil,
Bereft of reason.

To the same effect, and from the same source,
the pensive Muse of Cowper:
'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat
To peep at such a world. To see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd.
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjur'd ear.
Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease,
The globe and its concerns, I seem advance'd
To some secure, and more than mortal height. TASK.

Statius has, therefore, compared to the sage himself this secure and elevated cliff, on which Lucretius and Cowper represent him as seated:

Stat sublimis apex, ventosque imbruesque serenus
Despict.

Firm stands its brow sublime, and winds and showers
Despises, fearless.

It is highly probable that from this passage of Statius Goldsmith derived his beautiful and parallel simile; which, in reality, is little more than a free translation:

As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,

Though round its head the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sun-shine settles on its head.

Deserted Village.

Mr. Sotheby, in his version of Wieland's Oberon, has given us the same idea, almost in the same words:

Sublimely rais'd to Heaven, his brow appears
The shrine of peace; and like a sun-gilt height,
Where never earthly mist obscur'd the light,
Above the stormy world, its tranquil summit rears.

CANT. viii.

The beauty of this description is, however, the translator's own; for the rendering is so wide of the original that it is barely possible to trace the clue. In Wieland it occurs as follows:

—verschlossen der begier,
Von keiner furcht, von keinem schmerz betroffen.
Ist nur dem wahrem noch die heit re seele offen.
Nur offen der natur, und reingestimmt zu ihr.

Ver. 11. To mark the strife for honours, and renown,
For wit and wealth, insatiate — ] In a similar manner, Denham describes the various pursuits of our own metropolis, from the brow of Cooper's Hill:

Its state and wealth, its business and its crowd,
Seem, at this distance, but a darker cloud;
And is, to him who rightly things esteems,
No other in effect than what it seems.
Qualibus in tenebris vitae, quantisque periclis,
Degitur hocc avi, quodquomque est! Nonne videre est,
Nihil aliud sibi naturam latrare, nisi ut, quo
Corpore sejunctus dolor absit, mente fruatur
Jocundo sensu, cura semota, metuque?
Ergo corpoream ad naturam paucia videmus
Esse opus omnino, quæ demant quomque dolorem;

Ver. 16. —know ye not
Of all ye toil for nature nothing asks] Never have the practice or the precepts of any philosopher been more misrepresented and labelled than those of Epicurus. Indolence, and mere animal gratification, have been generally supposed to constitute the result of all his lessons, and the characteristic of all his philosophy. A life of indolence, however, could never have given either Epicurus, or Lucretius, that truly wonderful extent of knowledge, that deep research into the most curious phænomena of nature, and that power of argumentatively elucidating their own doctrines from facts, and, for the most part, from facts alone, which are to be traced in almost every page of this inimitable poem. And as to their corporeal pleasures let the passage before us speak, a passage perfectly consonant with the general precepts and practice of their system, and in which we meet with a rigid, and almost anchorite abjuration of every thing the world calls gratification or indulgence. In reality, the pleasures pursued and recommended by Epicurus were entirely of the negative kind: pleasures easily procured, and almost in every instance devoid of mutability. Solomon himself was never more convinced of the vanity of all earthly pursuits and enjoyments than the Grecian moralist; nor does the Christian system inculcate a greater purity of life and manners. “Happiness,” observes the philosopher, and it is to this passage Lucretius refers, “is the end of our being: but to be happy, we must be free from all pain of body; and from all trouble and vexation of mind: every thing actually required by nature is easily obtained, and that only is obtained with difficulty which is beyond her wants: we hence call competency our chief good.”

I agree with Mr. Hume that Tasso had the exigium of the present Book strongly in his eye when he composed the fascinating address of the fair phantom, in Armida’s garden, to Rinaldo; but I cannot, with him, admit that this Address contains all the spirit of the Epicurean system. The passage is as follows:

O giovinetti, mentre Aprili, e Maggio
Vi ammantan di forite, e verde apoglie;
Di gloria o di virtù fallace raggio
La tenerella mente ah non v’ invoglie.
Solo chi segue ciò, che piace è saggio,
E in sua stagion degli anni il frutto coglie,
Questo gridà natura; o dunque voi
Inducerete l’ alma ai detti suoi?
Foli perché gettate il caro dono,
Che breve è sì, di vostra età novella?
Nomi senza foggetto, idoli sono
Ciò che pregio, e valore il mondo appella.
La fama, che invaghisce a un dolce suono
Voi superbi mortali, e par si bella,
E’ un eco, un sogno, anzi del sogno un’ ombra,
Ch’ ad ogni vento si dilegna, e sgombra.
Goda il corpo sicuro, e in lieti oggetti
L’ alma tranquilla appaghi i sensi falli;
Through what dread dark, what perilous pursuits

Pass ye this round of being!—know ye not

Of all ye toil for nature nothing asks

But for the body freedom from disease,

And sweet, unanxious quiet, for the mind?

And little claims the body to be sound:

But little serves to strew the paths we tread

Oblii le noje andate, e non affrettii
Le sue miserie in aspettando i mali.
Nulla curi, se'l ciel tuoni o saetti;
Minacci egli a sua voglia, e infiammi strali.
Questo è saper, questa è felice vita:
Si l'insega natura, e si l'addita.

Cant. xiv. 62.

O happy man! when youth reigns o'er your hours,
And strews the paths of life with smiling flowers.
Ah! let not virtue, with fallacious ray,
Or glory lead your tender mind astray.
Who learns the fruits, each season yields, to prize,
Who follows pleasure, he alone is wise.
Know, this is Nature's voice! will you withstand
Her sacred laws, and slight her high command?
Insensate he who wastes his bloomy prime,
Nor tastes the transient gifts of fleeting time.
Whate'er the world may worth or valour deem,
Is but a phantom, and delusive dream:
Say what is fame, that idol of the brave!
Whose charms can thus deceiv'd mankind enslave?

An echo—or a shade—to none confin'd,
A shifting cloud dispers'd with ev'ry wind!
Then rest secure; in every offer'd joy
Indulge your senses, and your soul employ.
Past woes forget; nor antedate your doom
By vain presage of evils yet to come.

Vol. I.

Let thunders roll, and nimble light'nings fly;
Yet heed not you the threat'nings of the sky.
This, this is wisdom; hence each blessing flows:
This Nature bids, and this the path she shows.

Hoole.

Ver. 20. And little claims the body to be sound:
But little serves—] Hence perhaps Young
in his Night Thoughts:

Man wants but little, nor that little long.
An idea obviously caught by Goldsmith, and transplanted, in the form of the following couplet, into his Edwin and Angelina:

Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.

No man more fully exemplified this axiom of temperate philosophy than Epicurus himself, as I have already remarked in the prefixed life of our poet; and hence the following epigram of Athenæus:

Αἱ θυρών οὐδ' ισχυσί τι χειρον, καὶ θεία χρῆσθαι
Αι αἰσχρῶν μάκαρε και θείᾳ τινα θΡῆσθαι.
Τοις φυτοῖς: οὗς δ' ἐπὶ τοῖς θείαις τιμίων οἵτινες θρῆσθαι
'Ας δ' ἐκ τοίαυτοις τιμίων τερπνοις κυρίων οἴνῳ
Τοιούτοι σεβάσται, τοιοῦτοι τιμήται
Εκανε, καὶ Πυθώνι εἰς ἱερὰν τριτοδία.

Diog. Laert. x.

O why this impious toil! this lust of gain
That ever teems with turbulence and smart!
The little Nature needs we soon obtain,
But nought can glut the avaricious heart.
This, first of sages, Epicurus taught,
For'd by the Muse, or from the tripod fraught.
Delicias quoque utei multas substernere possint; 
Gratius interdum neque Natura ipsa requirit:

A similar remark recurs in many other parts of the present poem, but particularly in b. v. v. 1139.
Yet truest riches—would mankind their breasts
Bend to the study, in a little lie,
With mind well poised: here want can never come.
The idea is indeed common to moralists in every age and nation. Thus Horace:

Jure perhorruit
Late conspicium tollere verticem—
—Bene est, cui Deus obtulit
Parca, quod satis est, manu.
Well have I shunn'd to rear my brows
Mid scenes of pomp and care:
For happiest he whom God allows
Enough, though nought to spare.
So the Hebrew sage, Prov. xxx. 8.

Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with food convenient for me.

Ver. 23. *What, though the dome be wanting, whose proud walls?] The description is as true to historic fact, as it is exquisite in poetic embellishment. The Roman Patricians, in the magnificence of their palaces, were at this time exhibiting all the splendour of the East. Their vaulted ceilings, and in many cases, the whole interior of their walls, were either overlaid with gold or ivory, or inlaid with a mosaic of both. Even the outermost courts or vestibules in Cleopatra's palace, as we learn from Lucan, were lined with the latter, Phars. x. 119; while Nero, as Suetonius informs us, (in Nerone, c. 31) preferred the former, and overlaid his palace with sheet-gold alone. It is to the mosaic, or alternate inlay of the two, that Horace refers, in the following verses:

Non igitur, neque aureum
Mèt réuident in domo lacunar.  

Nor ivory, nor golden dome
Blazes around my humble home.

The palace of Menelaus is represented by Homer as having been more curiously tessellated still, and having been equally irradiated,

Χρυσω τ', πληκτρου τε, καὶ αργυρου, κ η λαξικως. 

Od. A. 72.

With amber, silver, ivory, and gold.
To these the luxurious Orientalists added sapphires, beryls, and other precious stones, of which the sapphire appears to have been most in favour; and was intended, in the swelling vault of the ceiling, to imitate, by the introduction of silver stars, the appearance of the heavens at midnight. The Hebrews were accustomed to this magnificent architecture; and the superb and splendid descriptions of the throne of the Almighty, in Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, obviously allude to it. In like manner we are told, Exod. xxiv. 10, that when God visibly manifested himself to Moses and the elders of Israel, "they saw, as it were, under his feet a paved (or tessellated) work of sapphire stones, and the clear azure vault of the heavens."

Thus, the Persian poet Sadi, in his book of apophthegms, describing the sky itself:
bability, taken immediately from Homer’s picture of the palace of Alcinous, beginning

Χειρόσ τ’ σειρ κνοφοι, εν γανατοι τι βάσιμοι, &c.
Od. H. v. 100.

The front appear’d, with radiant splendors gay,
Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day.
The walls were massy brass: the cornice high
Blue metals crown’d in colours of the sky; —
Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
Which boys of gold, with flaming torches, crown’d.
The polish’d ore, reflecting every ray,
Blaz’d on the banquetts with a double day.

Pope.

Yet the philosophic moral, in which consists the chief beauty of the description, is altogether our poet’s own: and Virgil has not been inattentive to so rich a treasure. In the second book of his Georgics, he has therefore introduced a passage, obviously referring to this of Lucretius, and extending to a length too considerable for insertion in this note. It begins at ver. 461.

Si non ingentem foribus domus alta superbis
Mane salutantum totis vomit ædibus undam—
At secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum; at latis ait fundis,
Spelunca, vivique lacus; at frigida Tempe, &c.

Thomson is under an equal and similar obligation to our poet: though the parallel passage in Thomson is rather a more exact transcript of Virgil than of Lucretius. I refer to his description of the happiness of a rural life in his Autumn, in which we find the following lines:

What, tho’ the dome be wanting, whose proud gate
Each morning vomits out the sneaking crowd
Of courtiers false, and in their turn abus’d?
Vile intercourse! What, tho’ the glitt’ring robe
Of every hue reflected light can give—
The pride and gaze of fools oppress him not?—
Sure peace is his: a solid life estrang’d
To disappointment, and fallacious hope—
These are not wanting—nor the chide of streams

And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade, &c.

Mr. Roscoe, in his life of Lorenzo de Medici, has favoured us with some verses of this highly-gifted sage, which are obviously drawn from the same exuberant fountain, and are at least equal to any of those I have already quoted.

Cerchi chi vuol, le pompe e gli alte honori
Le piazze, e tempi, e gli edifici magni,
Le delicie, il tesor, quali accompagni.
Mille duri pensieri, mille dolori:
Un verde praticel pien di bei fiori,
Un rivolo, che l’herba intorno bagni,
Un angelletto, che d’amor si lagni,
Acqueta molto meglio i nostri ardiri:
L’ombrese selve, i sassi, e gli altri monti,
Gli antri oscuri e le fere fugitivi,

Quivi veggo io con pensieri vaghi;

Quai me le togli eor una, hor altra cosa.

Seek he who will in grandeur to be blest,
Place in proud halls, and splendid courts his joy;
For pleasure or for gold his arts employ,
Whilst all his hours number’d cares molest.
A little field in native flow’rets drest,
A riv’let in soft murmurs gliding by,
A bird, whose love-sick note salutes the sky,
With sweeter magic lull my cares to rest.

And shadowy woods, and rocks, and tow’ring hills,
And caves obscure, and nature’s free-born train

Each in my mind some gentle thought instills;

Ah gentle thoughts! soon lost the city cares among.

Ver. 23. — whose proud walls

A thousand lamps irradiate, prop. sublime

These, and the two ensuing verses, cannot but remind us of that exquisite painting of Milton:

B b 2
Si non aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædeis,  
Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,  
Lumina nocturnis epulis ut subpeditentur;  
Nec domus argento fulget, auroque renidet,  
Nec citharæ reboant laqueata aurataque templæ;  
Quom tamen inter se, prostratei in gramine molli,  
Propter aquæ rivum, sub ramis arboris altæ,  
Non magnis opibus jocunde corpora curant:  
Præsertim, quom tempestas adridet, et anni  
Tempora conspargunt viridanteis floribus herbas:  
Nec calidæ citius decedunt corpore febres,  
Textilibus si in picturis, ostroque rubenti,

From the arched roof  
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row  
Of starry lamps, and blazing cressets, fed  
With naphtha, and asphaltus, yielded light  
As from a sky.

Ver. 29. *Yet listless laid the velvet grass along*  
Hence, perhaps, Mr. Gray, in a passage admirably picturesque, and exquisite:

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch  
A broader, browner shade,  
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech  
O'ercanopies the glade,  
Beside some water's rushy brink  
With me the muse shall sit and think  
At ease reclin'd.

In a beautiful Asiatic poem, entitled Moha Mudgara, or, A Remedy for Distraction of Mind, translated by Sir William Jones, we have a passage so consonantaneous with the present, that I cannot avoid transcribing it. Here, however, the writer is a devotee, as well as a poet: "To dwell under the mansion of the high gods, at the foot of a tree; to have the ground for a couch, and a hide for vesture; to renounce all extrinsic enjoyments, whom doth not such devotion fill with delight?" Jones’s Works, i. 212.

Ver. 34. *On down reclin’d, or swapp’d in purple robe  
The thirsty fever burns with heat as fierce, &c.*  
Towards this passage, we observe Horace turning his eye, in the first book of his Epistles:

Non domus et fundus, non æris accervus et auri  
Négroto domini deduxit corpore fèbres  
Non animo curas.  
Epist. ii.

Nor splendid house, nor spacious land,  
Nor wealth with wealth combin’d,  
Can fevers from the flesh command,  
Or troubles from the mind.

As he does also to the passage beginning at ver. 48, relating to cares and terrors. We meet with it the second book of his odes:

Non enim gaze, neque consularis  
Summovet lictor miseris tumultus  
Mentis, et curas laqueata circum  
Tecta volantos
Book II.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime
By frolic forms of youths in massy gold,
Flinging their splendours o'er the midnight feast:
Though gold and silver blaze not o'er the board,
Nor music echo round the gaudy roof?
Yet listless laid the velvet grass along
Near gliding streams, by shadowy trees o'er-arch'd,
Such pomp's we need not; such still less when spring
Leads forth her laughing train, and the warm year
Paints the green meads with roseat flowers profuse.
On down reclin'd, or wrapp'd in purple robe
The thirsty fever burns with heat as fierce

Nor glittering pomp, nor guards of state
Can soothe the sighing heart,
Nor from the mansions of the great
Bid hovering cares depart.

Linnéus, in his Flora Lapponica, has given us a
description of Lapland manners, so generally coinci-
dent with this beautiful picture of still life, as con-
trasted with the riotous pleasures of the world,
that I can have no doubt the philosophic botanist
had his eye turned to our own poet at the time he
wrote it. It commences, indeed, with an obvious
imitation of Virgil, in a passage which Virgil most
unequivocally deduced from Lucretius. O fortu-
natos ninium! su a bona norint, &c. O felix
Lappo! qui in ultimo angulo mundi sic bene lates
contentus et innocens.—Tu dormis hic sub tua pelle
ab omnius curis, contentionibus, rixis liber, igno-
rans quid sit invidia. Tu ducis innocentissimos tuos
annos ultra centenarium numerum cum facili senec-
tute, et summâ sanitate. Te latent myriades morborum
nostri Europæz communæ. Tu vivis in sybois, avis
instar, nec sementem facis, nec metis, tamen alit
te Deus optimum optime. Tua ornamenta sunt tre-
mula arborum folia graminosique luci. Tuus potus aqua
crystallina pelluciditatis.—Te non obtuit scorbatus,
nec febris intermittens, nec obesitas, nec podagra;
fibroso gaudio corpore et alacri animoque libero. O
sancta innocentia, estne hic tuus thronus inter Faunos
in summo septentrione, inequ velissimâ habita terra?
nunne sic prefers stragula haec betulina mollibus se-
nio tectis plumis? Sic etiam credidere veteres, nec
male. "O happy Lappian! who thus hidest thyself in
the remotest corner of the earth, content and innocent.
Thou reposest under thy bear-skin, void of all strife,
contention, or care, and altogether ignorant of en-
vy. Thou extendest thine innocent years beyond a
century, happy in an easy age, and in the full fruition
of health. From thee are hidden the myriads of diseases
that are common to us more enlightened Europeans.
Thou livest in the woods like a bird, neither sowing nor
reaping; but God, most benevolent, nourishes thee
most benevolently. Thine ornaments are the tremulous
foliage of trees, and the gassy shades: thy beverage, the
stream of crystal transparency. Thee, the scurvy de-
stroy'st not, nor the intermittling fever, nor unwieldy
culpulence, nor the gout: thou rejoicest in a body
Jacteris, quam si plebeiâ in veste cubandum est.
Quapropter, quoniam nihil nostro in corpore gazæ
Proficiunt, neque nobilitas, nec gloria regni;
Quod super est, animo quoque nihil prodesse putandum:
Si non, forte tuas legiones per loca campi 40
Fervere quom videas, belli simulacra cienteis;
Fervere quom videas classem, lateque vagari;
Hiis tibi cum rebus, timefactæ, Religiones
Ecfugiunt animo pavidae, mortisque timores;
Tum vacuum tempus linquunt, curâque solutum:
Quod, si ridicula hæc, ludibriaque, esse videmus;
Re verâque Metus hominum, Curæque sequaces,
Nec metuunt sonitus armorum, nec fera tela;
Audacterque inter reges rerumque potenteis
Vorsantur, neque fulgorem reverentur ab auro,
Nec clarum vestis splendorem purpuereâi:
Quid dubitas, quin omnis sit hæc rationis potestas?
Omnis quom in tenebris præsertim vita laboret.
Nam, velutei puerei trepidant, atque omnia cæcis
In tenebris metunt; sic nos in luce timemus
Interdum, nihilque sunt metuenda magis, quam

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active and muscular, and in a mind, free and unfettered, O holy innocence! hast thou not established here thy rural throne, in these utmost borders of the north, in this most abject climate of the world? and dost not thou thus prefer these rude and unsheltered sheds to the softer mansions of silk and down? This picturesque description is consistent with the assertions of our most credible travellers. Our own poet, Dyer, therefore, is, in some degree, incorrect in painting, as he has done in the first book of his
As when its victim on a pallet pants.

Since, then, nor wealth, nor splendour, nor the boast
Of birth illustrious, nor e'en regal state
Avails the body, so the free-born mind
Their aid as little asks. Unless, perchance,
The warlike host, thou deem, for thee array'd
In martial pomp, and o'er the fiery field
Panting for glory; and the gorgeous fleet,
For thee unmoor'd, and ardent,—can dispel
Each superstitious terror; from the breast
Root out the dread of death, and lull to peace
The cares, the tumults that distract thy soul.
But if all this be idle, if the cares,
The terrors still that haunt, and harass man,
Dread not the din of arms,—o'er kings and chiefs,
Press unabash'd, unaw'd by glittering pomp,
The purple robe unheeding—canst thou doubt
Man pants for these from poverty of mind,
Wand'ring in darkness, and through life misled?

For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,
Trembles, and starts at all things, so, full oft,

Fleece, the life and abode of the inhabitants of Lapland in the most dreary colours; and in representing them as totally devoid of all happiness and science. Delille, who has probably taken Linneus for his guide, is, on this account, more true to nature, and more entitled to praise. His delineation occurs in Les Jardins Chant, iii.

Oh, combien des Lapons l'usage heureux m'enchante! Qu'ils savent bien tromper leurs hivers rigoureux! &c.
Quae puerei in tenebris pavitant, finguntque futura.
Hunc igitur terrem animi, tenebrasque, necesse est,
Non radiei solis, neque lucida tela diei,
Discutiant; sed Naturae species, Ratioque.

Nunc age, quo metu genitalia materiai
Corpora res varias gignant, genitasque resolvant;

Ver. 55. *For as the boy, when midnight with the skies,
Trembles, and starts at all things, so, full oft,
E'en in the noon, men start—* Seneca has
quoted the two Latin lines corresponding to this
version, in his Epistle 112, and has endeavoured
to refute their illustration. He seems to apprehend,
that the poet meant to throw the blame of all
the errors, into which men are perpetually plunging,
upon their peculiar frame and constitution;
and he is hence anxious to exculpate the Deity from
a charge which, as the creator of mankind, would
necessarily attach to him. "We do not start," says he,
"whilst in the light; but, unfortunately, we have
made every thing dark around us: we therefore see
nothing whatever; neither what will injure, nor what
will benefit us. But we may acquire light, if we
chuse it; and hence alone may we acquire it—by
the study of those things which relate to God and
man." Non timemus in luce, Lucreti, sed omnia
nobis fecimns tenebras," &c. This opposition to
our poet is altogether idle, and unworthy a philoso-
pher of Seneca's talents: the fact of error, as specified
by himself, is the same which was before specified
by Lucretius; and the means of avoiding such error
is the same likewise—the study of Truth and Wisdom.

In direct repugnance to the taste and judgment of
Seneca, Lucretius himself appears to have been par-
ticularly pleased with this simile: for he has reintro-
duced it both into the third and sixth book, and that
without altering a syllable. See book iii. 55, and
book vi. 35.

Ver. 58. *—phantoms false
By darkness conjur'd,—*] The facetious But-
ler has some humorous verses to the same effect,
which the reader will not be displeased with perus-
ing in this place.

Who would believe what strange bugbears
Mankind creates itself of fears?
That spring, like fern, that insect weed,
Equivocally, without seed;
And have no possible foundation
But merely in th' imagination;
And yet can do more dreadful feats
Than hags, with all their imps and teats,
Make more bewitch, and haunt themselves,
Than all their nursery of elves.

Hudibr. Part III. iii. 1.

Ver. 60. *A terror this the radiant darts of day* A
favourite metaphor with our poet, as I have already
observed. See note on b. i. 166. In the Complaint
of Titus Andronicus, an old poem introduced into
Dr. Percy's collection, we meet with a figure not
very dissimilar:

I shot my arrows towards heaven high,
And for revenge to hell did often cry.

This couplet is, however, obviously taken from
Psalm lxxiv. 3, 4.

Hide me from the plots of the malignant—
Who whet their tongues like a sword;
And aim poisonous words, like arrows,
E'en in the noon men start at forms as void
Of real danger as the phantoms false
By darkness conjur'd, and the school-boy's dread.
A terror this the radiant darts of day
Can ne'er disperse: to truth's pure light alone,
And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.

Come, then, and mark how seeds primordial form
Created things, and how, when form'd, dissolve:

To shoot secretly at the innocent.
Clandestinely shoot they, and are not seen.

In this version, I have followed the Syriac reading, as confirmed by twelve MSS. So, Sol. Songs, viii. 6. should be rendered

For love is strong as death
'And' jealousy cruel as the grave;
Its flames are arrows of fire,
Which Jehovah kindleth in the heavens!

See the note on this passage in my version of the Song of Songs.

Not dissimilar is the figure employed by St. Paul, Rom. xiii. 12. εὐτωνωδ' ἐν ἐπερα του φωτος, "Let us put on the armour of light."—Dante appears to have had Lucretius in view, when composing the following verses:

Or come ai colpe degli caldi rui
Della neve riman nudo'l suggetto,
E dal colore, e dal freddo primai;
Così rimaso te nello intelletto
Voglio informar di luce si vivace,
Che ti tremolerà nel suo aspetto.

Now, as when vernal Sol begins to glow,
Down sinks the wintry mass of drifted snow
From Nature's face before his burning gaze;
Thus from your mind the darksome vest shall fall,
That hides your intellects in sombrous pall,
When truth divides the vale with piercing rays.

Ver. 63. Come, then, and mark how seeds primordial form

Created things,—] The poet now proposes the immediate subject of the book before us—the motion of elementary atoms, and the consequent production of material things. He has already traced their existence, and described them as floating, not only through the ocean of the atmosphere, but through the immense ocean of space; and has in general terms asserted, what he now undertakes to prove more decisively; namely, that it is from peculiar combinations, and juxta-positions of these corpuscles, that every material form or conglomeration of forms is produced. Before we enter upon an analysis of the theory invented by Epicurus, to account for the express mode by which such combinations, and juxta-positions of primary elements, take place, I cannot avoid noticing that the writings of several modern philosophers, and especially of those who have lately published essays on the subject of meteoric stones, or substances which, in almost every quarter of the globe, have been traced to have fallen from the Heavens, have reverted, in a very considerable degree, to the Epicurean theory, so far as we have hitherto advanced in considering it, and have added, in no small measure, to its probability. It is now generally admitted that the elements of all bodies may exist in a state of gass; that even gasses themselves may be compounds; that sulphur, quicksilver, and
Et, quæ vi facere id cogantur, quæque sit ollis
Reddita mobilitas magnum per inane meandi,

the most closely-vitrified flint may assume an ærial form; and that iron has been found, not only in the blood of animals, but in the juices of plants which have been purposely guarded from the access of all bodies of which this metal has been supposed to constitute a component part. The elementary particles of all bodies being thus capable of extreme division and volatilization, M. Hombolt has conceived that atmospheric stones, which fall to the earth, have been previously volatilized by the medium of hydrogeous gass, which, inflaming in the upper regions of the atmosphere, re-unites their primary corpuscles, that till then existed in a state of mutual repulsion. The opinion which contends, that the elements of these masses are a simple aggregate of the volatilized débris of substances emitted from the earth, united by mere affinity of composition; that of M. Patrin, who conceives that the substances which seed volcanos and meteoric stones are of the same description, and are furnished by the fluids of the atmosphere which circulate through the upper strata of the globe, and are there variously modified and combined; that of M. Izarn, who conjectures, as I have already observed, that all gasses themselves are compounds, and that all the most solid substances in nature are mere combinations of the elementary matter of gasses, whence solid substances may as readily be gendered in the air as beneath the earth: these theories all point to the hypothesis of Epicurus as their common basis, so far, I mean, as relates to the existence and diffusion of elementary atoms through every point of nature, through the earth, the atmosphere, and even the immensity of space. Those who, reasoning from M. La Place’s calculation, respecting the projectile force necessary to throw bodies from the moon towards the earth, derive these substances from lunar volcanos, approximate the Epicurean tenet; however, in a greater degree still; for such not only admit the existence of the same material corpuscles through different planets, but a power of actual combination into the same aggregate substances throughout every orb in the universe; while M. Chladni, who conjectures that these bodies are formed from substances exterior to the atmosphere of the earth and other planets, substances which have never incorporated with them, and are consequently found loose in the vast ocean of space, seems to embrace this part of the Epicurean theory in its utmost latitude. But it is time to attend to the mode by which, according to Epicurus, these elementary atoms are united and combined. According to Democritus, and the earlier atomic philosophers, the motions of primary corpuscles were only produced by solidity, weight, or re-action. Every atom was supposed to be intrinsically ponderous, and of course to be constantly descending, and that in a direction perfectly rectilinear. As some atoms, however, were conceived to be larger, and consequently more ponderous than others, it was imagined, that some must move with more velocity than others—that the heavier must overtake the lighter—that they must impinge against each other with considerable force—and that a new species of motion would be hereby engendered,—a motion by re-action, as the former was a motion by mere weight. These laws being either essential, or eternally imposed, every thing, it was contended, must arise regularly and necessarily: for the degree of resiliency, produced by the impulse of atom against atom, is a result as certain, and, allowing for the effect of magnitude, and consequent velocity, as calculable, as the measure of distance produced by weight alone. Order, therefore, it was asserted, must be the unavoidable issue of such a combination of facts: and definite results must, in every individual instance, follow, with the certainty of fate, from definite causes.

But, by various experiments, which Epicurus had been fortunate enough to make, it appeared, that although, in dense mediums, bodies of greater solidity, and consequently containing a larger quantity of matter, descended with more velocity than lighter and less solid bodies, yet, where no medium at all existed, and they were surrounded by a pure vacuum, as it was conceived, in space they must
ever be, the velocity of descent was, at all times, equal: and that, of course, in passing through space, the larger or more solid corpuscles could never overtake the lighter. Hence Epicurus was convinced, that, upon this theory, re-action and re-silution must be totally impossible; for, as the primal atoms of matter could never reach each other in a rectilinear course, they could never rebound, and be thrown back into the sphere of action of atoms still behind. And if it were possible to conceive that, from such rectilinear motion alone, the complex bodies of nature could in any way be produced, (a motion that is perpetually fixed and unchangeable in its operation,) then must there be, in every instance, a fixed necessity imposed, not only upon the facts, and events of matter in general, but also upon the thoughts, volitions, and actions of intelligent beings; the soul itself being, upon their hypothesis, as truly and essentially material as the exterior world around it; which moral necessity the atomists, in general, did not chuse to admit.

To remedy these defects and inconsistencies, to avail himself of the advantages of the motion by re-action, and to preserve to the soul the power of moral liberty, Epicurus conceived a third species of motion; and maintained, as will be found in the sequel of the present Book, that material atoms did not perpetually descend in a direction strictly rectilinear, but occasionally oscillated, the time and place being alike uncertain, from a direct line, though in the smallest degree possible: hereby bestowing a motion upon them, in no small degree, similar to the oscillations of the magnetic needle. And his motive for conceiving this oscillation to be so extremely minute, producing, as Lucretius observes, a declination from a right line, but not an obliquity, was, that otherwise he would have been opposed by palpable, or at least, ostensible facts: for every thing that descends, appears to the eye to descend in a line perfectly direct: the deviation or curvilinear motion was, therefore, supposed by Epicurus to be so minute, as altogether to elude the power of vision. This additional motion to the system of Democritus is thus noticed by Plutarch, and by him ascribed solely to Epicurus: ἀπεικόστα, ἐγένετο τῇ κινήσει, τῷ κατὰ πλαγίαν ἐπίσημον Ἐπικούροις, δόε τῷ κυνήσει τὸ κατὰ σταθμῆν καὶ τὰ παράκλητα. Plac. Phil. i. 23.

By this hypothesis, undoubtedly, its author was able to account, in a much more specious manner than any who had preceded him, for the motion of material atoms by re-action; but it does not, in any respect, appear calculated to solve the difficulties concerning moral liberty, nor to administer to the mind a greater degree of freedom than nature is found to possess in any other department. For, if the times and places in which primal seeds could decline from a right line were, as Epicurus declared they were, ever and alike uncertain, then must every event around us, as well as every thought within us, be altogether, and alike, contingent. If, on the contrary, we remove the uncertainty, then must the same necessity occur, which this addition is intended to remove. Independently of which, the addition itself was at best but a conjecture, and a conjecture which the constant succession of facts rather controverted than supported: for, as Lucretius himself acknowledges, bodies never appear to the sight to move otherwise than in a rectilinear direction. On both these accounts, this hypothesis of Epicurus was opposed with much violence, and certainly with some success, by the immaterialists of the Stoic and Platonic schools.

Among these antagonists Cicero appears to have been one of its most formidable opponents; and, from the friendship which subsisted between himself and Lucretius, no man can be conceived to have heard more urged in its favour than the former. His books on "the Nature of the Gods," and "on Fate," are filled with arguments subversive of the Epicurean theory. "What," observes he, "can be the cause of such a declination, and why is not such cause assigned? If the rectilinear motion of material atoms springs from gravity, why has not Epicurus told us by what means other atoms are freed from this common bond? Have they cast lots among themselves, or by what other means have they mu-
Expediam: tu te dictis præbere memento.

Nam certe non inter se stipata cohaeret Materies; quoniam minui rem quamque videmus, Et quasi longinquus fluere omnia cernimus ævo, Ex oculisque vetustatem subducere nostris; Quom tamen incolomis videatur summa manere; Propterea, quia, quæ decedunt corpora quoique, Unde abeunt, minuunt; quo venere, augmine donant:
illa senescere, at hac contra florescere, cogunt.
Nec remorantur ibei; sic rerum summa novatur Semper, et inter se mortales mutua vivunt:
Augescunt alia gentes, alia minuantur;
Inque brevi spatio mutantur secla animantum,
Et, quasi cursores, vitaæ lampada tradunt.

Exceedingly determined which atoms shall decline, and which shall persevere? And why, if they decline at all, may not the declination be several degrees removed from a right line, as well as the minutest degree imaginable? How, too, does it appear, if there be any necessity in nature for such declination, that the same necessity does not equally prevail among the declining as among the rectilinear atoms, in which case all the advantage of the hypothesis is destroyed in a moment?" These arguments of Cicero, and which Lucretius endeavours to combat, have from time to time been copied and re-advanced by every modern philosopher, who has entered the lists against the disciples of the atomic school of Epicurus: and they may be traced most fully, and triumphantly displayed, in the Anti-Lucretius of the Cardinal Polignac, and the "Creation" of our own countryman, Sir Richard Blackmore.

The most able supporter of the atomic school, in modern times, was Gassendi;—and, sensible of the weakness of this doctrine of an oscillation of atoms, and the curvilinear motion which depended upon it, at the same time convinced of the necessity of some free and uncontrolled action in nature, whence the mind obtains that moral liberty of which it appears conscious—he discarded the invention altogether—and contended, agreeably to the old hypothesis of Democritus, that moral spontaneity was obtained from the difference of velocity with which material atoms descended; a difference which, in a vast variety of cases, was altogether indefinite, and anomalous. Gassendi was supported in the re-advancement
Benign attend, while thus the muse explains.

Doubtless no substance boasts a bond within
Indissoluble, since each gradual wastes,
And, in the lapse of time, flies off entire,
By age o'erpower'd. Yet the great mass of things
Still meets the view uninjur'd, from the stores
Sustain'd of primal atoms. These, as oft
Their punctual flight they take, each form decrease,
And, as they join, augment: hence things attain
Their growth mature, and thence their sure decay.
Thus, void of rest, the changeful world renewes,
And man on man lives mutual; nations thus
Flourish, or fade; a few brief years roll round,
And sire to son, through ev'ry reasoning rank,
Yields, like a racer o'er the busy course,
His lamp of life, and instant disappears.

of this hypothesis by the entire system of Des Cartes, while that of Sir Isaac Newton was completely in opposition to him, which, in strict consonance with the doctrine of Epicurus, regarded all matter whatever as equally affected by gravity, and as falling with equal velocity in a vacuum: an opinion which has since been unequivocally confirmed by experiments with the air-pump. In consequence of this opposition, and of the growing reputation of the Newtonian theory, Gassendi does not appear to have drawn many philosophers into his own system; and the generality of materialists are now rather disposed to admit of an equal constraint existing in the operations of body and mind, than to fatigue themselves with searching farther for any occult cause of discrepancy.

It becomes me to state, before I close this note, that, excepting this single conjecture of the declination of atoms, the doctrines, maintained and illustrated in the book before us, are erected upon the most solid reasoning, and confirmed by the assent and experiments of the sagest philosophers of modern times. It is, as I have before observed, the system of Sir Isaac Newton himself; and the arguments advanced are those with which he combated the hypothesis of Des Cartes. We cannot but be astonished at the force and perspicuity with which they are urged, and the extent of philosophic knowledge they evince.

Ver. 81. *Yields, like a racer o'er the busy course,*  
*His lamp of life,*—[The poet, in this passage, alludes to the torch-games, instituted in honour of Vulcan, and of which a particular account is given*
Si cessare putas rerum primordia posse,
Cessandoque novos rerum progignere motus;  
Avius a verâ longe ratione vagaris.
Nam, quoniam per inane vagantur, cuncta necesse est
Aut gravitate suâ ferri primordia rerum,
Aut ictu forte alterius: nam, concita, saepe,
Obvia quom flīxere, fit, ut diversa repente
Dissiliant: neque enim mirum, durissima quae sint,
Ponderibus solidis, neque quidquam a tergo ibus obstet.
Et, quo jactari magis omnia materiaë
Corpora pervideas, reminiscere, totius imum
Nihil esse in summâ; neque habere, ubi corpora prima
Consistant: quoniam spatium sine fine modoque est,

by Pausanias, as also by the scholiast on Aristophanes, in his comedy of "the Frogs." The dexterity of the contest consisted in keeping the lamp or torch burning, during the rapidity evinced by the different candidates in running. He who first reached the goal with his lamp burning, was proclaimed victor; and the rest successively resigned their lamps to him in the order in which they arrived, as so many trophies acquired in the competition. Plato has an allusion to the same public sports, in his treatise de Legibus, Γυναικες και εκτρεποντες τοιαδες, καθαπτε λαμποδα
τοι βουει εκπεταδωτες αλλοι ει αλλως " engendering and rearing children, and in this manner delivering down life, as a lamp, from man to man."

The former part of this passage, which is designed to prove the existence of a perpetual motion in material atoms, although this motion be not always conspicuous, is well imitated by Ovid, in his Metamorphoses:

Rerumque novatrix
Ex aliis alias reparat natura figuras:
Nec peric in tanto quicquam, mihi credite, mundo,
Sed variat, faciemque novat. Met. 15. v. 252.

for nature knows
No steadfast station, but or ebbs, or flows;
Ever in motion, she destroys her old,
And casts new figures in another mould. Dryden.

The melancholy muse of Young has expressed the same idea in terms so appropriate, but at the same time so totally different, that I shall take the liberty of quoting his description for a comparison with those of Lucretius and Ovid:

Where is the dust that has not been alive?
The spade, the plough disturb our ancestors;
Who deems primordial atoms e’er can rest,
And, resting, urge through matter motion still,
Far wanders from the truth. Primordial seeds
Through space unfathom’d as their flight they wing,
From their own gravitating pow’r must pass,
Or blows extrinsic; each o’er each, alike,
Casual prevails: for oft the mass of seeds
That prone descends, with seeds repugnant meet
In contest tough, and distant far rebound.
Nor wondrous this, of firmest texture form’d,
And nought t’ obstruct the retro-cursive flight.
And though thou trace the seeds unequal heap’d
Of primal matter, still, reflect, th’ entire
Knows nought of bottom, nought of spot profound
Where they may rest collected: space throughout

From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth’s hollow surface shakes,
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.

Ver. 82. — lamp of life, — ] The phrase is strictly oriental. Thus, Sam. II. xx. 17. “Thou shalt no more accompany us to battle, lest thou quench the lamp of Israel.” So Luke ii. 32. “A light to illumine the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” So the sentimental Sadi, in his “Book of Apothegms”:

No light to him his lamp of life shall yield,
Who learns the liar’s subtle arms to wield.
In the following verses, Polignac has borrowed, but not expanded the idea:

Semina, caelestique evanuit habitus aure.

Anti-Lucr. v. 966.
The flaming seeds of life were quench’d in death;
And heaven’s own spirit vanish’d with the breath.

Ver. 85. — Primordial seeds —
From their own gravitating pow’r must pass,
Or blows extrinsic: — ] The poet here enumerates the two first modes of motion common to material atoms, and admitted by Epicurus, of which a more particular account has already been given in note on ver. 63 of this book.
Inmensumque patere in cunctas undique parteis
Pluribus obtendit; certâ et ratione probatum est.
Quod quoniam constat, nimirum nulla quies est
Reddita corporibus primis per inane profundum;
Sed magis, adsiduo varioque exercita motu,
Partim intervallis magnis conflicta resultant,
Pars etiam brevibus spatiis nexantur ab ictu.
Et, quæquamque, magis condenso conciliatu,
Exiguis intervallis, convecta resultant,
Indupedita suis perplexis ipsa figuris;
Hæc validas saxi radices, et fera ferri
Corpora constituunt, et cætera de genere horum
Paucula: quæ porro magnum per inane vagantur,
Cætera dissiliunt longe, longeque recursant,
In magnis intervallis; hæc aëra rarum
Subficiunt nobis, et splendidà lumina solis.
Multaque præterea magnum per inane vagantur,
Conciliis rerum quæ sunt rejecta, nec usquam
Consociare etiam coitus potuere recepta:
Quoius, utei memoro, rei simulacrum, et imago,
Ante oculos semper nobis vorsatur, et instat.
Contemplator enim, quom solis lumina quomque

Ver. 117. Not unresembling, if aright I deem,
Those motes minute that, when th' obtrusive sun
For this comparison, the Epicureans are totally indebted to the atomic schools of Democritus and Leucippus, who, as Aristotle informs us, in a passage quoted by Lambinus, illustrate these anomalous
Boundless exists, as, in our earlier verse,
Decisive prov’d, on ev’ry side immense.

Hence, then, primordial seeds through space profound
Boundless exists, as, in our earlier verse,
Decisive prov’d, on ev’ry side immense.

Hence, then, primordial seeds through space profound Repose can never know: but rather, urg’d To ceaseless motions, varying and adverse, By the rude conflict part far off rebound, And part with speed unite, the sev’ring blow Surmounted soon. Hence those, through trivial space Briefly repell’d, the vig’rous bond scarce broke, With quick reunion intertwining strong, Form the rude base of flints, and rigid steel, And matters firm alike: while those, beyond Far wand’ring through the void, of feeble link Mutual possest, the liquid air create, And the pure light the sun perpetual pours.

Nor these the whole compose. For seeds there are That through the boundless void for ever stray, Of social bond abhorrent, and in turn Refus’d all compact in the frame of things: Not unresembling, if aright I deem, Those motes minute that, when th’ obtrusive sun

atoms by the express simile of motes meandering in the air, and visible in the sun-beams, when they dart through some crevice into a darkened chamber.

Vol. I.
Insertei fundunt radiei per opaca domorum:
Multa minuta, modis multis, per inane videbis
Corpora misceri, radiorum lumine in ipso;
Et, velut æterno certamine, prœlia pugnasque
Edere, turmatim certantia; nec dare pausam,
Conciliis et discidiis exercita crebris:
Conjicere ut possis ex hoc, primordia rerum,
Quale sit, in magno jactari semper inani;
Dum taxat rerum magnarum parva potest res
Exemplare dare, et vestigia notitiai.
Hoc etiam magis hæc animum te advortere par est
Corpora, quæ in solis radiis turbare videntur;
Quod tales turbae motus quoque materiai
Significant clandestinos cæcosque subesse.
Multa videbis enim plagis ibi percita cæcis.

omits the idea of a darkened room, into which only a
single beam of light can pass at a time through a
crevise in the shutter:

quom solis lumina quomque
Insertei fundunt radios per opaca domorum.

"Le soleil," says the Baron, in his version, "ce
me semble, en fournit une image assez vrai-sembla-
ble; lorsque sa lumiere penetre dans les maisons,
yous y voyez par le voide, une infinité de petits
corps," &c.

Ver. 122. There may'st thou view them, now in
crowds combine,"]

So Dante, closely and elegantly copying our poet:
Coa si veggion qui diritte e torte,
Veloci e tarde, rinovando vista,
Le minuzie de' corpi lunghe e corte
Muoversi per lo raggio, onde si lista
Tal volta l'ombra, che per sua difesa
La gente con ingegno ed arte acquista.
So, brisk, and tardy, in fantastic ring,
Their giddy flight the mazy atoms wing,
That on the sun-beam sport, whose lucid
braid
Peeps, not unfrequent, through the shutter'd
shade;
Peeps through some crevice in the shutter'd shade,
The day-dark hall illumining, float amain
In his bright beam, and wage eternal war.
There may'st thou view them, now in crowds combine,
Now part discordant, o'er the restless scene
Urging the pigmy battle; and may'st hence
Learn what vast contests oft mid primal seeds,
Ceaseless, prevail, through boundless space propell'd.
Thus things minute instruct us, and unfold
The laws, at times, of things momentous most.

Such motes, moreo'er, and let the sage remark
Impress thy judgment, agitated thus
In the pure sun-beam, from the strife alone
Prove, in their primal seeds, some motion lurks
Unseen, and secret, whence the pigmy mass
Draws motion first. For oft the curious eye
Sees the light goss, by viewless force subdu'd,

That, with nice finger, rears dedalian art
To skreen the temples from its radiant dart.
The reader, acquainted with the Minstrel, cannot
but be reminded, in this place, of Beattie's fanciful
and picturesque description of the dance of the
warrior fairies, as represented to Edwin in his
dream:
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enliv'ning strains provoke the
dance;
They meet, they dart away, they wheel
askance;
To right, to left, they thr'd the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vig'rous spring, then
glance
Rapid along.
So Thomson, describing the busy flight of in-
sects:
Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand
ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolv'd,
The quiv'ring nations sport; till, tempest-
wing'd,
Fierce Winter sweeps them from the face of day.

SUMMER, 342.
Conmutare viam, retroque repulsa revorti,
Nunc huc, nunc illuc, in cunctas undique parteis.
Scilicet hic’ a principiis est omnibus error:
Prima moventur enim per se primordia rerum;
Inde ea, quae parvo sunt corpora conciliatu,
Et quasi proxima sunt ad vireis principiorum,
Ictibus illorum caecis impulsa, cientur;
Ipsaque, quae porro paullo majora, lassunt.
Sic a principiis adscendit motus, et exit
Paullatim nostros ad sensus; ut moveantur
Ilia quoque, in solis quae lumine cernere quimus;
Nec quibus id faciant plagis adparet aperte.

Nunc, quae mobilitas sit reddita materiai
Corporibus, paucis licet hinc cognoscere, Memmi.
Primum, Aurora novo quom spargit lumine terras,
Et variæ volucres, nemora avia pervolitantes
Æra per tenerum, liquidis loca vocibus obplent;
Quam subito soleat sol ortus tempore tali

Ver. 149. *When first Aurora, o'er the dewy earth,*
This beautiful picture of the day-spring has been
closely imitated by Virgil, who has, at the same
time, added a few additional touches of the pencil,
more accurately to discriminate the precise situation
of his hero at the moment:

appequaque varia circumque supraque
Æsute ripis volucres et fluminis alveo
Æthera mulierbat cantu, lucque volabant.

Now burns the main—along the saffron skies,
In roses deck’d, Aurora’s chariot flies:—
From brooks and groves a thousand songsters spring,
All ether charming with the strains they sing.

Ver. 150. *through the pathless grove
A thousand songsters ope their liquid throats,
All ether charming —*]
To the same effect,
Spenser;

Now burns the main—along the saffron skies,
In roses deck’d, Aurora’s chariot flies:—
From brooks and groves a thousand songsters spring,
All ether charming with the strains they sing.

Fairy Queen.
Turn from the path selected, backwards urg'd,
Now here, now there, through ev'ry point propell'd.
Such the perplexing power of primal seeds.

From seeds all motion springs; by impulse hence
Through molecules minute of seeds conjoin'd,
Nearest in power, protruded, though unseen.
Hence urg'd again, in turn, through things create
Of ampler form, till soon the sense itself
The congregated action marks distinct.
As in the lucid beam's light woof we trace
Still motion visual, though unseen its source.

Nor small the motive power of primal seeds.
This, Memmius, should'st thou doubt, we thus confirm:
When first Aurora, o'er the dewy earth,
Spreads her soft light, and through the pathless grove
A thousand songsters ope their liquid throats,
All ether charming—sudden we survey:

Ver. 152. —sudden we survey
Th' effusive sun, as with a garment, deck
With his own radiance, all created things;] So
Ps. civ. 1. 2.
With glory and majesty art thou clothed;
Thou art covered with light as with a garment.
This parallelism of imagery between the Hebrew
and the Roman bard, is as striking, as the imagery
itself is bold and appropriate.
It is thus imitated by Milton, in his address to
Light:

Before the sun thou wast; and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world. Par. Lost, ii. 8.
Thomson has a similar invocation, and composed
of similar imagery:
Prime cheerer Light!
Of all material beings first and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty, all were wrapt
In unessential gloom!

Summer, 90.
Convestire sua perfundens omnia luce,
Omnibus in promptu manifestumque esse videmus.
At vapor is, quem sol mittit, lumenque serenum,
Non per inane meat vacuum; quo tardius ire
Cogitur, aérias quod sic dixerberet undas:
Nec singillatim corpuscula quæque, vaporens,
Sed complexa, meant inter se, conque globata:
Quapropter simul inter se retrahuntur; et extra
Obficiuntur, utei cogantur tardius ire.

At, quæ sunt solidâ primordia simplicitate,
Quom per inane meant vacuum, nec res remorae fit
Ulla foris, atque ipsa, suis e partibus unum,
Unum in quem coepere, locum connixa feruntur;
Debent nimirum præcellere mobilitate,
Et multo citius ferri, quam lumina solis;

Perfectly accordant is the following splendid description of Klopstock, in his Messias:

—Hier füllen nur sonnen den umkreis;
Und, gleich ein hülls gewobt aus strahlen des urlichts,
Zieht sich ihr glanz um den himmel herum. Ges. i.
Here only suns the vast horizon fill;
Whose intermingling beams a robe of light
Weave that enwraps the bright expanse of heaven.

Not foreign to the same elegant figure, is the following of Tarafa, an Arabian poet, in his Albecriyyo,
one of the seven metrical effusions which were suspended in golden characters in the temple of Mecca.
He is describing the fair maid, of whom he was enamoured. I copy from Sir William Jones, "Her face appears to be wrapped in a veil of sun-beams; unblemished is her complexion, and her skin without a wrinkle."

Wawejhin câmmâ alshemsâ hhallat ridâahâ

Ver. 155. Instant in speed, unbounded in his blaze.] This inimitable description of the rapidity of light, is thus glanced at by Cowley, in his celebrated Hymn to the same power:

Swift as light thoughts their empty career run—
Thy race is finished when begun.

And so exact is this idea, to what was meant to be conveyed by Lucretius, that Creech, in his version of the Nature of Things, has thought he could not do better than copy the latter line verbally: accordingly, he has given us for his translation,

How swift the beams of the bright rising sun
Shoot forth! their race is finished when begun.
Th' effusive sun, as with a garment, deck
With his own radiance, all created things;
Instant in speed, unbounded in his blaze.

But the bright fluid, the pure stream he throws,
Flows not without resistance; many a wave,
Through space profound, ethereal checks its flight;
And many a self-engender'd power perverse,
Rear'd from its complex frame: perpetual hence
Lags the light fluid, doom'd to double strife.

But primal atoms, firm and solid sole
From pure simplicity, when through void space
Free and uncheck'd their easy course they wing,
One in themselves, at once their goal attain.

Hence than the rapid light more rapid still

Sir Richard Blackmore has likewise attempted an imitation of the same passage; but he is much more feeble than Cowley:

How soon the sun-beams at the morning's birth
Leap down from heaven, and light upon the earth!
Prodigious flight! they in few moments pass
The vast ethereal interposing space. "Creat. b. iv.
I have said, that these verses of Lucretius are imitable: perhaps the following are the nearest that approach them:

See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day!

Pope's "Mess."

Ver. 166. Hence than the rapid light more rapid still
Rush they,—] It was not possible for Lucretius to have selected a more pertinent illustration of the speed with which the minutest atoms of matter may move, than by referring us to the phenomenon of light: the particles of which, although inconceivably minute, bear, however, no imaginable proportion, in point of subtlety, to these primal corpuscles. By referring us, moreover, to an acknowledged fact, he gains this additional advantage—that we must admit it to be possible for myriads of bodies to be moving, with incalculable velocity, around us, although we be not apprized of such motion, or even of their existence, by any of the senses we possess. Aristotle, and his followers, denied this corporeity of light, and of course, that it had any velocity, or could possibly move in time or space. See his treatise, De Anima, l. ii. And Frachetta, the Italian expositor of Lucretius, who had imbibed all the doctrines of the Peripatetic school, and was rivetted to
Multiplexque loci spatium transcurrere eodem Tempore, quo solis pervolgant fulgura cœlum:
Nam neque consilio debent tardata morari,
Nec persectari primordia singula quàque,
Ut videant, quà quidque geratur cum ratione.
At queidam contra hæc, ignarei, materiaí
Naturam non posse, deûm sine numine, reddi
Tanto opere humanis rationibus admoderare;
Tempora mutare annorum, frugesque creare;
Et jam cætera, mortales quæ suadet adire,
Ipsaque deducit, dux vitæ, dia Voluptas,
Rush they, in equal hour through ampler space
Urg'd, than the beams that gild the glowing vault.
No pause for council need they, no delay,
Nor deep research to sever right from wrong,
Or prove what path their duty bids pursue.

Yet some there are, untaught, who dare contend
Primordial matter ne'er without the gods
Thus, in nice symmetry, to please mankind,
Could form th' alternate seasons, rear the fruits
That gladden life, or urge those gentler joys,
Gay Pleasure, guide, and goddess of the world,

calculation; and that when the earth is nearly in the
opposite point of her orbit, the eclipse uniformly
appears to take place about eight minutes later than
the tables predict them. Hence, it was fairly re-
solved, that the rays of light consist of small cor-
cpuscles, not acting instantaneously, but requiring
about 16½ minutes to fly through a space equal to the
diameter of the earth's orbit; and that this, amount-
ing to at least 190 millions of miles, the particles of
light move at the inconceivable rate of eleven mil-
ions of miles in a minute, which is nearly a million
times swifter than a cannon ball.

Allowing the materiality of light, it is not foreign
to our purpose, in this place, to notice the incom-
prehensibly small corpuscles of which it is composed.
I shall therefore just state, that from many accurate
experiments, Dr. Nieuwenhuijs has computed, that an
inch of candle, when converted into light, becomes
divided into 269,617,130 parts, with 49 zeros, or
ciphers annexed: at which rate, there must issue
out of it, when burning, 418,663, with 39 ciphers
more, particles in a second of a minute; which is
vastly more than a thousand times a thousand million
times the number of sands the whole earth can con-
tain, reckoning ten inches to one foot, and that 100
sands are equal to one inch. I have added this ob-
ervation on the minuteness of the particles of light,
to give some faint idea of the inconceivably smaller
dimensions of the primal particles of matter; since,
according to the Epicurean doctrine, every corpuscle
of light is a body compounded of a large number of
such particles.

Ver. 172. Yet some there are, untaught, who dare contend] The poet here alludes, both to the
Stoic system, and the popular theology: the former
of which maintained, that the world itself was a di-
vine and intelligent being; and the latter, that it was
the production of the gross and feeble gods, that were
worshipped by the people at large.

Ver. 177. Gay Pleasure, guide, and goddess of the
world.] Much unjust obloquy has been thrown
on our author, and the entire sect of Epicurus,
from an ill-founded idea, that the whole of their phi-
losophy consisted in carnal pleasures and indulgences.
This idea I have already controverted, in the note on
ver. 16, of this book. The assertion, contained in
the verse before us, that "Pleasure is the guide,
and goddess of the world," was never meant by our

Vol. I.
Ut res per Veneris blanditim secla propagent,
Ne genus obcidat humanum: quorum omnia caussâ
Constituisse deos quem fingunt omnibus rebus,
Magno opere a verâ labsei ratione videntur.
Nam, quam vis rerum ignorem primordia, quæ sint,
Hoc tamen ex ipsis coeli rationibus ausim
Confirmare, aliisque ex rebus reddere multis,

poet to be applied, in the present instance, to his own sect, but is merely employed as an apophthegm of universal admission and incontroversial truth. Creeceh, however, in his Latin edition of the present poem, is of a contrary opinion, and condemns the dogma, thus advanced, as pregnant with audacity and impiety (audacter et impie affirmat, &c.) But what then, it may be asked, is the uninterrupted object of all human pursuits, if it be not pleasure or happiness? For what other end do mankind either engage in toil, or desist from it altogether? Why, else, do they either cling to life, or free themselves from it by suicide? Why, but from a hope of obtaining some degree, at least, of comparative ease or happiness, or pleasure, or under whatever other title may be ranked

That something, which still prompts th' eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live, or dare to die?

That the uniform and perpetual pursuit of man is pleasure, is a truth which, if duly considered, cannot but be acknowledged by the severest moralist, and the most gloomy enthusiast. Young, in his "Night Thoughts," therefore, is not more poetical than accurate, when he asserts, that

Pleasure's the mistress of th' eternal powers;
For her contend the rival gods above.
Pleasure's the mistress of the world below:
How would all stagnate, but for Pleasure's ray!

How would the frozen stream of action cease!—
The foes of Epicurus all were fools.

If it be observed, that pleasures vary to infinitude in their kinds and objects; and that, while some may be pure and praise-worthy, others, most certainly, are vile and contemptible—I admit the fact. It is, however, still universally true, that the pursuit of all mankind is pleasure; and it is equally true, that the peculiar species of pleasure encouraged by our poet is, in every respect, consistent with virtue, and the dignity of man. In the present instance, the pleasure immediately referred to by him, is love, or sexual affection: but surely, it is possible to refer to a passion thus universally seated in the heart of every created being, without incurring the charge either of impiety or impurity. Lucretius, as a poet, deifies this passion, following the example of every poet who preceded him. D'Avenant, in his Gondibert, does the same: and where is the harm in representing the virtuous and temperate soldiers of this prince as yielding to the force of Love, when, in the form of Beauty, they beheld her pass by with her virgin-train? These are his words:

They vayled their ensigns as it by did move,
Whilst inward, as from native conscience, all
Worshipped the poet's darling goddess Love,
Which grave philosophers did Nature call.

Gondibert, Cant. i.

Ver. 182. For, though the rise of things I ne'er could prove,] This passage of our poet, Sir Richard Blackmore has first translated, and then attempted to answer:

"If I were doubtful of the source and spring
"Whence things arise, I from the skies could bring,
Book II.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Prompts in the panting breast, lest every tribe
Should fail on earth, the rites of Venus spurn'd.
These from the gods, as sovereign cause of all,
Such sophists trace, wide wand'ring from the truth.
For, though the rise of things I ne'er could prove,
Yet dare I, from the heaven's defective frame,
And many a scene alike perverse, affirm

"And every part of nature, proofs to shew
"The world to gods cannot its being owe;
"So full of faults is all th' unartful frame."—
Thus impotent in sense, though strong in rage
The daring Roman does the gods engage.

Creation.

But Sir Richard has totally mistaken the meaning
of this "daring Roman:" which, indeed, is not
very extraordinary, for almost all the commentators
have done the same. Far from attacking the eternal
intelligence and first cause of all things, in con-
sequence of the moral and physical evils of the world,
he accounts for them briefly here, and more fully in
the 5th book, by advert to the nature of matter
itself. This, the Epicureans, in common with all the
other Greek philosophers, conceived to have been
eternal, and uncreated. By its very nature, it is
subject to mutability in all its concrete forms; and
from its incessant changes, decompositions, and re-
combinations, proceed all the evils we meet with in
the world. But the intelligent First Cause, not hav-
ing created matter, of course could not alter its es-
sential tendencies; he could only endure it with cer-
tain powers of motion of which it was susceptible,
and thus benevolently draw forth its inactive cor-
puses into forms of action and utility, of real,
though not of uninterrupted happiness. But had
this supreme intelligence created matter himself, it
would not, conjectures our poet, have exhibited the
evils it exhibits at present. I am confident, there-
fore, adds he, that the intelligent First Cause could
not have created it, and I know whence these evils

proceed: were I, however, ignorant of this, and had
formed no opinion upon subjects of cosmogony,
Yet dare I from the heaven's defective frame,
And many a scene alike perverse, affirm
No power divine this mass material rear'd
With ills so pregnant.

The contrary, as is well known, was generally
maintained: for the multitude attributed the abso-
lute creation of all things to the operation of some
one or more of their own absurd and inconsistent
gods: while, as I have already observed, the Stoic
and Platonic philosophers contended, that the world
itself was a god, or divine being, endowed with intel-
ligence, and existing from all eternity. Here, in-
deed, if I mistake not, we meet with much impiety
and much absurdity; and it is against these absurd
and impious opinions Lucretius levels his attack.

The origin of moral evil is very unsatisfactorily re-
solved upon every hypothesis: but the eternity of
matter accounts for it far more explicitly than any
other system asserted in ancient times, either in
Greece or Rome. Happiest he, however, even
among ourselves, who resigns this intricate subject
altogether; and, returning with suitable modesty to
the paths of common life, directs his views towards a
future state for a full explanation of difficulties which,
even at present, he cannot surmount. But as the
most solid, if not the only, proofs of a future state
are deducible from Christianity, the whole, or the
greater part of them, could not possibly have been
known, either to the Grecian sage or Roman poet.
See note on book ii. ver. 1100.
Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse creatam
Naturam mundi: quamquam hæc sint prædita culpâ;
Quæ tibi posterius, Memmi, faciemus aperta:
Nunc id, quod super est, de motibus expediemus.

Nunc locus est, ut opinor; in hiis illud quoque rebus
Confirmare tibi; nullam rem posse suâ vi
Corpoream sursum ferri, sursumque meare.
Nec tibi dent in eo flammârum corpora fraudem;
Sursus enim versus gignuntur, et augmina sumunt:
Et sursum nitidæ fruges, arbustaque, crescunt:
Pondera, quantum in se est, quom deorsum cuncta ferantur.
Nec, quom subsiliunt ignes ad tecta domorum,
Et celeri flammâ degustant tigna, trabeisque,
Sponte suâ facere id sine vi subicente putandum est:
Quod genus, e nostro quom missus corpore, sanguis
Emicat, exsultans alte, spargitque cruorem.
Nonne vides etiam, quantâ vi tigna, trabeisque,

*Ver. 186. —* *This, in order dæ, &c.*] Our poet makes good this promise in book v. ver. 206, where he reverts to this subject, and commences it with the four preceding verses.

*Ver. 192.* *Nor let th' aspiring flame, with specious boast,*
*Heedless deceive thee.*——*] The admirer of Cowley will be here reminded of the following couplet:
Go, bid the stones a journey upwards make;
Go, bid th' ambitious flame no more ascend.

*Ver. 204.* *And springs not thus the pond'rous trunk* inners’d*] It is curious to observe how the same facts are sometimes recurred to by philosophers embracing opposite systems, in proof of the truth of the systems that thus differ. The very phenomenon Lucretius has here adverted to in explication of his own theory, Polignac has copied, to demonstrate Des Cartes' hypothesis of a plenum:
No power divine this mass material rear'd
With ills so pregnant. This, in order due,
The muse shall full demonstrate: turn we now
To what of motion yet remains unsung.

And here, O Memmius! mark this precept well;
That nought corporeal, of itself, can e'er
Ascend sublime through regions urg'd above.
Nor let th' aspiring flame, with specious boast,
Heedless deceive thee. True, with upward flight,
E'en from the first, its spreading spires unfold;
And fruits, and plants their growth still upwards urge.
Yet as the weight by all possest, below
Drives all things, deem not thou, when the bright blaze
Flames through th' affrighted house, the crackling roof
Tumbling precipitate, then deem not thou
It mounts spontaneous but from foreign force.
Thus, from the wounded vein, the vital blood
Ascends, and pours its purple strength sublime:
And springs not thus the pond'rous trunk immers'd

Injice suber aquis immergens, injice ligna;
Ligna petent summum valido connisa natatu,
Prosiliet superas celeri impetu suber ad undas.
Causa rei quenam est? nimirum liquor aquas
Fertur in ima magis quam lignum aut futile
suber:
Libraren simul omne petit; depulsaque quantum
Unde suâ superat gravitate hae corpora, tantum
Debilitant liquidam, cui sunt commissa column-

lib. 4.

Plunge cork, plunge timber through th' elastic
wave:
Back bounds the timber, resolute to swim,
While the light cork, still loftier, tops the
tide!
Whence this effect? hence clearly, that the wave
Is urg'd still deeper than the cork or trunk;
That all things claim their level; and that, hence,
As much as o'er such buoyant forms the stream
Triumphs in weight, themselves the stream divide.
Respuat humor aquae? Non, quo magis ursimus altum
Directa, et magnâ vi multei pressimus aegre,
Tam cupide sursum revomit magis, atque remittit;
Plus ut parte foras emergant, exsiliantque?

Nec tamen hæc, quantum est in se, dubitamus, opinor,
Quin vacuum per inane deorsum cuncta ferantur,
Sic igitur debent flamæ quoque posse per aras
Aëris, expressæ sursum, subcedere, quamquam
Pondera, quantum in se est, deorsum deducere pugnent.

Nocturnasque faceis, coeli sublime volanteis,
Nonne vides longos flammarum ducere tractus,
In quasquam dedit parteis natura meatum?
Non cadere in terrâ stellas, et sidera, cernis?
Sol etiam summo de vortice dissupat omnis
Ardorem in parteis, et lumine conserit arva;

Ver. 212. — Falls not, at night,
The mimic star, the meteor trailing long
Its line of fire, &c.——] This beautiful pas-
sage of our poet has not been passed by heedlessly
by Virgil or Manilius, both of whom have intro-
duced a close imitation of it into their respective
poems. In the Georgics of the former, we therefore
read,

Sepè etiam stellas, vento impendente, videbis
Præcipites cordo labi, noctisque per umbra
Flammærum longos à tergo albescere tractus.

lib. i.

The seeming stars fall headlong from the skies,
And shoot athwart the darkness of the night,
With sweeping glories, and long trails of light.

Dryden.

To the same effect, we meet with, in Manlius,

Præcipites stellæ passimque volare videntur
Cum vaga per liquidum scintillant lumina mun-
dum,
Et tenuem longis jaeculantur crinibus ignem;
Excurruntque procul, volucres imitata sagittas,
Albida dum gracili tennatur semita filo.

lib. i.

The common editions of this passage of Manilius,
in the last line, for albida read arida. I have tran-
scribed it, with Mr. Wakefield’s very pertinent
emendation, which must, I think, obtain the sanc-
tion of every critic: and is altogether consonant
with the albescere of Virgil, in the passage quoted
above. Thomson has retained the very same image
in his description of the same phenomenon, which,
it is probable, he borrowed from Lucretius or Virgil:

Seen through the turbid fluctuating air,
The stars, obtuse, emit a shiver’d ray;
In the clear stream, rejected by the wave?  
Though deep we plunge it, with redoubled force  
Still back it bounds, and, o'er th' elastic tide,  
Rears half its solid bulk. Yet doubt we not,  
Spite of such facts, that all things, uncontrol'd,  
Through space tend downward. From control alone  
The lambent flame thus mounts, tow'rs heav'n impell'd,  
Else prone from native weight. Falls not, at night,  
The mimic star, the meteor trailing long  
Its line of fire, whene'er, amid the gloom,  
Th' elastic ether opes the needed path?  
The mid-day sun flings down his rays direct  
And sows the fields with light: and the dread flash,  

Or frequent seem to shoot astrewart the gloom,  
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.  
Winter, ver. 126.  
In like manner, Mr. Cumberland, in a passage which forms part of the description of Satan, after his overthrow by our Saviour:  
High in mid-air, swift on the level wing,  
Northward he shoots, and, like a comet, leaves  
Long fiery tracks behind.  

Milton had, long before, employed a similar image to delineate the flight of Uriel. Par. Lost, iv. 555.  
So Escoiquiz, in his Mexico Conquistada, Cant. iv.  
Nightly we see those strange and dreadful stars  
Trail o'er our wretched town their length of fire.  
These meteors were formerly conceived to be exhalations from mineral substances raised into the air by subterranean heat: and philosophers of every age, from the time of Aristotle, have deemed it their duty to investigate, and endeavour to account for their origin, in order to disperse the apprehensions with which they have inspired the vulgar of almost every nation, from Hindustan to Europe and America. The philosophy of modern times, however, has been more fortunate in its researches, than the ancient schools. Beccaria has proved, almost to a certainty, that the falling star is a mere electric phenomenon; and Volta has conjectured, with a high degree of probability, that the meteor, denominated ignis fatuus, or will-o'-the-whisp, is nothing more than an exhalation of hydrogen, or inflammable gas, from the surface of bogs, fens, and other putrescent bodies, conflagrated by the electricity of the atmosphere; most generally, perhaps, by the falling star itself.
In terras igitur quoque solis vergitum arbor.
Transvorsosque volare per imbreis fulmina cernis:
Nunc heic, nunc illic, abrupteii nubibus, ignes
Concursant; cadit in terras vis flammea volgo.

Illud in hiis quoque te rebus cognoscere avemus:
Corpora, quom deorsum rectum, per inane, feruntur,
Ponderibus propriis incerto tempore ferme,
Incertisque locis, spatio depellere paulum:
Tantum, quod minumum mutatum dicere possis.

Quod, nisi declinare solerent, omnia deorsum,
Imbris utei guttae, caderent per inane profundum;

Ver. 217. And sows the fields with light — ] In
the same manner, our unrivalled Milton:
Now morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl.

Par. Lost, b. v. ver. 1.

Gesner has caught the same metaphor, and has
frequently introduced it into his Death of Abel.
Thus, in book 1. Die unstergelhende sonne streute
unausprechlichen glanz lier sie hin. “The
descending sun sowed ineffable lustre all over it.”
The bold, and beautiful language of the Psalmist, con-
tains, in many places, a similar image. Thus, xvii.
11.

Light is sown on the righteous,
And gladness on the upright of heart.
But, perhaps, the most daring use of this figure,
at least in modern times, occurs in the collogues of
Garcilago de la Vega:

Aves! que aqui sembrais vuestras querellas!
Birds! in these woods your soft complaints who sow!

Ver. 217. —and the dread flash,
When thunder rends the skies, though wide it dart,]

Nothing can be more natural or more beautiful
than this short description of a thunder-storm. That
of Thomson, which immediately precedes his episode
of Celadon and Amelia, has been much, and de-
servedly admired. I insert, therefore, the parallel
passage, for a comparison with Lucretius:

Wide rent, the clouds
Pour a whole flood, and yet, its flame unquench’d;
Th’ unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fills the mountains with redoubled rage.

Summer, 1145.

Ercilla is equally natural and picturesque. He
has obviously copied from Lucretius, and with a
masterly hand:

Agua rezia, granizo, piedra espessa
Las intrica das nuves despendian,
Rayos, buenos, relampagos apriessa
Rompen los ciilos y la tierra abrian.

Araucan. Cant. ix.

From clashing clouds their mingl’d torrents gush,
And rain and hail with rival fury rush,
Book II.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.

When thunder rends the skies, though wide it dart,
Now here, now there, amid the rushing rain,
Its forky fires—spends its chief strength on earth.

This, too, regard intent: that primal seeds,
When down direct their potent path they urge,
In time uncertain, and uncertain space,
Oft from the right decline—yet so minute
Veer they, no fancy less can e'er conceive.
Without this devious curve primordial seeds
Would drop successive, like the crystal show'r,

Bolts of loud thunder, floods of lightning rend
Th' opening skies, and into earth descend. Hayley.

Ver. 221. This, too, regard intent: that primal seeds.] The passage answering to this, and the four following verses, and comprizing the same number of lines in the original, is dispatched in two verses alone in Creech's translation, and is of course most incorrectly and unfaithfully rendered. It is given thus:

Now seeds in downward motion must decline,
Though very little from th' exact test line.

He has totally omitted, as his commentator has justly observed, the
—incerto tempore ferme
Incertisque locis—

In time uncertain, and uncertain space
of Lucretius, though an expression of the utmost consequence in the position advanced, and on the imagined truth of which all its advantage depends. The version of Marchetti is far more accurate in this respect;

D'uopo è ch' in tempo incerto, in luogo incerto, &c.
I have already observed, in the note on ver. 63 of the
Vol. I.

present Book that this third, or oscillatory mode of motion, was the entire invention of Epicurus; and was an improvement, as he apprehended, upon the old atomic philosophy, chiefly for the purpose of accounting for the moral liberty of intelligent beings: although he likewise contended, that from such oscillation alone proceeded the greater part of the conjunctions, unions, and adhesions of atoms to atoms; which, if the whole descended in a path strictly rectilinear, could not often take place, and of course the world not exist, as at present. "Deinde," observes Cicero, "ibidem homo acutus cum illud occurreret, si omnia deorum e regione ferrentur, et, ut dixi, ad lineam, nunquam fore ut atomus altera alteram posset attingere: itaque attulit rem commentitiam: declarare dixit atomum perpaulum, quo nihil posset fieri minus. Ita effici copulationes et complexiones et adhesiones atomorum inter se, ex quo effeceretur mundus, omnesque partes mundi, quaeque in eo sunt." Lib. 1. de Fin.—Our poet will apply this theory to the abstruse subject of moral liberty, in the passage commencing at ver. 257, of the present book, as he does to the combination and generation of physical bodies, at ver. 226.
Nec foret obfensus natus, nec plaga creata Principiis; ita nihil umquam natura creasset. Quod, si forte aliquis credit graviora potesse Corpora, quo citius rectum per inane feruntur, Incidere ex supero levioribus, atque ita plagas Gignere, quae possint genitaleis reddere motus; Avius a verâ longe ratione recedit. Nam, per aquas quæquamque cadunt atque aëra deorsum Hæc pro ponderibus casus celerare necesse est: Propterea, quia corpus aquæ naturaque tenuis Aëris haud possunt æque rem quamque morari; Sed citius cedunt, gravioribus exsuperata. At contra nulli, de nullâ parte, neque ullo Tempore, inane potest vacuum subsistere rei; Quin, sua quod natura petit, concedere pergat. Omnia quapropter debent per inane quietum Æque, ponderibus non æquis, concita ferri.

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Ver. 230. If then, there be, who deem the seeds of things] Nothing can be more true to the philosophic facts and experiments of the present day, than the reasoning and observations of our poet, contained in the passage extending from the present to ver. 247. And it is truly astonishing to observe how accurately he has anticipated the gravitation of Newton, and the decisions of Boyle upon the air-pump. It is a palpable error, observes he, to suppose that bodies, falling in a perfect vacuum, differ in the degree of their velocity; such difference proceeding entirely from the variation of the density or tenuity of the medium through which they move, and the solidity of the moving body.—Thus, in the exhausted receiver of an air-pump, a guinea and a feather, one of the heaviest, and one of the lightest bodies we are acquainted with, descend with equal rapidity, or, as our poet most accurately expresses it,

—in equal time

Through the blank void, unequal weights descend Of every fancied variance.

Gravity, observes Sir Isaac Newton, equally affects all bodies, without regard either to their bulk or figure, and exists in proportion to their quantity of matter; so that all bodies consist of matter equally
Void of all contest, all re-active blow,
Whence nature sole her world of wonders works.

If, then, there be, who deem the seeds of things
More pond'rous, as their rectilinear course
Speeds through the void, the lighter soon may reach,
And thus the repercussive war commence,—
Far err they from the truth. For though, when urg'd
Through the pure air, or clear translucent wave,
Doubtless, all pond'rous forms more swift descend;
This, from the variance of resistance sole,
Flows, by such fluids form'd 'gainst things unlike,
The grosser quick-o'erpow'ring. But pure space,
In every part, in every hour the same,
Throughout resists not, the demanded path
Yielding submissive. Hence, in equal time,
Through the blank void, unequal weights descend
Of every fancied variance: and hence, too,
Haud igitur poterunt levioribus incidere umquam
Ex supero graviora, neque ictus gignere per se,
Quoi variant motus, per quos natura gerat res.
Qua re atque re etiam paulum inclinare necesse est
Corpora, nec plus quam minumum; ne fingere motus
Obliquos videamur, et id res vera refutet.

Namque hoc in promptu, manifestumque, esse videmus;
Pondera, quantum in se est, non posse obliqua meare,
Ex supero quom praecipitant, quod cernere possis.
Sed nihil omnino rectâ regione viâ
Declinare, quis est, qui possit cernere, sese
Denique, si semper motus connectitur omnis,
Et veteri exorbit semper novus ordine certo;
Nec decliningo faciunt primordia motûs
Principium quoddam, quod fati fœdera rumpat,
Ex infinito ne caussam caussa sequatur:
Libera per terras unde hæc animantibus exstat,
Unde est hæc, inquam, fatis avolsa, voluntas,

Ver. 242. —whence, resolve,
Flow's through the world this freedom of the mind?
This question may as pertinently be asked in the present day, as in the age of Lucretius: for, although the Epicurean solution of it be very far indeed from satisfactory, and is, in some respects, even puerile, it still remains an undecided and perplexing proposition. Unquestionably, the mind is subject to as regular a chain of motives, volitions, and actions, as the natural world is to that of causes and effects. But to maintain with Bayle, Hume, and Priestley, that the necessity hence accruing is precisely the same, derived from the same source, and operating by the same system of laws, appears contrary both to facts and legitimate ratiocination. There is an argument advanced in Dr. Gregory's Dissertation on this subject, which I do not think has met with all the attention to which it is entitled.—A body placed
The grosser ne'er the lighter urg'd below
Can gain, triumphant; or the contest rouse
Whence spring new motions, and all nature lives.
Hence doubly flows it why the seeds of things
Should from the right decline; yet, in degree,
The least conceptibly, lest we should deem
The line oblique which nature ne'er assumes.
For nought more obvious, as the sight confirms,
Than that all weights, their downward course at will
Steering, obliquely never can descend;
But what keen sight of man can prove precise
That the swift cadence ne'er declines at all?
Had all one motion uniform, the new
Th' anteriour skilful copying, if throughout
Primordial seeds declin'd not, rousing hence
Fresh springs of action, potent to subvert
The bonds of fate, and break the rigid chain
Of cause on cause, eternal,—whence, resolve,
Flows through the world this freedom of the mind?

in a central point, between two powers of equal and opposite attractions, must remain at rest for ever. Allowing these opposite powers to be situate north and south, it may, nevertheless, be propelled east or west; and, in that case, would proceed in a line perfectly direct. But if we change the relative positions of the attracting powers, and place them north and east; and at the same time propel the body from the same central point, it would not proceed either due north or due east, but would mark out a new course for itself immediately between the two points, and so fly off at an angle of 22½ degrees. But no moral instance can be adduced parallel to either of these cases in physics. No proof can be brought of the mind's continuing for ever in a state of total inaction, merely because the motives operating upon it are precisely equal and opposite: nor, while we cannot even imagine that in cases in which the motives, although not
Per quam progredimur, quo ducit quemque voluptas; 
Declinamus item motus, nec tempore certo, 
Nec regione loci certâ, sed uti ipsa tuit mens?
Nam, dubio procul, hiis rebus sua quoique voluntas 
Principium dat; et hinc motus per membra rigantur. 
Nonne vides ctiam, patefactis tempore puncto 
Carceribus, non posse tamen prorumpere equorum 
Vim cupidam tam de subito, quam mens avet ipsa?
Omnis enim totum per corpus materiaî 
Copia conquiri debet, concita per artus 
Omneis, ut studium mentis connexa sequatur: 
Ut videas initum motûs a corde creari, 
Ex animique voluntate id procedere primum; 
Inde dari porro per totum corpus, et artus.

Verm. 270. Dost thou not see, as down the barrier drops
That reins the racer, &c.—]} This beautiful picture of the unquenchable ardour of the race-horse, admirably heightened by the abruptness of the question which presents him immediately before us, is copied from our poet by Virgil in a variety of instances, and is also imitated by Statius.

Thus Georg. i. 512. but more particularly

Nonne vides, quum precipiti certamine campus 
Conripuere, ruunteque, effusi carcere currus?

Dost thou not see, as down the barrier drops, 
How, in rash strife, the rival cars contend 
Swift bursting o'er the plains?
This power to act, though fate the deed forbid,  
Urg'd by the will alone? The free-born mind  
Acts, or forbears, spontaneous; its own time,  
Its place, alike uncertain: these the will,  
Doubtless, alone determines, and, at once,  
Flies the fleet motion through th' assenting frame.  
Dost thou not see, as down the barrier drops  
That reins the racer, instant though he dart,  
Not half so instant darts he as his soul  
Ambitious covets? Deep through all his frame  
Th' elastic nerves must first the wish convey  
Ere yet the consentaneous flight succeed.  
Hence, obvious, springs all motion from the heart,  
Rous'd by the mind's resolve, and instant urg'd  
Through every nerve, through every quiv'ring limb.

Qui dominis, idem ardor equis; face lumina surgunt;  
Ora sonant morsu; spumisque et sanguine, ferrum  
Uririt: impulsi nequeunt obsistere postes,  
Claustraque compressae transsumat anhelitus irae:  
Stare adeo miserum est, percut vestigia mille  
Ante fugam; absenteque ferit gravis ungula campum.


As pants the master, pants alike the horse:  
Flames are his eyes; his champing mouth resounds;  
With blood and foam the bit burns; the strained goal  
In vain opposes, and its smoaking bars.

Rehale the vapour of his smother'd ire.  
So vast the toil to stand! a thousand steps  
Die ere the contest, and his eager hoof  
 Strikes, as though loosen'd, the far distant plain.

There can be little doubt that Pope had this vigorous passage of Lucretius or Statius in his recollection, when he compiled the following verses:

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,  
And, pawing, seems to beat the distant plain;  
Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,  
And, ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.

Windsor Forest.

M. Delille has also imitated this passage successfully in his L'Homme des Champs.
Nec simile est, ut quom, impulsei, procedimus ictu,
Viribus alterius magnis, magnoque coactu;
Nam tum materiem totius corporis omnem
Perspicuum est nobis invitatis ire, rapique,
Donec eam refrenavit per membra voluntas.
Jamne vides igitur, quamquam vis extera multos
Pellat, et invitatos cogat procedere sæpe,
Præcipitesque rapi; tamen esse in pectore nostro
Quiddam, quod contra pugnare, obstareque, possit:
Quoius ad arbitrium quoque copia materiae
Cogitur interdum flecti per membra, per artus;
Et projecta refrenatur, retroque residit?
Quà re, in seminibus quoque idem fateare, necesse est;
Esse aliam, præter plagas et pondera, caussam
Motibus, unde hæc est ollis innata potestas:
De nihilo quoniam fieri nihil posse videmus.
Pondus enim prohibet, ne plagis omnia fiat,
Externè quasi vi: sed, ne mens ipsa necessum
Intestinum habeat cunctis in rebus agundis,
Et devicta quasi, cogatur ferre, patique;
Id facit exiguum clinamen principiorum,
Nec regione loci certâ, nec tempore certo.
Nec stipata magis fuit umquam materiae
Copia, nec porro majoribus intervallis:
Nam neque adaugescit quidquam, neque deperit inde.
A force far different this than e’er prevails
When aught without coërces. Passive, then,
Bends all the frame th’ extrinsic power beneath,
Borne down reluctant; till th’ awakening will
Unchains each member, and resumes her right.
For oft, though foreign force, with tyrant sway,
Rule us, resistless, headlong hurrying down—
Say—lurks no adverse something in the breast
Proud to withstand? full oft, at whose control,
Swift flows the nervous tide from limb to limb,
Bursting each bond—and, oft, as swift, retires?
Hence firm maintain we primal seeds some cause
Must feel of rising motion unbestow’d
By weight, or blow re-active, whence alone
Upsprings this secret power by man possesst:
Nought forming nought, as reason proves precise.
For weight forbids the credence that alone
Things by re-action move; yet, lest the mind
Bend to a stern necessity within,
And, like a slave, determine but by force,—
Though urg’d by weight, in time, in place unfixt,
Each primal atom trivial still declines.
Nor interstitial more, nor more compact,
Was e’er this frame of matter; nor augment
Primæval seeds, nor e’er admit decay.

Vol. I.
Quapropter, quo nunc in motu principiorum
Corpora sunt, in eodem ante actâ ætate fuere,
Et posthac semper simili ratione ferentur:
Et, quæ consuerint gigni, gignentur càdem
Conditione; et erunt, et crescent, inque valebunt,
Quantum quoique datum est per foedera naturâ:
Nec rerum summam conmutare uUa potest vis.
Nam, neque quo possit genus ulla materiâ
Ecçugere ex omni, quidquam est; neque, rursus, in omne
Unde coorta queat nova vis inrumpere, et omnem
Naturam rerum mutare, et vortere motus.

Illud in hiis rebus non est mirabile, quâ re,
Omnia quom rerum primordia sint in motu,
Summa tamen summâ videatur stare quiete;
Præter quam si quid proprio dat corpore motus.
Omnis enim longe nostris ab sensibus infra
Primorurn naturâ jacet: quapropter, ubi ipsam
Cernere jam nequeas, motus quoque surpere debent:
Præsertim, quom, quæ possimus cernere, celent
Sæpe tamen motus, spatio diducta locorum.
Nam sæpe in colli, tondentes pabula ëeta,

Ver. 325. From glebe to glebe, where'er, impaert'd
with dew,
The jocund clover calls them.] We cannot but be
here reminded of that elegant and picturesque passage
of Milton, in which the same imagery is introduced:
— from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dew, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly-grain. Par. Lost, i. 430.
Hence every movement in anterior time
That e'er subsisted, still subsists the same,
And will through endless ages: all begot
Begotten must be, punctual to their kinds,
Exist, increase, and perish; following firm
The laws by nature fram'd; nor aught of power,
Act where it may, can change th' entire of things.
For nought expands of spot where primal seeds
From the vast whole may fly; or e'er afresh,
Arm'd with new powers, re-enter, adverse thus
To nature's plans, disorganizing all.

Nor this stupendous that, though primal seeds
Move on incessant, and, through different forms,
Rouse different actions, the vast whole to sense
Rests undisturb'd. For far beyond all ken,
Lies the prime base impalpable of things.
As this eludes all vision, so, alike,
Its motion too elude. E'en oft the sight
No motion marks where still the moving scene
Springs obvious, by the distance sole conceal'd.—
The fleecy flocks, o'er yonder hill that browse
From glebe to glebe, where'er, impearl'd with dew,
Lanigerae reptant pecudes, quo quamque vocantes
Invitant herbæ, gemmantes rore recenti;
Et satiatei agnei ludunt, blandque coruscant:
Omnia quæ nobis longe confusa videntur,
Et veluti in viridi candor consistere colli.
Præterea, magnæ legiones quam loca cursu
Camporum conplent, belli simulacra cientes;

opportunity of introducing it. The following, of
the cardinal Polignac, is probably copied from Lu-
cretius, whose unrivaled poetry he was anxious to
imitate, as his principles he was studious to oppose:
Jamque laborati duro sub cortice succi
Erumpunt; frondemque et flores, ordine miro,
 Implicitos, unctæ monstrant in acumine gemmæ.

A passage, to the same effect, is to be found in
Dyer's Fleece, a poem by no means deficient in clas-
sical allusions, and pregnant with picturesque paint-
ings, drawn with a master's hand from nature:
—wait till all
The crystal dew, impell'd upon the grass
Are touch'd by Phæbus' beams, and mount aloft;

The term crystal is, with equal felicity, applied by
Ovid to the frost that, in the same manner, is scat-
tered every morning over trees and fields, in the ear-
er spring:
Tempus erat ut educerat primum terræ frigidæ
Spargitur, et tectae fronde quercunur aves.

This couplet of Ovid is imitated by Ariosto, in
his Orlando Furioso; and it is somewhat singular,
that Mr. Hoole, in his translation of both poets, has
made use of the phrase glittering and sparkling dew,
instead of glittering or crystal frost.

Fin che l'Aura e la gelata brina
Dalle dorate ruote in terra sparse,
E s'udir le Alcione, &c. CANT. X.
Till, from her golden wheels, Aurora threw
On verdant meads the drops of sparkling dew,
And on the margin of the wavy flood
Aleyone her ancient plains renew'd. Hoole.
In his version of the above passage of Ovid, he has,
with a similar error, written
Now earth first glitters with the morning dew,
And birds, in bow'ry shades, their plaints renew.
Calpurnius, in his fifth eclogue, has a few verses
so extremely correspondent with the imagery of Lu-
cretius, more especially when accompanied with the
classical amendment of Mr. Wakefield, that I should
be guilty of an unpardonable omission, if I were to
pass them by:
—ante diem pocus exitum: humida dulces
Efficit aura cibus, quoties, fugientibus umbri,
Frigida nocturno tinguuntur pascua rore,
Et matutia lucent in gramine gemmae. Ver. 52.
Lead forth betimes thy cattle; the moist air
Sweetens the herbage; lead them when, the shades
Fast flying, the cool glebe is thick besprent
With midnight dew-drops; and the gems of morn
Gleam o'er the greensward.—

Ver. 330. One white mass forming o'er the verdant
steep.] So, Dyer:
Such are the downs of Banstead, edg'd with woods,
And tow'ry villas; such Dorcestrian fields,
Whose flocks innum'rous whiten all the land.

Fleece.
The jocund clover calls them, and the lambs
That round them gambol, saturate with milk,
Proving their frontlets in the mimic fray—
Press, at this distance, on the sight confus’d,
One white mass forming o’er the verdant steep.
Thus, too, when warlike squadrons crowd the field,
Horrent in arms, with horses scarce restrain’d,

The idea of thus cloathing, or covering the verdant glebe with the reflected whiteness of the flocks that feed on it, is highly beautiful and picturesque. So Psalm lxv. 13.

The pastures are cloathed with flocks.

Ver. 331. Thus, too, when warlike squadrons crowd the field.

Horrent in arms, with horses scarce restrain’d, &c.]
The whole passage is manifestly deduced from the Iliad of Homer, though, in some degree, enlarged and improved:

Aigla δ’ σφραγος κεισ’ γηλαστον δ’ πασα περι κ’ αυ
Χαλκοῦ ύπο στιρατη’ ύπο δ’ κιτεροι μυστοι τοσσιν

T. 362.

Broad glittering breast-plates, spears with pointed rays
Mix in one stream, reflecting blaze on blaze;
Thick beats the centre as the courser’s bound,
With splendour flame the skies, and laugh the fields around.

Thus, this is more likely, because there can be no doubt, that he has borrowed the imagery of the earlier part of the picture before us, on another occasion; though I see no notice taken of the copy, in any of the commentaries upon either poet. In Lucretius it occurs thus, ver. 323.

Præterea, magnæ legiones quam loca cursu
Camporum complent, belli simulacra cientes;
Fulgur ubi ad columna tollit, totaque circum
Ære renidescit tellus, &c.

Virgil expresses himself in this manner:

Ut sepe ingenti belli quom longa cohortes
Explicit legio, et campo stetit agmen aperto,
Directeque acies, ac late fluctuat omnis
Ære renidentis tellus, &c.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Fulgur ubi ad coelum se tollit, totaque circum
Ære renidescit tellus; subterque, virum vi,
Excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoreque montes
Ictei rejectant voces ad sidera mundi;
Et circum volitant equites, mediosque repente
Transmittunt, valido quatientes inpete, campos:
Et tamen est quidam locus altis montibus, unde
Stare videntur; et in campis consistere fulgur.

Nunc age, jam deinceptis cunctarum exordia rerum,
Qualia sint, et quam longe distantia formis,
Percipe; multigenis quam sint variata figuris:

As when the legion o'er the plain afar
Unfolds its spreading cohorts rang'd for war;
When, opposite in arms, the squadrons stand,
And gleaming steel wide waves o'er all the land, &c.

The narrow space to which the Spartans were
confined at the battle of Thermopylae, has not al-
lowed our own countryman, Glover, to introduce the
latter part of the imagery selected by Virgil; but he
has thus described the former:

As o'er the main
In lucid rows the rising waves reflect
The sun's effulgence, so the Grecian helms
Return'd his light, which o'er their convex
pour'd,
And scatter'd splendour on the dancing plumes.

It may not be unentertaining to my readers, to
have an opportunity of comparing, with these de-
scriptions, a somewhat parallel passage in the Spanish
poet Lope de Vega. He is painting a rencontre
between the Spaniards and the Moors; and the
richness of dress, exhibited by both parties, enables
him to introduce an original simile.
Book II.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Shaking the solid glebe, while the bright pomp
Flames through the skies, and gilds the glowing earth,
While groans the ground beneath their mighty tread,
And hills, and heavens re-echo to their shouts—
View'd from afar, the splendid scene that spreads
Seems void of motion, to the fields affixt.

Come, now, my friend, and, next, perspicuous mark
What countless shapes primordial seeds assume,
How vast their variance: for, though myriads swarm

at least, a most admirable specimen of imitative harmony:

Mas ja cos escadrões da gente armada,
Os Éborenses campos vão qualhados
Lustra co sol arnes, a lança; a espada
Vam rinchando os cavallos jaizados:
A canora trombeta embandeirada
Os corações a paz acostumados:
Vay as fulgentes armos incitando
Pellas concavidades retumbando.

The glittering squadrons march in proud array;
On burnish'd shields the trembling sun-beams play:
The blaze of arms the warlike rage inspires,
And wakes, from slothful peace, the hero's fires.

With trampling hoofs Evora's plains rebound,
And sprightly neighings echo far around;
Far on each side the clouds of dust arise,
The drum's rough rattling rolls along the skies;
The trumpet's shrilly clangour sounds alarms,
And each heart burns, and ardent pants for arms.

Mickle.

The glittering pomp that is reflected from the arms of the warriors, is not forgotten in the well-known ballad of Chevy Chace:

Wher syx and thirte Skottish knyghtes
On a day wear beaten down;
Glen-dale glytteryte with ther armor bryghte
Over castill, towar, and town.

But, above all, ought we to bear in mind that sublime description of Milton, in his Paradise Lost:

He spake, and, to confirm his words, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, &c.

Whence, doubtless, Mr. Burke's bold and figurative description relative to the late queen of France.

Ver. 340. What countless shapes primordial seeds assume.] Having established the solidity, and consequent weight of atoms, together with their different modes of motion, our philosophic poet now proceeds to develop another of their properties; to wit, their variation of size and figure. This, though not a subject of ocular demonstration, he endeavours to establish by a variety of forcible arguments and analogies. Epicurus, in a variety of passages, but more especially in his epistle to Herodotus, had long before advanced the same doctrine: To ἀτόμα των ἀνθρώπων καὶ μήτου, εὖ  ὁ ἐν συγχρόνων γνώτοι, &c.
Non, quo multa parum simili sint prædicta formâ,
Sed quia non volgo paria omnibus omnia constant.
Nec mirum: nam, quom sit eorum copia tanta,
Ut neque finis, ut ei docui, neque summa sit ulla;
Debent nimirum non omnibus omnia prorsum
Esse pari filo, similique adfecta figurâ.

Præterea, genus humanum, mutæque natantes
Squamigerûm pecudes, et læta armenta, feraeque,
Et variae volucres, lætantia quæ loca aqualum
Concelebrant, circum ripas funtisque, lacaüsque;
Et, quæ pervolgant nemora avia pervolitantes:
Quorum unum quod vis generatim sumere perge;
Invenies tamen inter se differre figuris.
Nec ratione alia proles cognoscere matrem,
Nec mater posset prolem: quod posse videmus;
Nec minus, atque homines, inter se nota cluere.
Nam sæpe ante deûm vitulus delubra decora
Turicremas propter mactatus concidit aras,
Sanguinis exspirans calidum de pectore  flumen:
At mater, virideis saltus orbata peragrans,
Of equal figures, oft unlike they meet.
Nor wond'rous this, since, such th' abundance form'd,
No bounds can chain, no numbers e'er compute.
Hence, not unfrequent, each from each, through space, Must meet diverse, unkindred in their frames.

Thus nature varies; man, and brutal beast,
And herbage gay, and silver fishes mute,
And all the tribes of heav'n, o'er many a sea,
Through many a grove that wing, or urge their song
Near many a bank of fountain, lake, or rill,
Search where thou wilt, each differs in his kind,
In form, in figure differs. Hence alone,
Knows the fond mother her appropriate young,
Th' appropriate young their mother, mid the brutes,
As clear discern'd as man's sublimer race.
Thus oft before the sacred shrine, perfum'd
With breathing frankincense, th' affrighted calf
Pours o'er the altar, from his breast profound,
The purple flood of life. But wand'ring wild
O'er the green sward, the dam, bereft of hope,

Tunc piget ire domum, maestoque novissima campo
Exit, et appositas impasta avertitur herbas.  
Vol. 1.

Seizes, or cruel swain for rites divine;—
The dam, bereft, now fills the vallies, now
The floods, the woodlands, with her loud laments,
Her young demanding of each desert spot.
Slow treads she homewards—slow—but, once arriv'd,
Flies the sad scene, and spurns th' untasted grass.

H h
Linquit humi pedibus vestigia pressa bisulcis;
Omnia convisens oculis loca, si queat usquam
Conspicere amissum fetum: complectque querelas
Frundiferum nemus, adsistens; et crebra revisit
Ad stabulum, desiderio perfixa juventi.
Nec teneræ salices, atque herbæ, rure vigentes,
Fluminaque illa queunt, summis labentia ripis,
Oblectare animum, subitamque avortere curam:
Nec vitulorum alæ species par pabula læta
Derivare queunt animum, curamque levare:
Usque adeo quiddam proprium, notumque requirit.
Præterea, tenerei tremulis cum vocibus hædei
Cornigeras norunt matres; agnique petulci

Ver. 367. Nor shade for her, nor dew-distended glebe.] Virgil has been as attentive to this part of the description of our poet, as Statius. It is thus he represents the grief of a "brother-steer," who had lost his companion by the murrain, so admirably described in his Georgics:

Non umbrae alorum nemorum, non mollia possunt
Prata movere animum, non qui per saxa volatus
Purior electro campum petit annis. 1. iii. 520.

Mean time, nor grassy mead, nor lofty grove,
The mournful mate's afflicted mind can move;
Nor yet from rocks delicious streams that roll
As amber clear, can soothe his sorrowing soul.

Sotheby.

There is an episode, so perfectly similar, in the Alâmeriyyo of the Arabian poet Lebid, which constituted one of the Moallakât, or Seven Poems, that were transcribed in letters of gold, and suspended in the temple of Mecca, that I cannot avoid inserting it, for a comparison with Lucretius. Those, who copy from Nature, cannot widely differ in their picture, let them copy when and where they may.

Aflatîca am wahshîyyahôn masbûahôn
Khâdhalat wâdiyâhô alsiwâri kiwâmôhâ, &c.
The entire poem may be found in Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iv. in which we are also favoured with the following elegant version:

"Is this the swiftness of my camel? No; rather she resembles a wild cow, whose calf has been devoured by ravenous beasts, when she had suffered him to graze apart, and relied for his protection on the leader of the herd.

"A mother with flat nostrils; who, as soon as she misses her young one, ceases not to run hastily round the wâles between the sand-hills, and to fill them with her mournful cries:

"With cries for her white-haired young, who now lies rolled in dust, after the dun wolves, hunters of the desert, have divided his mangled limbs, and their feast has not been interrupted.

"She passes the night in agony, while the rain falls
Beats with her cloven hoof th' indented dale,
Each spot exploring, if, perchance, she still
May trace her idol; through th' umbrateous grove,
With well-known voice, she moans; and oft re-seeks,
Urg'd by a mother's love, th' accustom'd stall.
Nor shade for her, nor dew-distended glebe,
Nor stream soft gliding down its banks abrupt,
Yields aught of solace; nor the carking care
Averts, that preys within: nor the gay young
Of others soothe her o'er the joyous green:
So deep she longs, so lingers for her own.
Thus equal known, thus long'd for, seek, in turn,
The tender heifer, tremulous of voice,

in a continued shower, and drenches the tangled groves with a profuse stream. She shelters herself under the root of a tree, whose boughs are thick, apart from other trees, by the edge of a hill, whose fine sands are shaken by her motion. (trepidation.)

"At length, when the clouds are dispersed, and the dawn appears, she rises early, and her hoofs glide on the slippery ground.

"She grows impatient, and wild with grief: she lies, frantic, in the pool of Soayid, for seven whole days, with their twin sisters. (Seven Nights.)

"And now she is in total despair: her teats, which were full of milk, are grown flaccid and dry, though they were not worn by suckling, and weaving her young."

Lucretius, among the moderns, has been copied, in this tender and simple episode, by a variety of writers. Of these, the best specimens I am acquainted with, are that of Spenser, in his Fairy Queen, and that of Delille, in his L'Homme des Champs. The authors are common, and the reader may consult them at his leisure. The elegant and express version of it, however, by M. le Blanc de Guillet, is not so much at hand, and I shall therefore transcribe it as a fair specimen of his general success:

Non jamais dans leur coeur nul trait ne s'en efface,
Lorsqu'un jeune taureau, frappé d'un coup mortel,
Sous le coteau sacré tombe au pied de l'autel,
Sa mère, non plus mère, errante, désolée,
S'égare dans les bois, éperdu, isolée,
La trace de ses pas est marquée en tous lieux.
Partout elle promène un regard soucieux.
Où peut-être cachée l'objet de sa tendresse?
Toute à ce souvenir, elle revient sans cesse
Des pâris a son toit, de son toit aux pâris,
Par ces cris douloureux tour à tour attendris.
Plus de goût pour les fleurs, pour sa tendre feuillée,
Des perles du matin vainement emeillée.
Ni les gazons naissans, ni le cristal des eaux,
Ni les jeux, les combats d'autres jeunes taureaux,
Rien n'offre qu'un vain charme à sa douleur secrète.
Rien ne rend à son coeur le fils qu'elle regrette,
Ce fils si bien gravé dans ce coeur gémissant.
Balatum pecudes: ita, quod natura reposcit,
Ad sua quisque, serì decurrent ubera lactis.

Postremo, quod vis frumentum; non tamen omne,
Quidque suo genere, inter se simile esse videbis,
Quin intercurrat quaedam distantia formis:
Concharumque genus parili ratione videmus
Pingere telluris gremium, quâ mollibus undis
Litoris incurvi bibulam pavit æquor arenam.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam simili ratione necesse est,
Naturâ quoniam constant, neque facta manu sunt
Unius ad certam formam primordia rerum,
Dissimili inter se quadam volitare figurâ.

Perfacile est animi ratione exsolvère nobis,
Quâ re fulmineus muito penetratifior ignis,
Quam noster, fluat, e tedis terestribus ortus.
Dicere enim possis coelestem fulminis ignem,
Subtilem magis, e parvis constare figuris;
Atque ideo transire foramina, quæ nequit ignis
Noster hic, e lignis ortus, tedâque creatus.

Ver. 380. —th' enamell'd shells, that paint
The bending shore; whose thirsty sands drink
deep, &c.

We trace Ovid turning his eye to this passage of
our poet, in his elegy "to a female friend on a
voyage:"

Nec médius tenues conchas pictosve lapillos
Pontus habet: bibuli litoris illa mora est.

Seek not the midmost main for polislhed shells;
Or pictur'd jewels: these the strand presents
Thirsty and arid.

Camoens likewise, than whom few poets have
been more profoundly versed in Greek and Roman
literature, has copied from the same source. He is
describing the Island of Love:

—cuja brancha area
Pintos de riuvas conchas Cytereæ. Lus. Cant. ix.
And the gay-bleating lamb, their horned dams,  
Lur'd by the milky fount that nurtures life.  
The corn, moreo'er, the yellow harvest yields,  
Matures not all alike;—e'en the same kind  
In size oft varying to the curious eye.  
Thus vary, too, th' enamell'd shells, that paint  
The bending shore; whose thirsty sands drink deep  
The main's soft waves, redundant roll'd along.  
Hence doubly flows it why the seeds of things,  
Compact by nature, by mechanic art  
Shap'd not to one fixt model, each from each  
Should differ oft in figure through the void.  
Illumin'd thus, the mind with ease decides  
Why heaven's electric flash a subtler power  
Boasts, than the flame by torches fed below:  
That form'd than this of atoms finer far,  
Triumphant piercing many a pore minute  
By the dull taper's blaze essay'd in vain.

With purple shells transfus'd as marble veins,  
The yellow sands celestial Venus stains.  
Mickle.

So Akenside:  
And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.

In like manner, Darwin, when describing the formation of the external scenery of the earth from the ocean, that

---wrap'd her in his azure robe---  
And deck'd her shores with corals, pearls, and shells.

The verses of Creech, on this imagery of Lucretius, are more poetical than we find them in general; but they are by no means a translation of the original:  
And so in shells, where waters washing o'er,  
With wanton kisses bathe the amorous shore.
Praeterea, lumen per cornum transit; at imber Respuitur. Qua re? nisi luminis illa minora Corpora sunt, quam de quibus est liquor almus aquarum. 390
Et, quam vis subito, per colum vina videmus Perfluere; at contra tardum contatur olivom:

Aut, quia nimirum majoribus est elementis,
Aut magis hamatis inter se, perque plicatis;
Atque ideo fit, utei non tam diducta repente

Inter se possint primordia singula quæque
Singula per quoiusque foramina permanare.

Huc adcedet, utei mellis lactisque liquores,
Jocundo sensu linguæ, tractentur in ore;
At contra tetra absinthii natura serique

Centaurii fedo pertorquent ora sapore;
Ut facile adgnoscas e lævibus atque rotundis

Esse ea, quæ sensus jocunde tangere possunt:
At contra, quæ amara, atque aspera, quomque videntur,
Hæc magis hamatis inter se nesa teneri;

Proptereaque solere vias rescindere nostris
Sensibus, introituque suo perrumpere corpus.

Omnia postremo bona sensibus, et mala tactu,
Dissimili inter se pugnant perfecta figurâ:

Ver. 404. The wormwood straight convulsi, by the tongue
Abhor'd, and writhing every tupid nerve.] In
Light, the clear glass pervades, while lymph recoils:
Whence springs the diff’rence, but that subtler seeds
Rear the bright sun-beam than the fountain form?
Free through the strainer flows the sparkling wine,
While the slow oil hangs heavy: in its course
Check’d, or by atoms of a grosser frame,
Or more perplex’d, and tangled; each from each
Hence severing tardy, and, with toil extreme,
Transuding sep’rate through th’ attenuate lawn.

Thus vary tastes: and while the dulcet draught
Of milk, or honey charms th’ enchanted lip,
The wormwood strait convulses, by the tongue
Abhorr’d, and writhing every sapid nerve.
Hence may’st thou learn those seeds that rouse, combin’d,
A joyous flavour, round exist, and smooth;
While those that form the bitter, and austere,
Are hook’d, or jagged, and their path propel
Alone by wounding, hostile to the sense.

Thus all things live; from primal atoms rear’d
Of shape diverse, as deep within they ope

At sapor indicium faciet manifestus, et ora
Tristia tentantum sensu torquebit amaror.

GEORG. lib. ii. 246.

This will the taste demonstrate, and the lip
Distorted turn, and hate the bitter sip.
Ne tu forte putes, serrar stridentis acerbum
Horrorem constare elementis laevibus æque,
Ac Musæa mele, per chordas organicei quæ
Mobîlibus digitis expergefacta figurant:
Neu similis penetrare putes primordia forma
In nareis hominum, quom tetra cadavera torrent,
Et quom scena croco Cilici perfusa recens est,
Araque Panchæos exhalat propter odores:
Neve bonos rerum similis constare colores
Semine constitutas, oculos quei pascere possunt,
Et quei compungunt aciem, lacrumareque cogunt.

The Latin of these two verses is possessed of un-
common beauty, and most appropriate rhythm:
it is not possible to conceive of terms in any language bet-
ter adapted to convey the idea of ease, dexterity, and
rapid movement, than the mobilibus digitis of our
poet; and I am very sensible that the phrase, flying
fingers, in the version, although, perhaps, the most
expressive, as well as the most literal our own lan-
guage will afford, falls far short of the inimitable
original. Mr. Wakefield has here quoted two lines
from Maximianus, which, as he justly observes, have
an elegance nearly equal:

Docta loqui digitis, et carminia fingere docta,
Et responsarum sollicitare lyram. El. v. 17.
Skill'd with the flying fingers to discourse,
To feign sweet rhythms, and woo th' accordant lyre.
The verses of Lucretius cannot but remind us of
the following, in Pope's Alexander's Feast:

Wake into voice each silent string,
And sweep the sounding lyre.

Or the still more animated and elegant couplet in
Gray’s inimitable Elegy:

Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway’d,
Or wak’d to ecstasy the living lyre.

Mr. Cumberland, in his Calvary, has a still nearer
approximation to our poet, in the following:

—-the minstrel’s strike
Their golden harps: swift over the sounding strings
Their flying fingers sweep.

Polignac has been equally mindful of his elegant
antagonist:

—-Ita quilibet arte
Strænuus Aonìæ eitharam pulsare sonantem
Mobîlibus digitis, chordæque animare loquaces
Et lenocinio blandi modulaminis auaces
Demulcere tua, et cithará sic pendet ab ipsâ,
Non ullos ut possit eâ sine promere cantus.

Anti-Lucr. v. 743.
Some secret source of pleasure or of pain.

So deem not thou the saw’s discordant scream,

Horrid, and harsh, flows from the same smooth seeds

That wake the strain mellifluous, when the fair,

With flying fingers, sweeps th’ accordant lyre.

Nor deem those atoms like, from putrid scenes

That spring malignant, and th’ essential sweets

Breath’d from Cilician saffron, or the blaze

Of fragrant altars fed from orient groves.

Nor canst thou form from the same source those hues,

On which the vision feeds with fond delight,

And those abhor’d, and hideous, or the germs

Pungent and keen, that rouse the sight to tears.

The minstrel, thus, inflam’d with sacred fire,

Whose flying fingers strike the sounding lyre,

Wake the shrill strings, and, o’er thy ravish’d ear,

Breathe the sweet balm of movements soft and clear—

So on the lyre depends, that nought of strain

Void of its influence, can his hands attain.

Nor ought I to forget the elegant imitation of this passage of our poet, in the Oberon of Wieland, Canto xi.

How does her rosy finger’s subtle flight

In sweet confusion sweep each soul-felt string!

—Heic et acanthus

Et rosa purpureo crescit pudibunda colore:

Et viole genus omne heic est, et Spartica myrtus.

Atque hyacinthus; et heic Cilicii croceus editus antro.

Ver. 499.

Here springs the violet, th’ acanthus blows,

Here Sparta’s myrtle, and the blushing rose;

Blue hyacinths, and saffron boasting blooms

Bright as the saffron in Cilicia’s glooms.

Among the luxuries in which the Romans indulged in their more voluptuous periods, one was, the fashion of strewing this Cilician saffron, in conjunction with several other odoriferous flowers, over the stages of their public theatres, prior to the commencement of the drama. It is to this custom Lucretius appears to allude, in the present passage; and Horace has an allusion of the same kind, in his Epistle to Augustus:

Recte necne, crocum floresque perambulet Atte

Fabula, si dubitem; clament periisse pudorem, &c.

Ver. 79.
Aut sedâ specie tetrei, turpesque, videntur.
Omnis enim, sensus quæ mulcet quomque videntum,
Haud sine principiali aliquo lævore creatâ est:
At contra, quæ quomque molesta atque aspera constat,
Non aliquo sine materiæ squalore reperta est.

Sunt etiam, quæ jam nec lævia jure putantur
Esse, neque omnino flexís mucronibus unca;
Sed magis angellis paullum prostantibus, ac quæ
Titillare magis sensus, quam lædere, possint:
Fæcula iam quo de genere est, inulæque sapores.

Denique, jam calidos igneis, gelidamque pruinam,
Dissimili dentata modo, conpungere sensus

Ver. 431. —These the nerves
Pain not, but titillate:—] Titillare, 7αγελαβα.
Cicero has observed, that this was the term
employed by Epicurus to denote the agreeable exci-
tation produced by the lighter pleasures of the senses.
At has leviore ducis voluptates, quibus quasi titillatio
(Epicuri enim hoc verbum est) adhibetur sensibus.”
De Nat. Deor. I. 40.

Ver. 434. —sauces, cater’d to the taste
From the pale inula, or grape’s soft ground,—]
Among the sauces introduced at the Roman tables,
one was manufactured from the lees of some of their
favourite wines, and another from the root of the
Inula or Elecampane, the Aster of Tournefort and
Linneus. The wines principally employed, were
those of Falernum and Cos, an island in the Ægean
sea, widely celebrated as the native soil of Hippo-
crates. Horace, in several of the Epistles in his sec-
ond book of Satires, makes mention of both these
'Twere vain t' attempt: for all the soul that wakes
To various pleasure, boasts a base rotund;
While pain but springs from atoms hook’d and harsh.

Yet seeds there are between; not smooth complete,
Nor deeply jagged, but with angles shap’d
Just peeping o’er the surface. These the nerves
Pain not, but titillate; a sense perceiv’d
When sweets with bitters, sours with sweets combine,
As oft in sauces, cater’d to the taste
From the pale inula, or grape’s soft grounds.

But fires and frosts spring different; from a base
Unlike indented, though indented each.

sauces, which were supposed to have the double property of stimulating the appetite, and, at the same time, assisting the digestion: thus,

Pervellunt stomachum, siser, cale, facula Coa.

The taste of the sauce alluded to in this passage, and obtained from the lees of the Coan, or Falernian wine, was acid; while that produced from the inula was a pleasant and modified bitter, or austerer. For though Horace, in another passage, Sat. ii. 2. applies the epithet acid to this latter (acidas mavult inulas)—he only means to express its general acrimony or pungency. And in his eighth epistle of the same book, he has allotted to it its proper appellation of bitter (inulas amaras). The excess of its austerer, or bitter taste, was corrected by sweets of different kinds, which, like the former, rendered it not only a sauce grateful to the taste, but wholesome to the stomach. Thus Pliny: Amarius inula per se stomacho ini-micissima, eadem dulcis mistis saluberrima. Pluribus modis austeritate victæ gratiam invent. L. xix. c. 5.

Ver. 436. Yet fires and frosts spring different; from a base
Unlike indented, though indented each.] Heat and cold were equally, among ancient philosophers, supposed to be substances suorum generum: the corpority of cold, however, became doubted about a century ago, and was, at length, universally denied; Boerhaave, I believe, being the last who contended for its substantial nature, in opposition to the doctrine, that it was nothing more than a mere negative quality. Yet, since it frequently occurs in the great cycle of the sciences, as in the operations of nature, that that which dies in one season revives in another, so the new tenet, that cold is a mere negative quality, has some prospect of perishing, and the antiquated
Corporis, indicio nobis est tactus uterque.

Tactus enim, tactus, pro divôm numina sancta!

Corporis est sensus, vel quom res extera sese

Insinuat, vel quom lædit, quae in corpore nata est,

Aut juvat egrediens genitaleis, per Veneris res:

opinion, that it is a substance sui generis, resurg- ing from its ruins. Professor Pictet invented, some years ago, an instrument, by which he endeavoured to prove, that cold bodies transmitted frigorific rays, which might be concentrated in a convex mirror, and sensibly affect a delicate air thermometer: and Count Rumford, building upon this idea, has engaged in a course of additional experiments, and written a very ingenious paper, in which he has given their result, and his own consequent opinion; which appears to be, that frigorific rays, or emanations, issue from all cold bodies in the same manner as calorific emanations from hot; and that the cold experienced on the summit of high mountains, as well as the regulated temperature of the earth, is produced by the intermixture of such frigorific rays transmitted from the heavens with the calorific rays of solar heat. But as whatever emanates or radiates must be a substance, the frigorific rays of cold bodies, and the calorific of hot, must be necessarily and equally substantial, and consequently, cold itself, as well as heat; which is the doctrine maintained in the text. See Philosoph. Trans. for 1804. Part I. Art. vii. Elementary heat, or fire, is still indeed ranked among philosophers as an independent and essential substance; though it seems doubtful how long, even heat itself may be allowed to preserve its primitive rank and dignity. Light and fire, it is generally maintained, are one and the same thing, produced by one and the same cause. But those who, with such a belief, entertain, at the same time, the theory of Euler with respect to light, must altogether discard the materiality of fire, and conceive of it, as Euler did of the former, to be nothing more than a vibratory motion of the particles of the combustible body, or of the elastic medium of the air, by which the sensation of heat is communicated to the touch in the same manner as the sensation of sound is excited in the ear. See note on ver. 166 of this book. And this, from some of his earlier papers, appears to have been the theory of Count Rumford himself, notwithstanding the discrepancy of such an opinion with that I have just noticed. Yet, perhaps, this discrepancy exists rather in the wording of his hypothesis, than in any necessary hostility of one part of it to another.

The comprehensive and elaborate theory of Epicurus, however, not only allowed an actual and material existence to elementary heat and cold, but attributed to the primary corpuscles of each, a certain and definite mechanical figure, by means of which their different operations were effected. Consistently, therefore, with the general position advanced by our poet, ver. 405, and following, that every thing pleasant and grateful to the senses is formed from atoms perfectly smooth and round, while, whatever is hateful and disgusting is educed from pointed or jagged atoms,—Epicurus determined, that the atoms of both elemental heat and cold, were pointed, or, as Lucretius terms them, indented: but, as exciting different effects, that they were pointed or indented differently: those of heat being in some degree round or orbicular, with little points abutting from the surface of the corpuscle, while those of cold, on the contrary, were angular and pyramidal, or polygons of three sides. In his epistle to Pythoecles, he gives this reason for the conversion of water into ice, that "the orbicular atoms (meaning those of heat) are, at this time, extruded from the water, and those of a trigonic and acutangular
This if thou doubt, the touch shall quick decide.

For touch, O touch! ye powers of heav'n supreme!

Touch forms the genuine sense whence chief we trace

Whate'er without insinuates, or within

Springs up innate, injurious in th' escape,

Or, like the genial tide by Venus rous'd,

Matutina parum cautos jam frigora mordent:

Now bite the morning frosts the unprepared.

In the same manner, in our own language, we use

the phrases frost-bitten, a cold biting wind, &c. Thus, Shakespear:

—Here feel we the icy pang,

And churlish chiding of the winter's wind;

Which, when it bites, and blows upon my body,

E'en till I shrink with cold, I smile.

Ver. 438. For touch, O touch, ye powers of heav'n supreme!

Touch forms the genuine sense, &c.] The term touch, like simple perception, appears applicable to all the senses; but even in its appropriate and more restrained meaning, our poet may be justified in his eulogy, in consequence of its being a sense extending universally over the body, and not confined, as are the senses in general, to one individual organ. See note on ver. 341, b. i.

Faber has, unwarrantably, objected to this apostrophe, which, observes he, may be a poetic, but, certainly, is not a philosophic illustration, and, least of all, an illustration after the manner of Epicurus. Upon this subject, however, and in express contradiction to Faber's opinion, Eusebius has justly observed, that "Epicurus was accustomed to indulge in similar apostrophes, or exclamations to the supreme powers, in all his books; binding himself by the most solemn oaths; and invoking the gods in almost all his discourses,"  

Ver. 437. Unlike indentors. — Dissimili dentata modo. Indentors, or armed with teeth. This term, which was occasionally applied by Latin poets to any thing that could puncture or lacerate, or irritate by its acrimony, has, nevertheless, been more frequently used to describe the effect of severe cold, or frost. Thus Horace:
Aut, ex obtensu quom turbant corpore in ipso Semina, confundunt inter se concita sensum:
Ut, si forte manu quam vis jam corporis ipse Tute tibi partem ferias, atque experiare. Quapropter longe formas distare necesse est Principiis, varios quae possint edere sensum.

Denique, quae nobis durata ac spissa videntur, Hae magis hamatis inter sese esse necesse est, Et quasi ramosis alte compacta teneri. In quo jam genere in primis adamantina saxa Primâ acie constant, ictus contemnere sueta; Et validei silices, ac duri robora ferri, Æraque, quae claustris restantia vociferantur. Illa quidem debent ex lævibus atque rotundis Esse magis, fluido quae corpore liquida constant; Namque papaveris haustus item est facilis quod aquarum: Nec retinentur enim inter se glomeramina quaeque,
Pregnant with pleasure; or, perchance, the frame
Affecting inly, as th' essential seeds
Collect tumultuous, urg'd to civil strife.
A feeling, this, full oft educ'd amain
Whene'er th' uplifted palm, from sport or ire,
Lets fall its vengeance o'er the redd'ning cheek.
Hence, from effects so various, various too
Must be the forms to primal seeds assign'd.

There are, moreo'er, that hard exist, and dense:
From atoms, these, more crook'd and clinging spring,
Like tangled branches intertwin'd throughout.
Such, mid the foremost, shines the diamond's blaze,
Fearless of insult, such the valid flint,
The steel's enduring vigour, and the brass
Discordant creaking from the public gates.
While those, revers'd, a fluent power that boast
Swell into birth from seeds round, and smooth,
Unlink'd th' essential globules, and with ease
Et procursum item proclive volubilis exstat.

Omnia postremo, quae puncto tempore cernis

Diffugere, ut fumum, nebulas, flammasque, necesse est,

Si minus omnia sunt e laevibus atque rotundis,

At non esse tamen perplexis indupedita;

Pungere uetei possint corpus, penetrareque saxa,

Nec tamen hærere inter se; quod quisque videmus

Sentibus esse datum: facile ut cognoscere possis,

Non est; sed acutis, esse dementis.

Sed, quod amara vides eadem, quæ fluvida constant,

Sudor uetei maris est, minume mirabile quoiquam.

Nam, quod fluvidum est, e laevibus atque rotundis

Est; et laevibus atque rotundis mixta doloris

Corpora: nec tamen hæc retineri hamata necessum:

Scilicet; esse globosa tamen, quom squalida constant,

Provolvi simul, ut possint conlædere sensus.

Et, quod mixta putes magis aspera laevibus esse

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Ver. 467. —nor to view
Cobering equal, like th' embracing briar:
Not jang'd, but pointed, hence, the base they own.] The commentator upon Creech's translation has justly observed, that these verses form a material part of the argument of Lucretius, and expresses his surprise that Creech has omitted them in his version; more especially, as he has retained the original verses corresponding to them in his Latin edition. The fact is, that the interpreters have been divided upon their authenticity and purity. Lambinus has marked them off as needless and inelegant. Faber has discarded them altogether, as the impertinent insertion of some scribe. Nardius, Fayus, Havercamp, and Wakefield, have all, however, retained them in the text: and upon their authority, as well as for the additional illustration which they afford, I have suffered them to remain, and allotted them a place in the translation. Marchetti, probably from the indecision of the critics, has retained the more vulgar reading of sensibus for sentibus: and of course omitted the reference to the briar, contained in the second line of the above quotation:

Non gli abbiano intrigati accio siam' atti
A punger gli occhi e a penetrar ne' sassi
Pour'd headlong down, dissevering as they fall.
Those, too, that quick fly off, as clouds or smoke,
Or lambent flame, if not from seeds educ'd
Rotund, and polish'd, doubtless, in their make
Nought know perplex'd, or hook'd, since arm'd with power
To pierce the Parian marble, nor to view
Cohering equal, like th' embracing briar:
Not jagg'd, but pointed, hence, the base they own.

Nor wond'rous this; that things of fluent frame
As the broad ocean, oft should strike the sense
With taste unlovely; for, though round, and smooth
The genial atoms whence all fluids flow,
Still, seeds discordant oft will intermix,
Rough, though globose, and by the tongue abhor'd,
Though fitted still the fluent mass to form.
This to confirm, to prove with polish'd seeds
Seeds harsh full oft combine, whence springs alone

Senza che sieno avviticchiati insieme,
Il ch'è vedo ciascuno essere concesto
Di conoscere a' sensi onde tu possa
Facilmente imparar ch' el non sono
Fatte d' adunchi ma d' acuti semi.

I will here just remark, that this version of Marchetti is altogether synonymous with a conjectural emendation hazarded by Mr. Wakefield on the present passage, and which he has inserted in his notes, though he has not ventured to introduce it into the text. The reading in the latter is as follows:

Vol. I.

Nec tamen harere inter se; quod quisque videmus
Sentibus ece datum.

His conjectural emendation runs thus:
Nec tamen inter se, quodquomque videmus
Sentibus est clarum.

For the learned editor's reasons for this variation, I must refer the reader to the edition itself. In the mean time, it must be universally acknowledged, that the terms printed in Italics, in the Italian and Latin, form a striking similarity and agreement.
Principiis, unde est Neptuni corpus acerbum;
Est ratio secessundi, seorsumque videndi.
Humor dulcis, ubei per terras crebrius idem
Percolatur, ut in foveam fluat, ac mansuescat.
Liquit enim supra tetri primordia viri;
Aspera, quo magis in terris hærescere possint.
Quod quoniam docui, pergam connectere rem, quæ,
Ex hoc apta, fidem ducat: primordia rerum
Finitâ variare figurarum ratione.
Quod, si non ita sit, rursum jam semina quædam
Esse infinito debebunt corporis auctu.
Nam, quod eâdem unâ quois vis in brevitate
Corporis inter se multum variare figurâe
Non possunt: face enim minumis e partibus esse
Corpora prima; tribus, vel paullo pluribus, auge:
Nempe, ubi eas parteis unius corporis omnes,
Summa atque ima, locans, transmutans dextera lævis,
Omnimodis expertus eris, quam quisque det ordo

---

Ver. 481. Thus Nature acts: through many a thirsty
sand
The surge she filters, fresh'ning in its course, &c.
There is an obvious imitation of the entire passage in
Thomson's Autumn, and one of the sages he refers
to, is unquestionably our poet:
Some sages say, that where the numerous wave
For ever lashes the resounding shore,
Drill'd thro' the sandy stratum, every way,
The waters with the sandy stratum rise;
Amid whose angles infinitely strain'd,

They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
And clear and sweeten as they soak along.

Ver. 741.

Ver. 486. This prov'd, what follows, as a truth
deriv'd;] We have here another axiom, or
position developed, of the Epicurean philosophy, that,
though the primal atoms of matter vary much in
their configuration, consistently with what has been
already stated, they cannot possibly, from the mi-
nuteness of their size, vary to infinitude. And the
The main’s disflavour—from the briny wave
The nauseous mass subtract, and all is sweet.
Thus Nature acts: through many a thirsty sand
The surge she filters, fresh’ning in its course,
Till freed, at length, from every acrid pow’r,
Tangled, and fixt behind, the dulcet lymph
Resprings to view, a calm and lucid pool.

This prov’d, what follows, as a truth deriv’d,
But that the forms of seeds, though varying much,
Ne’er vary endless; not unfrequent, else,
Full many a seed must boast a bulk immense:
For many a differing figure ne’er can lurk
In things minute. Deem, then, primordial seeds
Three fancied parts comprise, or grant e’en more,
Invert their order, let the right be left,
Depress the loftiest, the profound exalt,—

progressive proofs of this axiom are, if I mistake
not, so clearly advanced by our poet, as to render all
comment unnecessary. It is the doctrine of Epicu-
rus himself, as we learn from Plutarch de Placit. Phi-
losoph. l. i. c. 3. as also from his own epistle to Her-
dotus, ατόμοι ταῖς διάφοραις οὐκ επιλθεῖσαν εἰς τὰς ἀλλὰ
μόνον αὐτοκλήσιν. “The simple forms of different
atoms are not infinite, but merely indefinite.”

Blackmore discovered, therefore, a scanty know-
ledge of the system of this philosopher, when, in his
apostrophe to Lucretius, in the fourth book of his
“Creation,” he wrote thus:

Since to your uncompounded atoms you
Figures in number infinite allow,
From which, by various combination, springs
This unconfin’d diversity of things,
Are not, in this, design and counsel clear?

Sir Isaac Newton, as well as Lucretius, would
have advised him, had they been present, to search
for other arguments of wisdom and design, than this
infinite diversity of figures in the primal atoms of matter,
and have added, that he could otherwise have no rea-
son to hope for success.
Formarum speciem totius corporis ejus;
Quod super est, si forte voles variare figuras,
Addendum parteis alias erit: inde sequetur,
Adsimili ratione, alias ut postulet ordo,
Si tu forte voles etiam variare figuras.
Ergo formarum novitatem corporis augmen
Subsequitur: quâ re non est ut credere possis,
Esse infinitis distantia semina formis;
Ne quaedam cogas inmani maxumitate
Esse: supra quod jam docui non esse probare.

Jam tibi Barbaricae vestes, Meliboeaque fulgens
Purpura, Thessalico concharum tincta colore;
Aurea, pavonum ridenti inbuta lepore,
Peplä, novo rerum superata colore, jacerent:
Contemptus sudos Smyrnæ, mellisque sapores;
Et cycnea mele, Phœbeaque, dædala chordis,
Carmina, consimili ratione obpressa silerent:

Ver. 503. Already else the purple scarf superb
Of Melibœa, robbing for its dye
The Syrian coasts.——] The Melibœa, here
alluded to, was a city of Thessaly, at the foot of
mount Ossa, and the birth-place of Philoctetes. It
was universally celebrated, as Vossius has observed,
for the manufacture of its purple dye; a tincture ob-
tained from them urex, or oyster fisheries, established
for this purpose in many parts around the coasts of
Thessaly and Syria. In this manner Virgil alludes to it, in his description of the games instituted in com-
memoration of Anchises:

Victori chlamydem auratum, quam plurima
circum
Purpura Mazandro duplici Melibœa cucurrit;
Lib. v. v. 250.
The victor’s prize a golden robe, imbued
With Melibœan purple, from the shores
Of intricate Mazander.

Ver. 506. The peacock’s laughing plumage——] The
figure is bold, but not uncommon. I have already
noticed it in a note on B. i. 8. With Lucretius, it
appears to have been a favourite trope; and the reader
Soon will the pigmy mass exhaust complete
Its tiny change of figures: would’st thou, then,
Augment the variance, thou must add, perforce,
New primal matter, hence augmented sole.
Thus from fresh forms increase of size must flow
Perpetual; nor the seeds of things in shape
Can differ endless, or e’en once evince
A bulk immense, as erst the Muse has prov’d.

Already else the purple woof superb
Of Melibœa, robbing for its dye
The Syrian coasts,—already, dropt with gold,
The peacock’s laughing plumage else had sunk
By gawdier hues o’erpower’d. The balmy myrrh,
The luscious honey never more had urg’d
A boast unrivall’d; e’en the swan’s soft dirge
Had ceas’d, and Phœbus dropt his liquid lyre:

will again find it employed in v. 564 of the present
book. With Mr. Gray, it seems to have been
equally in favour. In a note on the above, v. 564, I
have introduced one passage in proof of this asser-
tion: in the following couplet, from the same ex-
quise poet, we meet with another:
The laughing flowers that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Gessner employs this figure with an equal fre-
quency. I must restrain myself to a single instance,
in which I shall select from his “Death of Abel:”
“Ein buntes gemische von blumen—lächle der sonne
entgegen.” “The diversified clusters of flowers
laughed beneath the rays of the sun.”

Ver. 509. —e’en the swan’s soft dirge
Had ceas’d,—] The poets of Greece and
Rome have universally adopted the popular error,
that the swan never dies, without uttering the most
melodious death-song: an opinion, however, as we
learn from Pliny, lib. x. c. 20. that neither the natu-
ral historians, nor philosophers of the same countries,
ever countenanced. See, on this subject, the note
on b. iii. 8.
Namque aliis aliud præstantius exoraretur.

Cedere item retro possent in deteriores
Omnia sic parteis, ut diximus in meliores:
Namque aliis aliud retro quoque tetrius esset
Naribus, auribus, atque oculis, orisque saporis.
Quæ quoniam non sunt, quin rebus redditæ certa
Finis utrimque tenet summam; fateare necesse est,
Materiam quoque finitis differre figuris.

Denique, ab ignibus ad gelidas hiemisique pruinæ
Finitum est, retroque pari ratione remensum est.
Omnis enim, calor ac frigus: medieique tepores
Inter utrasque jacent, explentes ordine summam.
Ergo finitâ distant ratione creatâ:
Ancipiti quoniam nucroni utrimque notantur;
Hinc flammis, illinc rigidis insessa pruinis.

Quod quoniam docui, pergam connectere rem, quæ,
Ex hoc apta, fidem ducat: primordia rerum,
Inter se simili quæ sunt perfecta figurâ,
Infinita cluere: et enim, distantia quom sit
Formarum finita, necesse est, quæ similes sint,
Esse infinitas; aut summam materiaï

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Ver. 526. But mark this truth, a truth connected close,] Another axiom of the philosophy of Epicurus, is here advanced in its course: which is, that although the forms of primal atoms be not infinite, yet the atoms of every existing form are so. Our poet has, before, uniformly asserted, that the atoms at large are innumerable: either, then, those of every existing figure must be equally innumerable, or those of some figures must be more numerous than those of others. But as it is natural to suppose that
All things o'er all prevailing undefin'd.
Thus those by sense abhor'd, as these belov'd,
To more abhor'd would yield; each still o'er each,
In sight, or sound, in taste or smell diverse
More hateful rear'd, more hideous, and obscene.
But since such powers exist not, since a bound
Is stampt on all things, we must own, convinc'd,
That primal seeds in shape are bounded too.

From frost to fire, from fire to winter's frost,
All, all has limits: heat and cold intense
Th' extremes creating; while progressive warmth
Fills up, between, the modulated scale.
Thus each degree, though varying, varies not
For ever, by extremes adverse confin'd,
Combustion here, and there the polar ice.

But mark this truth, a truth connected close,
That all primordial seeds, of shape alike,
Alike are endless; for though few the forms
Those seeds admit, yet finite were themselves
Th' entire of things, a doctrine erst disprov'd,

---

those of every figure are of equal utility and importance in the world, it is in the same manner natural to suppose that they are all equally innumerable, or infinite. Were it not so, indeed, the harmony of creation would be destroyed, and the different orders of beings not arise with a similar precision: for there would then be either a surplus of those which were infinite, or a defalcation in those which were not. Epicurus himself has noticed this axiom of our poet in his epistle to Herodotus: πάντα ἀπαντά δι’ σχετικοῖς, ἀπλοῖς ἀπαντῶν σεν ἀτόμων, εὐ γαής, &c.
Finitam constare: id, quod non esse probavi.

Quod quoniam docui, nunc suaviloquis ego paucis
Versibus obtendam, corpuscula materiae
Ex infinito summam rerum usque tenere,
Undique protelo plagarum continuato.

Nam, quod rara vides magis esse animalia quaedam,
Fecundamque magis naturam cernis in illis;
At regione, locoque alio, terrisque remotis,
Multa licet genere esse in eo; numerumque repleri:

Sic, uti quadrupedum cum primis esse videmus
In genere anguimanos elephantos; India quorum
Milibus e multis vallo munitur eburno,
Ut penitus nequeat penetrari: tanta ferarum
Vis est; quam nos perpauca exempla videmus.

Ver. 532. *Come, then, while thus, in short, but sweetest verse,*] Gassendi, in his commentary on this part of our poet, contends, that this, and the three following verses, should be omitted, as irrelevant to the subject. The connexion, however, I think, is obvious, and the verses themselves are possess of no small beauty. Independently of which, if every similar fancy of every expositor and commentator, were to be equally submitted to, not the text of Lucretius alone, but that of every other classical poet, would be so mangled, curtailed, and varied, that, in the end, we should not have a single line left of acknowledged originality. Lucretius has suffered too much from such fanciful alterations already.

Ver. 542. *—myriad guard,
As with an iv'ry mound, all India's sons:*] The frequent use of the elephant in ancient, as well as modern wars in this country, is too generally known to need any particular detail. The term *val- lum,* however, (*mound or wall,*) employed by our poet in the original, receives a large accession of force and beauty from the observations of both Polybius and Pliny, that in India the houses of the wealthy were frequently inlaid with ivory, and the stalls of their beasts inclosed with elephants' trunks. Polyb. l. v. Plin. Nat. Hist. I. viii. c. 10. See also note on v. 23. of the present book, where the same subject is still farther discussed.

Dalrymple informs us, that one of the titles of the king of Ava and Pegu, at the present moment, is "Lord of White, Red, and Spotted Elephants:" of which colours, however, it appears that the white has by far the pre-eminence, in consequence of a.
Book II. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Were finite too, by bounds surmountless chain'd.
Come, then, while thus, in short but sweetest verse,
We prove them infinite; prove hence alone
The world's vast fabric lives, cemented strong
By blows re-active unremitted urg'd.

Few are the forms the casual sight surveys
Of brutes exotic; and, with us, but small
Their unprolific power: yet foreign climes,
And realms far distant, view each class complete,
Boundless in number. Thus, though seldom here
Heaves the huge elephant his pond'rous limbs,
Prince of the savage tribes; yet myriads guard,
As with an iv'ry mound, all India's sons;
A mound no power can pierce. Such the vast stores
That Nature boasts in orders deem'd most rare.

Thomson, in his picturesque description of Asia, has not forgotten to introduce this gigantic animal:

—where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave,
Or mid the central depths of blackening wood,
High rais'd in solemn theatre around,
Leans the huge elephant.—Regardless he
Of what the never-resting race of men
Project: thrice happy! could he escape their
guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps;
Or with his towery grandeur swell their state.
The pride of kings! or else his strength pervert,
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray.

SUMMER, v. 718.
Sed tamen, id quoque utei concedam, quam lubet esto
Unica res quaedam nativo corpore sola,
Quoi similis toto terrarum non sit in orbi;
Infinita tamen nisi erit vis materiai,
Unde ea progigni possit concepta, creari
Non poterit: neque, quod super est, procrescere, alique.
Quippe et enim sumant oculi, finita per omne
Corpora jactari unius genitalia rei;
Unde, ubi, quâ vi, et quo pacto, congressa coibunt,
Materiâ tanto in pelago, turbâque alienâ?
Non, ut opinor, habent rationem conciliandi:
Sed, quasi, naufragiiis magnis multisque coortis,
Disjectare solet magnum mare transtra, cavernas,

Ver. 546. Yet could creation's utmost scope produce
A form unparallel'd by all that breathe,

Ver. 557. As when the main,
World'd into fury, many a mighty ship
Wrecks ruthless, and towards every coast impels

Silius appears, obviously, to have imitated this description of a tempest, in the following lines:

Sic Lagea ratis, vasto velut insula ponto
Conspecta, illis scopulis ubi nubifer Eurus
Naufragium spargens, operit mare: jamque per undas
Et transtra, et mali, laceroque aplustria velo,
Et miseri fluitant, removentes aequora, natæ.

So strikes the Lagean bark, the shore at hand,
Against some rock that skulks beneath the strand,
When arm'd with storms, and scattering ship
wrecks wide,
Fierce Eurus blocks the repercussive tide:
Masts, planks, and seamen, sails, and streamers torn,
O'er the wild waves in one rude wreck are borne.
Yet could creation's utmost scope produce
A form unparallel'd by all that breathes,
Alone and individual,—were the base
Not infinite whence first the monster sprang,
How sprang he then at all? nor birth were his,
Nor e'en, though born, the power to nurture life.
But grant the priinal atoms whence alone
Such individual springs, were finite found,
How, when, and where, by what concerted plan,
What pow'r innate, could e'er those atoms meet,
Through ocean, scatter'd of ungenial seeds?
These time could never join. As when the main,
Work'd into fury, many a mighty ship
Wrecks ruthless, and tow'rd's every coast impels

There is a bold picture of the same phenomenon in Dyer's Fleece, which I will transcribe for a comparison. He is speaking of Lord Anson's trending round the coasts of Patagonia:

——Fast-gathering tempests rous'd
    Huge Ocean, and involv'd him: all around
    Whirlwind, and snow and hail, and horror: now
    Rapidly, with the world of waters, down
    Descending to the channels of the deep,
    He view'd th' uncover'd bottom of th' abyss,
    And now the stars, upon the loftiest point
    Toss'd of the sky-mixt surges. Oft the burst
    Of loudest thunder, with the dash of seas,
    Tore the wild-flying sails, and tumbling masts,
    While flames, thick-flashing in the gloom, re-
    veal'd
    Ruins of decks and shrouds, and sights of death.

B. iv.

I much suspect, however, that this description of Dyer, more especially the latter part of it, is drawn from Voltaire, who thus expresses himself in his Henriade:

L'astre brillant du jour à l'instant s'obscurcit;
L'air siffle, le ciel gronde, et l'onde au loin mugit;
Les vents sont déchainés sur les vagues emues;
La foudre étincelante eclate dans les nues;
Et le feu des eclairs, et l'abysme des flots,
Montraient par-tout la mort aux pâles matelots.

L. iv.

The reader may accept of the following version:

At once dread darkness veils the bright day-
    star;
Air sighs, heaven howls, and ocean groans afar:
    Loose fly the wild winds o'er the tortur'd waves,
Through the rent clouds the peeling thunder roars;
    And fires above, and boundless gulps below,
To the pale crew, new deaths, new dangers show.

L. 12
Antennas, proram, malos, tonsasque, natanteis; 
Per terrarum omnes oras fluitantia aplustra
Ut videantur, et indicium mortalibus edant,
Infidi maris insidias, vireisque, dolumque,
Ut vitare velit, neve ullo tempore credant,
Subdola quom ridet placidi pellacia ponti:
Sic tibi, si finita semel primordia qucedam
Constitues, sevom debebunt sparsa per omnem
Disjectare aestus divorsei materiai:
Numquam in concilium ut possint compulsa coire;
Nec remorari in concilio, nec crescere aducta:

Ver. 559. —towards every coast impels
Masts, yards, and streamers, cordage, sails, and helms,
And planks disparted,—] Cowper appears to have had this description of Lucretius before him, when writing the following lines, which compose a part of his very beautiful little poem, "On the Receipt of his Mother's Picture out of Norfolk:"

But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distrest,—
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest-tost,
Sails ript, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.

Few poets have been more felicitous in their description of a storm at sea, than the wild and enthusiastic Wieland. It is thus he paints the tremendous tempest raised by the avenging Oberon, in consequence of the premature and unhallowed union of Sir Huon and Amanda:

Inzwischen bricht mit fürchtenlichem sausen
Ein unerhörter sturm von allen seiten los;
Des erdballs axe kracht, der wolken schwarze schoos
Giesst feuerströme aus, das meer beginnt zu brausen,
Die wogen thürmen sich wie berge schäumend auf,
Die pinke treibt in ungewissem lauf
Der bootsmann schreyt umsonst in sturmbetäubte ohren,
Laut heult's durchs ganze schiff, weh uns! wir sind verloren!
Der ungezähmtten winde wut,
Der ganze horizonzt in einen höllenrachen
Verwandelt, lanter glut, des schiffes stetes krachen,
Das wechselsweis bald von der tiefsten flut
Verschlungen scheint, bald, himmelan getrieben,
Auf wogenspitzen schwelt, die unter ihm zerstieben,
Dies alles, stark genug, die todten aufzuschrecken,
Musst endlich unser paar aus seinem taumel wecken.

Meanwhile the tumult maddens more and more,
Fierce from all sides at once a whirlwind breaks,
Rock'd by rude gusts, th' earth confus'dly shakes,
The welkin flames with lightning vaulted o'er:
High in the air by surging tempests cast,
Masts, yards, and streamers, cordage, sails, and helms, 560
And planks disparted, teaching as they float
What dangers lurk unseen; what snares to lure
Unthinking mortals;—and forewarning loud
To fly the smooth temptation, nor e'en once
Trust the false waves, though deck'd in loudest laugh:
So, should'st thou make the primal seeds of aught
Once finite, instant the tumultuous war
Of adverse atoms, through the boundless void
Drives them far-distant—never more to meet,
Or met, cohere, or e'en, cohering, grow:

The world of waters bellows to the blast:
The vessel reels at random to and fro,
The boatswain calls in vain, while shrieks of woe
Ring thro' the staggering ship, all hope of safety past!
The wind's unbridl'd rage, the heaven that burns,
Enswapt in flames like hell's sulphureous tides,
The crackling of the vessel's rifted sides,
That now, as rise and fall the waves by turns,
Sink, buried in the dark, unfathom'd deep!
Now rocks upon the billow's ridgy steep,
While all beneath in foamy vapour dies;
These sounds, of power to force the dead to rise,
Awake the conscious pair from love's enchanted sleep.

S o t h e b y.

I cannot close this note, long as it is, without recommending to the reader's perusal, at his own leisure, that full, and, in my opinion, unrivalled description of a sea-storm, introduced by Camoens into the sixth book of his Lusiad. The passage is far too voluminous for insertion, but it begins thus:

Mas neste passo assi promptos estando,
Eis o mestre, que olhando os ares anda

O apito toca, accordão desportando
Os marinheiros d' húia e d' outra banda, &c.
When shrilly whistling thro' the decks resounds
The master's call, and loud his voice rebounds;
Instant from converse, and from slumber start
Both bands, and instant to their toils they dart, &c.

I quote from Mr. Mickle's version, who has translated the whole with admirable spirit. On the truly poetical machinery by which this tempest was alayed, and the affrighted navigators conducted to the desired haven, I have had occasion to refer already, in the note on Book I. v. 1.

Ver. 565. Trust the false waves, though deck'd in loudest laugh: ] See note on Book I. 8. and 505 of Book II. and hence, with much probability, the classical and accomplished Gray:

Fair laughts the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm:
Regardless of the sweeping Whirlwind's sway,
That, bash'd in grim repose, expects his evening pay.

B a r d ii. 2.
Quorum utrumque palam fieri manifesta docet res;
Et res progigni, et genitas procreare posse.
Esse igitur genere in quo vis primordia rerum
Infinita palam est, unde omnia subjepadantur.

Nec superare queunt motus itaque exitiales
Perpetuo, neque in aeternum sepelire salutem:
Nec porro rerum genitales, auctificeique,
Motus perpetuo possunt servare creat.
Sic æquo geritur certamine principiorum,
Ex infinito contractum tempore, bellum.
Nunc heic, nunc illic, superant vitalia rerum;
Et superantur item: miscetur funere vagor,
Quem puerei tollunt, visentes luminis oras:
Nec nox ulla diem, neque noctem aurora, sequuta est,
Quæ non audierit, mixtos vagitibus, ægros
Ploratus, Mortis comites, et Funeris atri.

Illud in hiis obsignatum quoque rebus habere
Convenit, et memori mandatum mente tenere;
Nihil esse, in promptu quorum natura videtur,
Quod genere ex uno consistat principiorum:
Nec quidquam, quod non permixto semine constet.
Et, quæquomque magis vis multas possidet in se,
Atque potestates, ita plurima principiorum
In sese genera, ac varias docet esse figuras.
Facts without which Creation’s self would fail,
As all must thus proceed, augment, mature.
And hence the primal seeds of all that live
Must, too, be boundless, whence each want is fed.

Nor can the mortal motions that wear out
The varied forms of things, with utter doom,
Prevail for ever: nor e’en those, revers’d,
Of genial pow’r, that quicken into life,
Can, through perpetual time, that life sustain.
Thus war eternal, midst the seeds of things,
With equal triumph reigns; now here, now there,
The vital pow’rs o’ercoming, and o’ercome.
The sigh funereal mingles with the bleat
Of babes just bursting to the light of heaven;
Nor night o’er day, nor morn o’er night prevails,
But marks the discord—Infancy’s shrill cry
Mixt with sick moans, th’ apparitors of Death.

This too, attentive, treasure in thy mind:
That nought the sight surveys, the soul conceives,
Flows from one class of primal seeds alone.
Whate’er exists is compound; and the more
The latent powers, the energies it boasts,
The more complex its nature; rear’d to life
From seeds more various, and of various shape.
Principio, tellus habet in se corpora prima, 
Unde mare inmensum, volventes frigora, funtes
Adsidue renowen; habet, ignes unde orientur:
Nam multis subcensa locis ardent sola terrae;
Eximiis vero furit ignibus inpetus Aetnae.
Tum porro nitidas fruges, arbustaque lacta,
Gentibus humanis habet unde extollere possit:
Unde etiam fluidas frundeis, et pabula lacta,
Montivago generi possit præbere ferarum;
Qua re magna deum mater, materque ferarum,
Et nostri genetrix haec dicta est corporis una.

Ver. 595. First Earth herself the essential atoms holds] In proof of his assertion, that nothing created is produced from one class of atoms alone, the poet, in the first place, adverts to the formation of the Earth, which, as before observed, the Epicurean school conceived to be an immense system, surrounded by other worlds, or other immense systems of the same genus. See notes on verse 544 and 1132 of the present book.

Ver. 595. — the essential atoms holds
Of streams and fountains, whence the main rises, &c.] The whole of this passage is beautifully and metaphorically imitated by Statius, in his apostrophe to the earth. I have already quoted the copy in a prior note.

Ver. 604. Hence mighty Mother of th' immortal gods,
Of brutes, and men, is Earth full frequent sign'd.] To this effect, are the following verses in the Hymn of Orpheus, in which Earth, herself, is represented as speaking:

Mother of gods and mortal men, on me
Th' expansive heavens above, the fields below,
And airs, and seas depend.

And equally in point, as well as more generally illustrative, are the verses that follow from the celebrated Hymn to Cybele, attributed to Homer:

Me, the great mother of all gods and men,
The Muse symphonous sings, from Jove supreme
Descended:—me the trumpet's clam'rous note,
The drum's loud thunder, and the pipe acclaim,—
And wolves and lions with exulting roar,
Resounding mountains, and harmonious shades.

The deification of the Earth is differently accounted for: Mr. Bryant's system is, perhaps, after all, the most plausible, though it wants a foundation, and is, in other respects, too fanciful, especially in its etymologies. The reader will find a more general account of it in the note on ver. 1167 of this book. According to this hypothesis, the idolatry of
Book II.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.

First Earth herself th' essential atoms holds Of streams and fountains, whence the main renews; Holds in herself the secret seeds of fires, Oft the brown heath wide-parching, unperceiv'd, And oft, like Aetna, blazing to the day: And holds each embryon, whence, to glad mankind, Springs the gay corn, the blossom'd fruit-tree springs, Or whence the brutal tribes that roam at large Draw their green banquets, and possess their shades. Hence mighty Mother of th' Immortal Gods, Of brutes, and men, is Earth full frequent and feign'd.

The earlier ages of the post-diluvian world are divisible into three classes, the arkite, the solar, and the ophite. The first female divinity ever invented, was, according to Mr. Bryant, a deification of the ark, under the appellation of Isis, Aphrodite, or Venus; and from the circumstance of its containing, in its womb, the whole existing world of animals—even the patriarchs themselves, who were afterwards deified and worshipped—this deity was denominated, in Egypt, where the superstition took deepest root, Da-Meter, Δαμήτηρ, "the mother of gods and men," the great first principle of all things. In the note above referred to, I have observed, from the same hypothesis, that she had two annual feasts appropriated to her honour; during which periods all her priests assisted in a public exhibition and procession of a little ark, typical of her original existence, and all the people pressed forwards to worship it; and that the greatest degree of joy and idolatrous exultation prevailed on these occasions. In process of time, however, as mankind descended from the period of the flood, this important event became less deeply impressed on their minds. They then beheld all things originating from the earth; from which they also conceived that the sun, moon, and stars, the habitations of their fabulous deities, and, consequently, that these deities themselves, primarily arose. On the earth, as well as the ark, they now therefore conferred the name of Da-Meter, or Δαμήτηρ, "the common mother of all things;" gods and men, as well as plants and animals; writing it, perhaps, originally, Γημήτηρ, Ge-Meter, or "Mother-earth," which, by an easy convertibility, was transferred into the very title bestowed on Isis, or Aphrodite. Having thus transferred to the Earth the name or title originally applied to Isis, they also instituted a similar system of religious feasts, and this junior Da-Meter, or deified Γη, or Earth, had her own solemn processions and exhibitions, as well as the deified Ark or Isis—of which one is here described by our poet; processions and exhibitions, which were conducted with as much pomp and festivity as those originally invented in honour of Isis or Venus Da-Meter: the only difference consisting in this, that, instead of the sacred Ηῆρ (Hip) or ark, in which, during one of the annual feasts, was placed an image of Osiris, or Noah, a crescent cwt was introduced, in which a female was placed, personifying the Goddess Earth herself; while, instead of pouring water into the ark to prove its soundness and freedom from leaking.
Hanc veteres Graiūm doctei cecinere poëtæ
Sedibus in curru bijugos agitare leones:
Aēris in spatio magnam pendere docentes
Tellurem, neque posse in terrâ sistere terram.
Adjunxere feras; quod, quam vis ecfera, proles

sprays of roses, and other flowers, her own immediate productions, were scattered round on every side, and the priests and priestesses were overshadowed with immense quantities of crescent, or circular garlands.

Besides the name of Da-Meter, the ancients also bestowed upon the Earth, after her apotheosis, the additional appellations of Rhea, Ops, Cybele, and Mother of Ida. And, perhaps, the whole of these, like the term Da-Meter itself, were, originally, only so many different titles conferred upon Isis, Aphrodite, or Venus. The first is said to be derived from Ρεσ (Reō) to flow, and, consequently, means a fountain: “the fountain, or first source of all things;” but, from the admitted origin of Venus, is far more applicable to her than to the Earth. It is, moreover, contended, that Ρεσ and Ζης, the signification of which are nearly alike, were convertible terms, the latter being changed into the former by the use of the Attic dialect; and that they were derived from the same Egyptian radical, whence the modern Copts have acquired their Τές and Ζις, which still mean “to drink,” or “partake of the fountain.” But Zēs, Ζης, and Dia, were, doubtless, applied to Venus; and we can have little hesitation, therefore, in admitting that Rhea (Ρεσ) was, in like manner, appropriated to her originally; and, like Da-Meter, was hence deduced as a title for the deified Ρής or Earth. With respect to the second term, Ὑψ (Ες), there can be no doubt, we are told, that this is of arkite origin, and an early appellation of Venus; and that hence Pelopia, or Thyatira, which are commutable terms for the same place, was a city peculiarly dedicated to this goddess. It is also asserted, that Cybele (οὐδενῶς from Cu-Bel, "the temple of Bel,"') was only an additional appellation for Venus, Isis, or the arkite goddess: that Bel was the chief deity of the Syrians, and represented, like the Egyptians’ 26, under the form of a serpent or dragon, which was, unquestionably, an arkite emblem. From Bel, or Belial, the Greeks obtained Belias, which, consistently with this system, is interpreted by Hesychius Δείας, Draco: a remark advanced by Mr. Allwood in support of the Byzantine theory. As to the term Idea Mater, it is still more conspicuous, we are told, that this was deduced from Venus, than either of the others. Ida was the name of two mountains, one in Phrygia, and one in Crete: on the former, Venus was said to have received the judgment of Paris; and the whole island in which the latter was placed, was peculiarly consecrated to her worship. Admitting the primary hypothesis, it should seem to follow, from these observations, which I have selected with some care, that the whole of the names and titles of Ρής, or the deified Earth, were derived from Isis, or Venus, the earliest female divinity personified by the idolaters of Babylon.

Ver. 607. Paint drawn by lions in a car sublime:] Virgil acquaints us with the same fact, in the following lines, as well as in many other places:

Alina parens Idea Deīm, cui Dindyma cordi,
Turrigeræque urbes, bijugique ad franca leones:

Æn. I. x. v. 252.

—great mother of the deities
With turrets crown’d, on Ida’s holy hill,
Fierce lions rein’d, and, curb’d, obey thy will.

Dryden.

In this passage, the common editions of Dryden’s translation give us tygers, instead of lions. Virgil himself, however, says nothing of tygers, and perhaps the English version is only a typographic error. Macrobius adds the following explanation to that of our own poet: and confirms, in a greater degree, the
error of Dryden, or his transcribers: “haec dea leonibus vehitur, validis, impetu, &c.” L. i. c. 21. “This goddess is drawn by lions, animals renowned for their fire and impetuosity. These are qualities which are attributed to the heavens, within whose circumference is contained the air, that sustains and carries forwards the earth.” The motive assigned by Lucretius is, however, much more pertinent and natural.

Vcr. 608. — in ether pois’d, she hangs
Unpropt by aught beneath; — ]To this couplet and opinion of Lucretius, Ovid refers, in that well-known passage of his Metamorphoses:
Nec circumfuso pendentibus aere tellus
Ponderibus librata suis. L. i.
Ere earth, self-balanc’d, was in ether hung.
Whence, perhaps, Milton:
And earth, self-balanc’d, on her centre hung.
The sublime author of the Book of Job has a passage perfectly parallel, Ch. xxi. 7.

The north or north-pole ( الحمل ) is here used synonymous for the heavens at large, the inhabitants of Idumaea knowing nothing of the south. The second verse of this beat or couplet, has generally been supposed to refer to the creation of the world out of nothing; but it is hence obvious, that it rather alludes to the cosmology of Idumaea, or of Egypt; from the latter of which countries, it is probable, that the philosophers of Greece derived the doctrine before us.

Achilles Tatius, a Platonist, and historian of the sixth century, gives us the following exemplification of the manner in which the earth is thus suspended: “Put,” says he, “a single seed of millet, or grain of any thing similar, into a bladder, and blow the bladder gradually full of air, and the seed or grain will be carried up, and retained in the middle of it. In the same manner, the earth, being on all sides pressed upon equally by the air, remains suspended in its centre.” In Arat. Phenomen. This method of philosophizing, however, cannot but remind us of the Indian story of the elephant and the turtle; and is nearly as deficient in its powers of explanation.

A very different, and certainly a more poetic, if not a more philosophic account, is offered by Lucretius, in its proper place, viz. Book V. 556, and following, of the present version; in which the reader will find a most elegant and complete development of the Ptolemaic system. In the mean time, I cannot avoid noticing, how strictly and exquisitely Camoens, who has adopted the same astronomic hypothesis, has adhered, in a variety of instances, to his great original. A single passage shall suffice for the present:

Qual a materia seja não se encerada,
Mas encerghasse bem que esta composto
De varios orbes, que a divina verga
Compos, e hum centro a todos sos tem posto:
Volvendo, ora se abaxa, ora se erga,
Nüca sergue, ora se abaxa, e hum mesmo rosto
Por toda a parte tem, e em toda a parte
Começa a acaba, em fin por divino arte.

The frame ethereal various orbs compose,
In whirling circles now they fell, now rose;
Yet never rose nor fell, for still the same,
Was every movement of the wondrous frame;
Each movement still beginning, still complete,
Its author’s type, self-pois’d, perfection’s seat.
Obficiis debet molliri victa parentum:
Muralique caput summum cinxere coronâ,
Eximiis munita locis quod subintet urbeis:
Quo nunc insigni per magnas prædita terras
Horrifice fertur divinæ Matris imago.
Hanc variæ gentes, antiquo more sacrorum,
Idæam vocitnant matrem; Phrygiasque catervas
Dant comites, quia primum ex illis finibus edunt

Ver. 612. And, with a mural crown her brow they bound,
Since with her turrets she guards man's civic rights.] That her temples, in this grand
exhibition, were guarded with this mural wreath or coronet, is still further confirmed by the following
lines of Virgil:

—qualis Berecynthia mater
Invehitur curru Phrygias turritas per urbes.

L. vi. v. 784.

—in pomp she makes the Phrygian round
With golden turrets on her temples crown'd.

DRYDEN.

Ovid has likewise recorded the same fact, and offered the same explanation:

At cur turritâ caput est ornata coronâ?
An Phrygiâ turres urribus ills dedit? FAST. iv.

But with a crown of turrets why bedeck'd?
Is it that turrets she to Phrygia taught?

The Greeks and Romans were accustomed, on public occasions, to distribute wreaths or coronets of
a variety of forms to citizens of distinguished merit of every kind: the decoration varying according to
the species of merit exhibited. The Corona Muralis of which our poet is here speaking, was bestowed by
the commander in chief, as a mark of honour on the soldier who first scaled the walls of a besieged town.

It was composed of gold, and ornamented with embrasures, in imitation of the battlements of fortified
walls or towers: affording a happy emblem of the right which every distinct city or state has to regulate
its own political constitution, and to resist any hostile attempt or encroachment on the part of its neigh-
bours.

Our own poet Denham has here not unaptly com-
pared the scenery of spires and battlements around
Windsor to this imperial diadem:

A crown of such majestic towers does grace
The gods' great mother, when her heavenly race
Do homage to her.

COOPER'S HILL.

Ver. 616. Her many a state, from holy legends, call
Parent of Ida, and with Phrygian nymphs]
I have already observed, that there were two moun-
tains of much celebrity thus denominated among the
Greeks. One was in Phrygia, at a short distance
from Troy, on the brow of which Paris is said to
have adjudged the golden apple to Venus: and the
other in the island of Crete, where was the immediate
residence of the priests of “This mighty mother of
both gods and men,” who were named Curetes, but
who were themselves of Phrygian descent, and to
whom our poet adverts in ver. 639. In either place,
therefore, this Idæan deity may have been supposed
to have peculiarly resided.
The wildest young a mother's cares may tame;
And, with a mural crown her brows they bound,
Since with her tow'rs she guards man's civic rights.
Thus deckt, tremendous, round from realm to realm,
Still moves the solemn pomp, by all ador'd.

Her many a state, from holiest legends, call
Parent of Ida; and with Phrygian nymphs
Surround, her fair attendants; Phrygian term'd,
Since these the climes where first, as fame reports,

Ver. 619. Since these the climes where first, as fame reports,] That Phrygia was peopled at a very early period of the world, we may fairly conclude from an admission of the Egyptians themselves, that this country was inhabited antecedently to their own. The first occupiers were therefore probably a colony of Cuthites or Ammonians, a branch of the confederate idolaters, who were scattered in every direction from the plains of Shinar, during the erection of the city of Babel. In consequence of this early population, Phrygia became soon and extensively celebrated for her progress in letters and agriculture. The former she is said to have derived from the Egyptians, having been taught them by Hercules, who was avowedly of Egyptian descent; and respecting her knowledge of the latter, we may form some idea from the Romans having borrowed the radical of her own name, as a general appellation for grain among themselves: for there can be little doubt that the Latin term fruges was derived from the Greek φρυγα (Phrygia), on the introduction of letters into Greece. See however more particularly the note on Book V. 1483; and Book VI. 1.

Upon this subject Faber has offered us a conjecture in some degree different, and I believe less tenable. Yet, though fanciful, it is ingenious. The term 1de (Ida), observes he, in its original signification, implies mountainous and woody places, as is well known to those who are acquainted with the Greek historians and etymologists; whence he infers, that as these were the original dwellings of rude uncivilized man, the term Ida Mater is expressive of that earliest infancy of the human race, in which they were supported by acorns, or other natural and uncultivated productions; or pursued the savage life of the hunter. But, continues Faber, after the invention of agriculture, she was denominated Phrygia, from the term φρυγα, "to dry or dress in the sun." Whence, even upon this etymology, we may observe that the Romans denominated grain of every kind by the generic term fruges: as also the propriety of assigning to the Dea-Mater a body of attendants of Phrygian descent:

Since these the climes, where first, as fame reports
The field was curt'rd, and the harvest rose.

Were this criticism of Faber strictly correct, it would give us, in the name of the goddess, in her attendants, and in the ornament of her head-dress, an appropriate allusion to the three successive states in which the greater part of mankind have probably existed; 1st, In the unsettled character of hunters or shepherds, wandering from mountain to mountain, and supporting themselves with the uncultivated productions of nature, the milk of their flocks, or the casual success of their adventures in the woods, 2dly, As agriculturists, attached to particular spots,
Per terrarum orbeis fruges coepisse creari.
Gallos attribuunt; quia, numen quei violarint
Matris, et ingratei genitoribus inventei sint,
Significare volunt indignos esse putandos,
Vivam progeniem quei in alas luminis edant.
Tympana tenta tonant palmis; et cymbala circum
Concava, raucisonoque minantur cornua cantu,

and living upon the labours of the plough. And,
dily, As citizens, consociating for common security,
regulated by common laws, and defending themselves
from foreign attacks by walls and fortresses.

Ver. 62. Her priests are eunuchs]—There is a
fiction recorded by many ancient writers, that those
who had determined to devote themselves to the
priesthood of Cybele, or the Idea Mater, were
initiated into the office by a kind of baptism in
the river Gallus, a considerable stream in Phrygia: the
waters of which had no sooner approached their lips
than they became instantly delirious, and castrated
themselves. Many of the Christian fathers have alluded
to this tradition. St. Jerom has related the
whole story as a truth; and Tertullian, from this effect
of the Phrygian river, denominates the high priest of
this goddess Archi-gallus.

There is no necessity, however, for attributing to
the waters of the Gallus any such miracle. The enthusiasm engendered by superstition has in all ages
been equal to such an effect. The priests of Baal, in
the midst of their solemnities, were accustomed to
shout aloud, and mangle themselves with knives and
lancets, 1 Kings, xviii. 28; and long before this
period, a similar kind of penance and mortification
was so common even among the Hebrews themselves,
in the midst of their funeral ceremonies, that Moses
was expressly commanded by the Almighty to pro-
hibit so barbarous a rite. A similar prohibition was
also contained in the laws of Solon, and composed
a part of the Roman law of the twelve tables, Mulieres
genat ne radunt, neve lessum funeris ergo habent. The
devotees of Syria, the votaries of Isis, and Bellona,
were all equally severe upon themselves, yet none of
them have exceeded the fakirs of Hindustan. In the
time of our Saviour we learn, Matt. xix. 12.
that there were among the Jews some who
had made themselves eunuchs for the king-
“dom of heaven’s sake,” and it is well known, that
several centuries afterwards, Origen submitted volun-
tarily, and for the same reason, to the same barbarous
punishment. Origen, however, appears to have had
more to plead in his favour, than many others who had
equally mangled themselves. He had entered into
a vow of celibacy, which, from being possesed of a
warm and sanguineous temperament, he did not at all
times find it easy to adhere to. His own confessions
indeed state him to have been frequently tempted by
concupiscent impulses; and fearful of his being led
astray by their violence, he emasculated himself to
preserve his virtue. In this respect, however, he was
peculiarly unfortunate; for after having submitted to so
crucial an operation, he was condemned by an ecumeni-
The field was cultur'd, and the harvest rose.

Her priests are eunuchs—emblem this devis'd
To teach that sons rebellious to their sires,
Or those the sacred fame that dare traduce
Of her who bore them, never shall themselves,
Worthless and vile, by gods and men abhorr'd,
Boast aught of babe to glad their longing sight.
With vig'rous hand the clam'rous drum they rouse
And wake the sounding cymbal: the hoarse horn
Pours forth its threat'ning music, and the pipe

Ver. 627. With vig'rous hand the clam'rous drum
they rouse.

And wake the sounding cymbal: the hoarse horn]

This wild uproar and intermixture of instruments,
priests, and people, are thus imitated by Ariosto:

Un muover d'arme, un correr di persone,
E di talacimanni un gridar d'alto,
E di tamburi un suon misto, e di trombe
Il mondo assorda; e'l ciel par ne rimbombe.

Ver. 629. —the pipe

With Phrygian airs directs the madd'ning mind:]

The movement, termed by the ancients, Phrygian, was the most enthusiastic, and
best calculated to fill the soul with fury, of any
musical mode the Greeks were acquainted with; and
was, in this respect, diametrically opposite to the
Lydian, which had more of the modern piano, and
was well adapted to subdue the fiercer passions of the
breast, or melt it into feelings of tenderness and
love. Dryden, therefore, has, with much critical
accuracy, represented the old minstrel Timotheus as
selecting this latter genus for the purpose of softening
the violence of soul, to which he had just before
excited the Macedonian conqueror by the true Phrygian
movement:

Some strike the drum with loud rebounding roar;
Some through the taper trump shrill clangors pour:
These the hoarse horn, while those discordant strain
The shrieking pipe, till every nerve complain.

Ver. 629. —the pipe

With Phrygian airs directs the madd'ning mind:]

The movement, termed by the ancients, Phrygian, was the most enthusiastic, and
best calculated to fill the soul with fury, of any
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accuracy, represented the old minstrel Timotheus as
selecting this latter genus for the purpose of softening
the violence of soul, to which he had just before
excited the Macedonian conqueror by the true Phrygian
movement:

Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothe'd his soul to pleasures.
Et Phrygio stimulat numero cava tibia menteis:
Telaque præportant, violenti signa furoris;

The wonderful accounts we have received of the effects of music in ancient times, compared with what occur in the present day, have induced many persons to regard the whole as fabulous: while others have imagined that, with all our boasting, the ancients far exceeded us in their knowledge of harmonics. This last is certainly, however, an erroneous opinion, for we do not know, anterior to the invention of Guido Aretine, in the thirteenth century, that musicians had ever the smallest idea of counterpoint, or the science of harmoniously combining the notes of different diapasons, which has infinitely added to the extent and perfection of the musical art. The Greeks had, unquestionably, three distinct genera, and perhaps a greater variety of modes than exist in the present day; but these genera were never blended together so as to produce the effect of harmony;—the diatonic being always employed separately from the chromatic, and this again from the enharmonic, and each merely differing from the other two by a variation in its intervals. How then comes it to pass, if there be any truth in the records or traditions referred to by Lucretius and Dryden, if almost every passion could be either excited or allayed, and a variety of diseases removed or mitigated by the skilful performer in past ages, that we so seldom meet with the same wonderful effects in the present day? I incline to believe, that much more is narrated of the effects of ancient music, than was ever justified by fact; but it would evince a most unreasonable scepticism, to discredit every thing that is related upon this subject, because many of the cases recorded are fairly and incontrovertibly attested. I incline to believe then, also, that much of this deficiency of influence among ourselves is produced by the very perfection itself, which the musical art has acquired in modern times; and that, on the great mass of the people,—in reality, on every one who is not a scientific student, and capable of remarking, by strict and rigid attention, the harmonic relation of the individual tones of one part with those of another,—pure and simple melody has a much more lively and empassioned effect than the most correct and elaborate piece of harmony, or music in parts, though performed with the advantage of the most brilliant execution. Of this, indeed, the experience of every day is a sufficient proof. Concerts of instrumental music, alone, are not so generally attended upon as those combined with vocal, in which there is less room for the display of harmonic relations: and, if I be not much mistaken, the attention of an uninstructed audience is more rigidly fixt on a solo, whether vocal or instrumental, than on a trio or a glee. The mind of the multitude is distracted by the richness and variety of compound music; and the nervous system is rather generally agitated, than particularly excited to any individual passion. The grandest chorus in an Oratorio, or the fullest finale in an opera, produces much less impression upon an audience, than a single song, or unsupported air; and the Braes of Ballendyne, Logan Water, or the Birks of Endermay, give more sensible pleasure, than the most labourd passage of Haydn, Pleyel, Giornovichi, or Viotti. It is impossible for any one not to have noticed this, who has ever frequented places of public amusement. The former are never encored, but the latter repeatedly; and, provided the music be descriptive, or sentimental, even the merit of the voice itself is not of extreme consequence.—Mrs. Jordan receives as hearty a welcome as Madame Banti. Simple, unsupported melody, is within the comprehension of the people at large; but the complicated and elaborate overture, or chorus, is too perplex for them to understand. The same thing occurs in other facts of a similar kind. Men of letters, and liberal education, may admire the majestic style of Dr. Johnson, or the brilliancy of Mr. Burke; but the uninstructed multitude will, at all times, be infinitely better pleased, as well as more affected, with the unadorned simplicity of De Foe's Robinson Crusoe, or Keate's Voyage to the Pelew Islands.

Music, moreover, is a stimulus, acting in some degree on all elastic bodies, animate or inanimate, with the force of a blow; and diminishing hereby,
Book II. 

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

With Phrygian airs distacts the madd'ning mind, 
While arms of blood the fierce enthusiasts wield

and in various cases totally destroying, the attraction of cohesion. In some description of bodies, it produces more effect than in others; yet it does not appear, I believe, in any instance, that this effect, or influence, results from a mere assemblage of different sounds, or rather from a mere assemblage of the concordant sounds of different diapasons; but is singly excited by some individual tone of sound, simple and uncompounded, and in a certain mysterious manner symphonicous with the constitution of the body affected. Dogs, rats, and other animals, who would be frightened away by a sudden burst of music in parts, have their attention frequently rivetted, in the most fixed and extraordinary manner, by the operation and frequent recurrence of certain notes consonant with their feelings, or nervous conformation.

The French, among other fancies, not long ago made a public trial of the effect of music upon elephants; and for this purpose, erected an orchestra near the booth of a male and female animal of this description. The concert was opened with some light, varied airs, and a base in F major, in the moderate character; it passed on to a trio, from Gluck in F minor; a solo, likewise in a minor key, and some few overtures played in full harmony by all the band together. The animals were at first frightened; but afterwards pleased with whatever was performed, and in whatever key. But the piece that far most affected them was the beautiful canzonette, O ma tendre Muscette! executed as a solo, and without accompaniments. See Letter to the authors of the Decade Philosophique.

The Dutchman, who is related by Morhoff to have had a power of breaking goblets and wine-glasses with his voice when exalted to a certain pitch, was incapable of producing the same effect by an equal quantity of sound produced from a combination of different notes; and must have been so, though it had equalled the volume of the fifteen hundred musicians assembled a few years since, at Westminster-abbey, to commemorate the birth of Handel. Kircher, in the same manner, informs us of some particular stones that would tremble excessively at the sound of one peculiar organ-pipe, but were insensible to the action of every other. Such being the effect of the melopœa, or simple melody, upon the inanimate and brute-creation, it is impossible that it should not have an equal effect upon certain combinations or classes of human nerves: and I am persuaded, that in a variety of diseases, in which the nervous system is the chief seat of attack, it might often be introduced with advantage, were music ever scientifically studied as a branch of therapeutics. Among the ancients, we have many diseases mentioned as having been cured by music, which, I am very ready to confess, appear to have been much more benefited by its mechanical, than by its sympathetic effects. It was a common prescription in rheumatic and gouty complaints, as we learn from Theophrastus, Aulus Gellius, and even Galen himself. But it is highly probable, that all its beneficial results, or at least the greater part of them, in these cases, flowed rather from the exercise of dancing, with which it was always accompanied, together with the perspiration, and copious drinking, which attended such exercise, than from any internal or sympathetic influence it was capable of exerting. When, therefore, Pliny informs us, Lib. xxviii. cap. i., upon the authority of Cato, that persons, with strained and dislocated limbs, had frequently recovered from the use of a remedy of this kind, to render the assertion at all credible, we must believe, that, from the violence of the strain in the latter case, the limb had been merely supposed to have been dislocated, than that a reduction of the luxated bone should hence actually have occurred. Although, undoubtedly, if a man, who had dislocated his knee or his ankle, could be prevailed upon to engage in a brisk dance, the action of the dance itself might as effectually, in some instances, restore the injured joint to its due situation, as the more topical and scientific assistance of the chirurgical practitioner himself.

It is not even improbable, that the cure of the bite
DE RERUM NATURA.

Lib. II.

Ingratos animos, atque inopia pectora volgi
Conterrere metu quae possint numine divae.

Ergo, quom primum, magnas inventa per urbes,
Munificat tacitum mortaleis muta salute:

Ære atque argento sternunt iter omne viarum,
Largifìca stipe ditantes; ninguuntque rosarum
Floribus, umbrantes Matrem, comitumque catervam.
Heic armata manus, Curetas nomine Graeci
Quos memorant Phrygios, inter se sorte catervis
Ludunt, in numerumque exsultant, sanguine fletei:

of the tarantula, if, in reality, music have any effect
upon this disease at all,—of which the celebrated
Neapolitan professor Cirillo has much doubted, but
which is supported by the concurrent testimony of
Redi, Mead, and Fontana,—is performed in the same
mechanical way. Like opium, the poison of the
tarantula is found to produce a very considerable dispo-
sition to stupor and apoplexy. Strong, nervous stim-
ulants, continued till the violence of their influence
have subsided, must, in both cases, therefore, be highly
rational and beneficial; and it is not at all impro-
hable, in persons more especially of irritable constitu-
tions, that musical tones upon a key, adapted to the
peculiar genius of their nervous system, and incess-
antly persevered in, may protract life, whether ac-
companied with dancing, or not, but especially in
the latter case, till the extraneous and morbid matter
have ceased to operate, and be entirely discharged
through some of the emunctories of the body.

Quere. Is it altogether irrational to employ such a
stimulus in the desperate case of canine madness?
But in diseases strictly mental, the powers of the
melopoea might, I think, be more advantageously
studied and made use of, than in any other class of
disorders whatever; and upon which, indeed, it
might operate by its own sympathetic influence.
Alexander, Scipio, Saul, the attendants on Orpheus,
or the Mater Idea of Lucretius, are not the only
persons of whom we have credible reports, that their
passions were either maddened or sobered by different
applications of different musical powers. Niewentyt
and South, in modern times, make mention of simi-
lar facts. Eric, king of Denmark, is reported to
have been roused, at all times, to the most furious
acts, by the performance of certain compositions of
a musician, whom he pensioned. And Boyle, who
has professedly written on this subject, relates the
case of a woman, who could never avoid shedding
tears, as also that of a man, who could never retain
his urine, upon the performance of particular tunes,
symphonious with their respective constitutions.

But it is not the music of the times, but the man-
ners also that have changed, and hereby rendered the
above, and similar effects, much less frequent than
might otherwise have been expected, even allowing
that the most scientific attention had been paid to
sympathetic melody. The simpler the sphere of life
in which mankind move, unquestionably the stronger
the passions to which they are subjected. Whether
the exercise of such violent passions be more or less
To fright th’ unrighteous crowds, and bend profound
Their impious souls before the pow’r divine.

Thus moves the pompous idol through the streets,
Scatt’ring mute blessings, while the throngs devout
Strew, in return, their silver and their brass,
Loading the paths with presents, and o’ershade
The heavenly form, and all th’ attendant train
With dulcet sprays of roses, pluckt profuse.
A band select before them, by the Greeks
Curetes call’d, from Phrygian parents sprung,
Sport with fantastic chains, the measur’d dance

for the general benefit of society, is not now an ob-
ject of inquiry: but it is an indubitable fact, that be-
fore mankind become tamed into a relish for civil so-
ciety and habit, education and example have taught
them to command their own feelings; their passions,
as they are fewer, are more active, and of course
more easily worked upon by any consentaneous stimu-
lus whatever.

Music, then, when employed in the form of sim-
ple and unsupported melody, is a natural stimulus,
operating upon the constitution of inanimate, as well
as animate beings; but far more impressively upon
the latter. And we perceive clearly why, in the
earlier and less cultivated ages of the world, the
powers of melody were possest of a much more ge-
neral influence than in the present day, even when
carried to its utmost degree of perfection. We per-
ceive, clearly, why the highland pipe, the reed of
Pan, the harp of Ossian, or the rude and barbarous
songs or instruments of the natives of Otaheite,
Africa, or America, should possess a greater enchant-
ment over their respective audiences, than the most
elaborate music of Europe over the more polished
societies to which it is addressed. The passions of
the former are stronger, and they are sooner and more
violently affected by the application of general stim-
ulants of every kind.

Still, however, in the present day, and resisted as
it is by the present complicated system of passions
and manners, its effects are often too obvious to be
questioned. And I am confident, that the science
of melody might be much more effectually employed
by our modern empirics in the extirpation of a va-
riety of chronic diseases, than the occult and pre-
tended powers, either of animal magnetism, or me-
tallic tractors. We need not recur for its effects
with the Platonic philosophers, to their anima mundi,
nor, with Baptista Porta, to magic; its mode of in-
fluence is as obvious, and in definite circumstances, I
apprehend, as unequivocal as those of gravitation, or
muscular motion.

Ver. 640. A band select before them,—

Sport with fantastic chains, the measur’d dance
Weaving enfuriate.——] These kinds of de-
vo
ci
tional processions and dancings were not con-

fined
to Greece alone, but appear to have been in common
use among ancient nations of every diversified reli-
gion. They constituted a part of the ceremonies of
the Hebrews themselves; and hence, at the time of
Terrificas capitum quatientes numine cristas,
Dictæos referunt Curetas, quei Jovis illum
Vagitum in Creta quondam obscutasse feruntur;
Quom puerei circum puerum pernice choreâ,

the removal of the ark from the family of Abinadab,
"David, and all the house of Israel, played before
Jehovah on all manner of instruments made of fir-
wood, even on harps and on psalteries, and on tim-
brels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.—And David
danced before Jehovah with all his might." Sam. ii.
chap. vi. 5—14. And it appears, in the next
chapter, that Michal, his consort, was cursed with
barrenness, for having despised the sacred solem-
nity.

In the beautiful oriental story of Dushwanta,
and Sacoontala, whence the poet Chalidas drew
the subject for his Fatal Ring, a drama which Sir
William Jones has elegantly translated from the
Sanscrit, we meet with a similar procession. Dush-
wanta was on the road that led to the recluse habita-
tion of the spotless Sacoontala: "He departed," says
the historian, "under the escort of a numerous army,
composed of horse and foot, of elephants and char-
riots; he marched along, amid the shouts of the sol-
diers, resembling the roaring of lions, the clangor of
the shell or trumpet, the rattling of chariot-wheels,
&c. As the king was passing, there was a buzz of
applause. The women, anxious to behold their
prince, in all the exalted splendour of majesty, stood
upon the tops of lofty terraces—they shouted for joy,
and a shower of flowers was sprinkled down upon
his head, while here and there troops of the priesthood
stood chanting his praises." Wilkins's Transla-

But the Phrygian dance, here referred to, seems to
be chiefly imitated, or, perhaps, only retained, in all
its extravagance, on the annual return of the Hindu
festival of ablution in the waters of the Ganges.
See Mem. Nat Inst. Sciences Morales et Poli-
tiques, tom. iv. p. 41, 42. Mem. de M. Lescallier.

Ver. 644. —shaking their tremendous crests.] The
idea forms a part of the well-known description of
Hector, when about to embrace his infant son, who
immediately clung to his nurse's bosom:

—σατροσ φιλου αλων ασχολεις
Τασδους χαλκος το ειδε λεον επινοξαε τη
Δινω απ' ακροτατης κορυμει νιποτα νοντα.
Il. 2. 467.

Scared at the sight of his beloved sire,
The brass deep-dreading, and the hairy crest
That shook tremendous o'er his nodding helm.

Ver. 645. These picture, haply, the Dictæan train,
Alike Curetes term'd, as fame reports, &c.]
Saturn, in consequence of the decree of the Fates, that
he should be dethroned and expelled his kingdom
by one of his sons, was accustomed, according to the
Greek mythologists, to destroy and devour them as
soon as they were born, intending hereby to frustrate
the determination of the Fates themselves. Rhæa,
Cybele, or the Mater Idea of Lucrætius, for she had
an infinite variety of names, was the wife of Saturn,
and was delivered of Jupiter in the island of Crete;
whose life she endeavoured to preserve from the bar-
barous custom of her husband, by concealing him, at
first, in a secret and retired cave, and afterwards, by
entrusting him to the care of six brothers of his own
age, named Curetes, whom she designed for, and after-
wards actually made, priests to herself. These compa-
nions of the infant Jupiter she instructed, at all times,
to encompass him, and drown his cries with their
clashing shields, or the music of their cymbals; on
which last instrument they had been already taught
to perform, whenever Saturn was at hand, and hunt-
ing for the young divinity.
Weaving enfluriate, charm’d with human blood,
And madly shaking their tremendous crests.
These picture, haply, the Dictæan train,
Alike Curetes term’d, as fame reports,
Who drown’d the infant cries of Jove in Crete,

To the whole of this tradition Callimachus refers
to in his hymn to Jupiter:

Οὐλαὶ ἔν Κυρήνης σι εἴπει, προλα ὁρκοφάντος,
Τεχνὴ πτιτοίγοιτε, ὢν Κρώνος αὐτίν ἐχιν
Ἀστῆς ἒσπεραν, καὶ μὲν στο κυρήνην. L. 52.

Thee the Curetes, when a babe, conceal’d
With close comming’d dance, and clashing shield;
Thus striking loud their arms o’er Saturn’s ear
To drown thine infant cries of grief and fear.

The origin of this fable is thus developed
Mr. Bryant’s system: From Da-Meter, or the
defied earth, “the common mother of gods and
men,” Saturn proceeded, as her first-born offspring.
But Saturn, as his name imports, is a type, either
of Ether itself, or the ethereal fires, as the sun,
moon, and stars; and differs not essentially from the
Greek Οὐρανός, which is literally, “the heavens.”

In process of time, however, Saturn is feign’d to
have married the deified Γαία, or Da-Meter; and from
this junction proceeded Jupiter. But Xuth, or
Xuth-P’-Ait-Or, (Jupiter) “the temple of inspiration
of the radiant Xuth,” or “Xuth, the sun,”
was, undoubtedly, an arkite deity; and so precisely
accords, as he is described by Herodotus, with
Noah or Osiris, that there can be no doubt of both
being the same person. Xuth, Jupiter, or Osiris,
was, therefore, the male deity, and supreme object
of arkite idolatry, as Isis, Aphrodite, or Venus, was
the female. The Curetes (Cur-Ait-Es, “most il-
lustrious luminaries,”) here spoken of as the compan-
ions or educators of Jupiter, were so many priests
ministering to him as the arkite deity: and the re-
mainder of the fable, which asserts the strong incli-
nation of Saturn to destroy and devour him, and
that these Curetes surrounded and defended him
with their shields, imports a contest between the
idolatry of the sun, and that of the ark, at a period
when the latter was either in a state of infancy, or at
a low ebb; and the vigour with which its cause was
espoused by its priests and votaries: a vigour, in-
deed, which, according to the prosecution of the
fable, was eventually crowned with the completest
success. For we are told, that Jupiter, or the arkite
deity, at length, overcame Saturn, or the solar deity,
and banished him from Heaven, affording a type of
the triumph of the arkite worship, or the religion of
Isis and Osiris in Egypt; from which country, there
can be no doubt that the Helladians derived the
whole of this story.

The fable of Saturn’s devouring his own offspring
is, however, highly beautiful, if considered under
another and a more obvious allegory. Saturn, or
Chronos, was the first-born of Cybele, or the Da-
Meter, and the great parent of all beings, whether
gods or men. As Chronos, he was also the sun
himself, the prime fountain of light and heat, which
his name immediately implies:—Chronos (Χρόνος)
meaning nothing more than irradiation, or ethereal
fire. According to the systems of most of the ancient,
and as well most of the modern philosophers, the cor-
ruption or destruction of one thing is but the gen-
eration of another;—and the heat of the sun destroyst
what its heat has also brought to perfection. The
great luminary, and original fountain of all things,
was hence allegorically represented as devouring his
own offspring. The allegory became, in process of
time, a part of popular mythology; and human sac-
chrifices were offered to him in Crete, Carthage, and
Latium, as also in every other country in which his
worship prevailed. See note on Book I. 522.
Armatei, in numerum pulsarent æribus æra,
Ne Saturnus eum malis mandaret adeptus,
Æternumque daret matri sub pectore volnus.
Propertia, magnam armatei Matrem comitantur:
Aut, quia significant divam prædicere, ut armis,
Ac virtute, velint patriam defendere terram;
Præsidioque parent, decorique, parentibus esse.

Quæ, bene et eximie quam vis disposta ferantur,
Longe sunt tamen a verâ ratione repulsa.
Omnis enim per se divûm natura, necesse est,
Inmortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,

Ver. 650. —_left Saturn the shrill shriek
Should trace, and RHÆASHED eternal tears.] Of
Rhæa, see the preceding note. Saturn is represented by
different traditions to have been the husband, the son,
and brother of Rhæa. He was once imprisoned by his
brother Titan, in consequence of a dispute between
them, and liberated from his confinement by his son Ju-
piter. Still apprehending, however, in consequence of
the declaration of the oracle upon this subject, that Ju-
piter would seize from him his crown, and subvert his
government, he continued to devise a variety of plots
to destroy him; and hence it occurred, that Jupiter
was at length compelled to depose him; and actually
banished him from the island of Crete, over which he
had reigned. Saturn fled, with all speed, from the fury
of his son, who still pursued him, and secreted him-
self, according to Virgil, in the country which, on
this account, was afterwards denominated Latium,
or the bidding-place. Here he collected, from all
quarters, a large body of subjects, and appears to have
learnt wisdom from his adversity; for he drew up
a most excellent code of laws, governed with
impartial justice, and even paternal affection, and
is thus said to have introduced among mortals the
Golden Age:

Is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
Composuit, legesque dedit; Latiumque vocari
Maluit, his quoniam _latisset tutus in oris_.
Aurea, _quæ perhibent_, illo sub rege fuerunt
Sæcula: sic placidâ populos in pace regebat;

_Aeneid._ viii. 321.

The men, disperst on hills, to towns he brought;
And laws ordain'd, and civil customs taught;
And Latium call'd _the land where safe he lay_
From his undutious son, and his usurping sway.
With his mild empire peace and plenty came,
And hence the golden times deriv'd their name.

Dryden.

Vossius, in consequence of Saturn's being reported,
by another tradition, to have been the son of Cælum
and Terra (heaven and earth), believes him to be syn-
nonymous with Adam: he endeavours to trace his
name from the Hebrew verb _sotar_, _to lie hid_; and
imagines that, in this etymology, he finds an equal
reference to the flight and migration of Saturn to the
When round the boy divine, in arms they danc'd,
Boys still themselves, and beat to measur'd sounds
Their clashing shields, lest Saturn the shrill shriek
Should trace, and Rhaea shed eternal tears.
Thus these the matron-goddess now precede:
Or else, perchance, they paint how ev'ry breast
Should burn with patriot fire, and ev'ry arm
Prove the firm guardian of a parent's years.

All these, though pageants well-devis'd, and bold,
Wide wander still from philosophic fact.
For, far from mortals, and their vain concerns,
In peace perpetual dwell th' immortal gods:

country of Latium, and the retreat of Adam from
the presence of the Almighty in the garden of Eden.
De Philosoph. cap. vi. Cicero, however, gives us
a very different derivation of the term Saturn; and
endeavours, at the same time, to account for the
romantic story of his eating his own children. "He
was denominated Saturn," observes he, "from his
extreme age—his having been saturated with years.
He is represented as having been accustomed to de-
vour his sons, because time consumes the different
spaces of months and years; and though filled with
the ages that are elapsed already, continues still insat-
tiable." Saturnus appellatus est quod saturetur annis,
&c. de Nat. Deor. i. ii. The preceding note offers
however, if I mistake not, a much happier allegory.

Ver. 658. For, far from mortals, and their vain con-
cerns,
In peace perpetual dwell th' immortal gods:] These six verses are to be found, without any al-
teration, in Book I. 57, and following; in the note
on which passage I have observed, that the Epicu-
reans never meant to exclude the existence of beings
superior to man both in rank and happiness; be-
ings whom they denominated and regarded as
gods, but whose faculties were incapable, either of
creating, or governing the universe; and who were
themselves dependent upon the supreme cause of all
things. These exalted spirits seem to have constituted,
in the Epicurean creed, what the order of angels con-
stitute in the Christian, only with this difference, that
the latter, though perfectly happy, and exempt from
cares and sorrows, are constantly engaged in the su-
perintendence of the moral world. "Ne se peut-il
point," says Leibnitz, "qu'il y a un grand espace
au delà de la region des étoiles? Que ce soit le ciel
empyrré ou non, toujours cet espace immense qui
environne toute cette region pourra être rempli de
bonheur et de gloire. Il pourra etre conçu comme
l'ocean, ou se rendent les fleuves de toutes les creatures
bien heureuses, quand elles seront venues à leur per-
fecction dans le systeme des étoiles." Theod. p. i. 19.
Without translating this passage, I shall give the
verses of Akenside upon it, who denominates this
seat of felicity, and, probably, with a reference to
Lucretius as well as to Leibnitz:
Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque, longe.
Nam, privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, neque tangitur irâ.

Terra quidem vero caret omni tempore sensu;
Sed, quia multarum potitur primordia rerum,
Multa, modis multis, ecfert in lumina solis.
Heic, si quis mare Neptunum, Cereremque vocare

Th' empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode.

Pleas. of Imag. I. 202.

The disembodied spirits of good and virtuous men,
are represented in the same glorious system, as
associating with them, and partaking of their felicity.
No idea can be more consoling to those who are left
behind; and it forms, as it ought to do, the common
theme of our monumental apostrophes. Camoens
thas begins a beautiful sonnet upon the death of his
friend, Dona Catalina de Ataside.

Alma minha gentil, que te partiste
Taê cedo desta vida descontente,
Response la no eco eternamente,
E viva en ca na terra sempre triste.

Go, gentle spirit! now supremely blest,
From scenes of pain and struggling virtue go!
From thy immortal seat of heavenly rest
Behold us ling’ring in a world of woe!

Hayley.

Ver. 663. Vice no revenge, and virtue draws no
boon.] Happiness, according to Epicurus,
was totally inconsistent with a subjection to human
passions of every kind. The tranquil beatitude of
superior beings could never, therefore, be disturbed
either by suffering virtue, or triumphant vice. Upon
this subject we have his own words, as recorded by

Diogenes Laertius, x. 139: Το μακαδιον, κει σφαιρητον,
ουτε αυτο παγματι εξη, ουτε αλη ταρση: ουτ’ ουτι οργη,
ουτε χειρι, συναχται: which passage Cicero has
thus rendered: Quod beatum æternunque sit, id nec
habere ipsum negotii quidquam, nec exhibere alteri;
itaque neque irâ, neque gratiâ, teneri. De Nat.
Decr. i. 17. “That which is blessed and immor-
tal can never be disturbed with concerns either of
its own or of other beings; nor can it be affected
either with love or hatred.”

Mr. Cowper, following the general, but erronous
opinion entertained concerning the tenets of this
school of philosophy, is hence rather too severe upon
it in the following verses:

Yet thus we do, refusing, while we can,
Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
Gods, such as guilt makes welcome, gods that sleep
Or disregard our follies, or that sit
Amus’d spectators of this bustling world.

Task, Book V.

Annaeus Seneca has imitated this verse of our poet
most obviously, in the following address to For-
tune:

——Sed cur idem
Qui tanta regis, sub quo vasti
Pondera mundi librata suos
Ducunt orbes; hominum nimium
Each self dependent, and from human wants
Estrang'd for ever. There no pain pervades,
Nor dangers threaten; every passion sleeps,
Vice no revenge, and virtue draws no boon.

Meantime the earth sensation never knows;
But, blest with the rude principles of things,
In various mode hence various forms she rears.
Call, if thou chuse it, the resounding deep
Neptune, and Ceres term the golden grain;

Securus ades? non sollicitus
Prodesse bonis, nocuisse malis.  
Hippol.

Whence springs it then, that thou, whose power
Sways every scene through every hour,
The radiant orbs, through ether hurl'd,
The balance of the buoyant world,
Should'st look with unconcern below
On human weal and human woe,
Unanxious to reward the just,
Or tread th' unrighteous to the dust.

See also note on Book I. 62.

Ver. 667. Call, if thou chuse it, the resounding deep
Neptune, and Ceres term the golden grain;]
Vida had, probably, our poet in his memory, when he
wrote the following:
Quid cum Neptunum dicunt mare, vina Lyceum,
Et Ceres frumenta——

Poetic iii. 123.

They now name Ceres for the golden grain,
Bacchus for wine, and Neptune for the main.

Pitt.

It is not often the philosophers of a nation, but
the people themselves, who thus multiply gods, and
trace, in every attribute or operation of one Supreme
Creator, a distinct and adorable existence. Hesiod
enumerates thirty thousand deities, acknowledged
and worshipped in his own day; and Bruxillus, long
afterwards, indeed, declared in the Roman Senate,
Vol. I.

that the divinities avowed by the state amounted to
at least two hundred and eighty thousand. But
the enlightened philosopher, whether among the
Greeks or the Romans, who admitted a supreme in-
telligence of any kind, seldom divided the godhead,
and contemplated this confused assemblage of popu-
lar divinities as nothing more than mere images of his
different attributes and operations. In this belief the
more intelligent of the poets themselves united; and
most of them could associate with Eschylus, in the
assertion: Ζεὺς οὐ ποιεῖ οὐκ έπει, Ζεὺς τε γάρ, Ζεὺς δὲ οὐνικος,
Ζεὺς τα ταπινα. Strom. v. "Jupiter is the air, Ju-
piter is the earth, Jupiter is the heaven, all is Ju-
piter;" or, as Alexander the Epicurean expresses it:
"the supreme power is sometimes denominated Ju-
piter, sometimes Apollo, sometimes Pallas." Huic
dcum appellavit aliquando Jovem, aliquando Apol-
Tract iii. c. 13.

So Virgil:

Ab Jove principium, Muse: Jovis omnia plena.
All springs from Jove, and all of Jove is full.

Ecl. iii. 60.

It is the same among the Asiatics. The un-
lettered Hindu, like the unlettered citizen of ancient
Rome, pays his homage to deities without number;
but the learned regards the eternal Bрема as one and
the same power under all this endless divarication,
Constituet fruges, et Bacchi numine abuti
Mavolt, quam laticis proprium proferre vocamen;
Concedamus, ut hic terrarum dictitet orbem
Esse deùm Matrem, dum verâ re tamen ipse.

Sæpe itaque, ex uno tondentes gramina campo,
Lanigeræ pecudes, et equorum duellica proles,
Buceriæque greges, eodem sub tegmine coeli,
Ex unoque sitim sedantes flumine aquâi,
Dissimili vivunt specie, retinente parentem
Naturam; et mores generatim quæque imitantur:
Tanta est, in quo vis genere herbæ, materiaï
Dissimilis ratio; tanta est in flumine quoque.
Hinc porro, quem vis animantem ex omnibus una
Ossa, cruror, venæ, color, humor, viscera, nervei,
Constituunt; quæ sunt porro, distantia longe,
Be Bacchus wine, its vulgar source forgot,
And e’en this mass of senseless earth define
Parent of gods; no harm ensues,—but mark,
’Tis fiction all, by vital facts disprov’d.

Thus varies earth in product; and, alike
In primal seeds, thus varies all she bears.
The steed, the steer, the fleecy flock that range
Beneath the same pure sky, from the same fount
Their thirst that quench, and o’er the flow’ry lawn
Crop the same herbage, differ still, through time,
In form generic; each parental stamp
Retaining close, from sire to sire propell’d.

Such the vast variance of primordial seeds;
Through every herb, through every fountain such.
Each form, moreo’er, of animated life
Compounded, flows from muscle, bone, and nerve,
Vein, heat, and moisture; yet e’en these comprize

The resemblance between this address, and the following Orphic verses, in the Book de Mundo, as quoted by Apuleius, is peculiarly striking:

Of which the reader may accept the following version:

Jove first exists, whose thunders roll above;
Jove last, Jove midmost: all proceeds from Jove.
Female is Jove, immortal Jove is male,
Jove the broad earth, the heavens’ irradiate pale.
Jove is the boundless spirit, Jove the fire
That warms the world with feeling and desire.
The sea is Jove, the sun, the lunar ball,
Jove king supreme, the sov’reign source of all.
All power is his: to him all glory give,
For his vast form embraces all that live.
Dissimili perfecta figurâ principiorum.

Tum porro, quâquamque igni flammata cremantur,
Si nihil præterea, tamen hâc in corpore aluntur,
Unde ignem jacere, et lumen submitttere, possint;
Scintillasque agere, ac late differre favillam.

Cætera, consimili mentis ratione peragrans,

Invenies igitur multarum semina rerum
Corpore celare, et varias cohibere figuras.

Denique, multa vides, quibus et color et sapor unâ,
Religione animum turpi quom tangere pacto,
Reddita sunt cum odore ; in primis pleraque dona:
Hæc igitur variis debent constare figuris:
Nidor enim penetrat, quâ sucus non it in artus:
Sucus item seorsum, et seorsum sapor, insinuatur
Sensibus; ut noscas primis differre figuris.
Dissimiles igitur formæ glomeramen in unum
Conveniunt; et res permixto semine constant.

Quin etiam, passim nostris in versibus ipsis
Multa elementa vides multis communia verbis;
Quom tamen inter se versus ac verba, necesse est,
Confiteare alia ex aliis constare elementis.
Non, quo multa, parum communis, litera currat,
Aut nulla inter se duo sint ex omnibus eidem;
Sed, quia non volgo paria omnibus omnia constant:
Full many an atom, each, of shape unlike.

Thus fire itself is complex; for if nought Deep blend besides, the germs, at least, combine Of heat, smoke, ashes, and translucent light:
And reas’ning thus, thy vig’rous mind may deem Still pow’rs beyond lurk deeper though unknown.

Oft the same substance, as the fragrant gums Burnt o’er the altar to th’ offended gods, Emits both taste and odour, hence from seeds Educ’d, of various figures; odours oft Piercing the nerves that tastes essay in vain, And tastes where odours fail: facts that evince Their forms diverse; and prove that seeds unlike Rear the mixt mass diffus’d through all that lives.—

Mark but these fluent numbers; many a type To many a term is common; but the terms, The numbers cull’d, as diff’ring these from those, From different types evolve: not so diverse That the same type recurs not through the whole, Or that, recurring, it recurs alone From types too bounded; but from types alike
Sic aliis in rebus item communia multa,
Multarum rerum quom sint primordia, rerum
Dissimili tamen inter se consistere summa
Possunt: ut merito ex aliis constare feratur
Humanum genus, et fruges, arbustaque lata.

Nec tamen omnimodis connecti posse putandum est
Omnia: nam volgo fieri portenta videres;
Semiferas hominum species existere, et altos
Interdum ramos e gigni corpore vivo;
Multaque connecti terrestria membra marinis:
Tum, flammam tetro spiranteis ore, Chimaeræ
Pascere naturam per terras omniparenteis:
Quorum nihil fieri manifestum est; omnia quando,
Seminibus certis certa genetrice creata,
Conservare genus crescentia posse videmus.
Scilicet id certa fieri ratione necesse est:
Nam, sua quoque, cibus ex omnibus intus in artus
Corpora discedunt; connexaque, convenienteis
Ecficiunt motus: at contra aliena videmus
Rejicere in terras naturam; multaque cecis
Corporibus fugiunt e corpore, percita plagis;

Ver. 718. And Nature's all-prolific womb propel,
With breath of fire, Chimaeræ; — ] Hesiod,
in the same manner, has described this imaginary
monster:

H de Νάτάρα ποντι, τιπαντα άφιμακτον πρω.

Theog. I. 319.

Next, the Chimera rear'd she, breathing fire
Fierce and unquenchable.
Free to each term, yet ever new combin’d,
Flows the vast change, th’ harmonious system flows.
Thus, through the world, the primal seeds of all,
To all things common, re-arrang’d diverse,
In myriad forms shoot forth; and herbs, and men,
And trees umbrageous own the same fixt source.

Yet not in endless modes combine the seeds
Of things at random; many a monster else
Would start tremendous, the fair frame of man
Sprout forth half-form’d, and trunks of trees have souls.
Shapes then would swarm half earthly, half marine,
And Nature’s all-prolific womb propel,
With breath of fire, Chimæras; things the sight
Meets never, since from seeds, and pow’rs precise,
All spring to life, and thus preserve their kinds.

Thus all must spring, since all, from every food,
To every tribe adapted, strait digests;
And, blending with each limb, the train renewes
Of acts appropriate; while th’ ungenial mass
Meets earth unchang’d: or if, perchance, absorb’d,

Thus also Virgil:

Hæc loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem
Invertère,—

Bulls breathing fire her furrows ne’er have known.

Warton.

For a further account of this fabulous and romantic creature, see note on Book V. v. 921.
Quæ neque connecti quoquam potuere, neque inter Vitaleis motus consentire, atque initari.

Sed, ne forte putes animalia sola teneri Legibus hiis, quædam ratio disterminat omneis. Nam, velutei totâ naturâ dissimiles sunt Inter se genitæ res quæque, ita quomque necesse est Dissimili constare figurâ principiorum:
Non, quo multa parum simili sint praedita formâ; Sed, quod non volgo paria omnibus omnia constent. Semina quom porro distant, differre necesse est Intervalla, vías, connexus, pondera, plagas, Concursus, motus: quæ non animalia solum Corpora sejungunt, sed terras ac mare totum Secernunt, cælumque a terris omne retentant.

Nunc age, dicta, meo dulci quæsita labore,

Ver. 742. But baste we, many a truth lies yet unsungs] He proceeds to the development of another axiom of the Epicurean philosophy; and having discussed the substances of bodies, he now advances to their qualities. He asserts, that the secondary qualities of all bodies, as colours, sounds, tastes, odours, and warmth, do not exist in the bodies themselves, but are only effects produced by the operation of those bodies upon the various organs of sense. This important discovery has been generally attributed to the researches of modern philosophy, in consequence of the long prevalence of the doctrines of the Peripatetic school over those of every other sect, prior to the triumphs of Des Cartes and Newton; doctrines which spoke very abstrusely and unintelli-
gibly upon secondary qualities in general; but, at the same time, clearly affirmed, that at least the quality of colours inhered in the body that was coloured, and formed a constituent part of it. We shall find, however, by a further perusal of the theory and arguments of Lucretius, that modern philosophy, with respect to the qualities of bodies, has only revived an old and unjustly exploded hypothesis; and that Newton, Locke, and Boyle, have scarcely advanced an argument upon the subject that is not to be met with in the present poem.

The "Treatise on Colours," which is printed among the works of Aristotle, and is generally attributed to him, though its real author is uncertain, and is said by some critics, to have been Theo-
Flies off impalpable through pores extreme,
Void of all union, and for life unfit.

Nor deem each animated tribe alone
Such laws avows—all nature feels their force.
For since the difference ’twixt created things
Is total, their primordial seeds in form
Must differ too: not that they ne’er commix
Of equal shape, but e’en when mixt that still,
From re-arrangement, the result is chang’d.

Nor only in their forms thus vary seeds
Primordial; but, alike, in weight, and pow’r,
In concourse, motion, intervening space,
And close connexion; changes that define,
Not men and brutes alone, but bound secure
From ocean earth, and earth from heav’n sublime.

But haste we, many a truth lies yet unsung

---

Epicurus upon the philosophy of colours: for, while he is altogether silent upon the writings of Lucretius, he gives the above-mentioned treatise all the eulogy to which it can possibly be entitled. “Ce traité annonce,” says he, “un observateur profond, et il présente des vues véritablement philosophiques sur l’origine des couleurs, sur le passage d’une nuance à l’autre, sur la manière dont un peut, en unissant deux couleurs en creer, pour ainsi dire, une troisième. J’ose même avancer, que les modernes avoient peu ajouté à ces connaissances jusqu’au moment où le grand Newton est venu changer toutes nos idées sur cette matière, en nous revelant, à la faveur du prisme, le grand secret de la nature sur la composition de la lumière, et sur le mécanisme des couleurs.” If
Percipe: ne forte haec albis ex alba rearis

Principis esse, ante oculos quae candida cernis;

Aut ea, quae nigrant, nigro de semine nata:

Neve alium quem vis quae sunt inbuta colorem,

Propterea gerere hunc credas, quod materiai

Corpora consimili sint ejus tincta colore.

Nullus enim color est omnino materiai

Corporibus, neque par rebus, neque denique dispar:

In quae corpora si nullus tibi forte videtur

Posse animi injectus fieri, procul avius erras.

Nam, quom caecigenei, solis quei numina numquam

Despexere, tamen cognoscant corpora tactu,

Ex ineunte ævo nullo conjuncta colore;

Sciœ licet, nostrœ quoque menti corpora posse

Vorti in notitiam, nullo circumultita fuco.

M. Ameilhon had studied the system of Epicurus, he would have known, that much of this great secret of nature on the composition of light, and the mechanism of colours, had been elucidated, and publicly taught by this accurate philosopher, although it does not appear that he had ever made use of a prism for the analysis of coloured light: an invention and application which exclusively appertain to Sir Isaac. In the modern doctrine, however, there are many doubtful points, and the late experiments of Dr. Herschell, upon radiant light and heat, will, perhaps, establish a new era in this elegant study.

In advancing in his own day, what is now the generally accredited hypothesis, Lucretius was opposed by the philosophers of every school but his own; for they all contended, that colours were essential ingredients of the coloured body; although they differed, in some degree, from each other in their modes of accounting for the productions of colour. The Stoics conceived that it was a property inherent in the elementary particles of matter; the Pythagoreans, that it formed an essential part of the surfaces of those particles when combined; and the Peripatetics, that it resulted from different intermixtures of their four elementary qualities, heat, cold, moisture, and dryness; while the Platonists maintained, that colours were nothing more than different combinations of light and darkness. Against all these Lucretius manfully enters his protest; and in a chain of rationation, which does honour to the human intellect, proves that colour is a real quality, and not a substance; an accident or event, as he has termed it in ver. 509, Book I., and not a conjunction: that its actual existence is in the light
Cull’d from my own lov’d labours. Deem not thou,
When aught of substance black or white the view
Solicits obvious,—deem not, in the germs
Of embryo matter, black or white inheres,
Or aught besides of tint, where aught occurs,
Rousing the vision; since the seeds of things
Live void of colours actual or conceiv’d.
This shouldst thou doubt, contending nought exists
Through the wide world but must evince some hue,
The doubt flows groundless. He, whose sightless orb
Ne’er drank the day enlighten’d, still perceives
Whate’er exists though tints elude his ken.
Hence not essential colours to the form
Of things created: frequent e’en ourselves,

—itself;—and that all its variations and hues result from
different reflections or refractions of the solar beam.
Having fully established this truth by facts and arg-
ments, which reach to verse 846, he next pro-
ceeds, in a more cursory manner, to observe, that
bodies are equally devoid of all other secondary qua-
lities, sound, smell, warmth, and moisture, as they
are of colour: and that nothing actually attaches to
them but their primary properties of solidity, figure,
extent, number, motion, or rest. Throughout the
whole of which, indeed, he is supported by the still
existing creed of Epicurus, who thus expresses him-
self in his epistle to Herodotus: καὶ μεν, καὶ τοις αὐτέ-
μους φωστήρ, μαζί μοι τοιοῦτο τινὶ τῶν ἐφαινομένων προτερο-
θείας τινὶς σχέσις καὶ ἀκρίμας, καὶ μετὰθείας, καὶ ἐκ τῆς
αισθήσεως σχέσις συμφωνίας. Ποιοτέτοις γὰρ ἀλλαῖς,
διὸν δραμά τι, καὶ διώκετος, πάροι τὶς τινὶς τῶν ατομῶν
µικαλλουσιν, δο καὶ τοις ατοµοίς εἰναι ἑκάστου. "The
particles of bodies are not to be conceived of as pos-
sessing any external qualities whatsoever, excepting
form, weight, magnitude, and those which neces-
sarily result from its peculiar configuration; for every
other kind of quality, as colour, for example, and
heat, entirely results from their different combina-
tions, and consequently change as these change."

Ver. 756. — frequent e’en ourselves,
Mid the deep shade of night, by touch alone
Prove what surrounds us, every hue extinct.
"Let us consider the red and white colours in por-
phyry: hinder light but from striking on it, and its
colours vanish. It no longer produces any such ideas
in us: upon the return of light it produces these ap-
pearances on us again. Can any one think any real
alterations are made in the porphyry by the presence or absence of light; and that those ideas of whiteness and redness are really in porphyry in the light, when it is plain it has no colour in the dark? It has, indeed, such a configuration of particles, both night and day, as are apt, by the rays of light rebounding from some parts of that hard stone, to produce in us the idea of redness, and from others, the idea of whiteness. But whiteness or redness are not in it at any time, but such a texture that hath the power to produce such a sensation in us." Locke on Hum. Unders. Book II. c. vii. Lucretius could not have expressed the doctrine he meant to inculcate more pertinently; the instance of not perceiving coloured bodies in the dark is, perhaps, taken from himself; as most assuredly, is that passage of Virgil, in which he says:

_—céæum condidit umbrá
Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem._

_Sen_. vi. v. 271.

_Jove o'er the heavens incumbent shadows stream,
And pitchy midnight robs the world of hues._

Ver. 759. _All hues, more'or, to all by turns convert;_ No assertion can be more strictly consonant with the discoveries of modern philosophy. Colours, according to the Newtonian theory, are of two kinds, primary, or simple, and secondary or heterogenous: the former consisting of all those produced by rays of light possessed of an equal degree of refrangibility, and an equal magnitude of their parts, as violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red: the latter, of all others compounded of the primary ones, or of a mixture of rays differently refrangible. But it is a curious fact, that even in the prismatic series of the seven original colours above enumerated, the middle colour of any three, in the order in which they occur, may be produced by a mixture of the two extremes: thus, a mixture of violet and blue gives us an indigo; indigo and green, a blue; blue and yellow, a green: and in this manner, each, as our poet observes, would convert to each, till the entire series was finished: when, if we were to pursue the experiment, it would again appear, that the last in the order, being red, combined with the second in the order, being indigo, would still produce the middle colour of the two, being, in this case, violet. It is probable, however, that Lucretius had his eye more immediately directed, in the present assertion, to colours refracted from the laminae of shells and spars, or the plumes of pigeons and peacocks; where, from a cause that will shortly be explained, the sight is perpetually beholding a conversion of one colour into another. But the primal
Mid the deep shade of night, by touch alone
Prove what surrounds us, every hue extinct.

All hues, moreo'er, to all by turns convert;
A change primordial seeds can ne'er sustain;
Since something still through nature must exist
All change defying, lest th' entire survey'd:
Fall into nought; for that which once admits
Mutation dies, its pristine pow'rs destroy'd.—
Tinge, then, with caution, the prime seeds of things,
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes. 755

Praeterea, si nulla coloris principii est
Reddita natura, et variis sunt praedita formis,
E quibus omnigenos gignunt, variantque, colores;
Praeterea, magni quod refert semina quæque
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contineantur,
Et quos inter se dent motus, adcipiantque;
Perfacile ex templo rationem reddere possis,
Quur ea, quæ nigro fuerint paullo ante colore,
Marmoreo fieri possunt candore repente:
Ut mare, quam magnei commorunt æquora ventei, 765

Ver. 770. Much, then, import th' arrangement, and the powers,
The kinds, connexions of primordial seeds, &c.] It is the language of Mr. Locke, and expressed with his own precision. Without multiplying extracts from his invaluable Essay, compare the present passage of our poet with the latter half of the sentence quoted from it in the note on verse 754 of the present book: "It has indeed, such a configuration, &c."

Ver. 776. Thus, when loud tempests tear the tortur'd main.] This change of colour in the ocean is thus accurately remarked, as well as beautifully described, by Ovid:

Fluctibus erigitur, calorque æquore videtur
Pontus; et inductas aspergiet tangere nubes.
Et modo, cum fulvus ex imo vertit arenas,
Concolor est illis: Stygia modo nigrior unda;
Sternitur interdum, spumisque sonantibus albet.

Metam. I. xi. v. 497.

Up mounts the main tow'ards heaven, with giddy surge
Lashing the clouds: now from the dread abyss
Sweeping the yellow sands, through every wave

Itself as yellow—blacker now than hell,
And now wide-whitening with resounding foam.
The poet, as well as the painter, is, therefore, left almost at liberty as to his choice of colour, when describing so variable a body as the ocean: and hence, with almost every colour it has been occasionally endowed. Ovid, in the above verses, has arrayed it in three diversities of hue,—black, white, and yellow; and every one remembers the green vestment which Shakspeare attributes to it in that fearful soliloquy of Macbeth:

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? no; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous sea incarnardine,
Making the green one red.

Nor is it in its liquid state alone that the sea thus changes in its hues: when converted into ice, the colours evinced are nearly as numerous and opposite. Thomson, therefore, and Ambrose Philips, are both equally true to Nature; though each pictures the icy mountains of the northern regions with a different tincture; the former telling us that
Thron'd in his palace of cernian ice
Here Winter holds his un rejoicing court. Winter,
Lest, hence, thou ope the doors of death to all.

But though material atoms thus live void
Of hue; still many a diff’ring form is theirs,
Whence hues they gender, and their variance stamp.
Much, then, import th’ arrangement, and the powers,
The kinds, connexions of primordial seeds,
Positions, impulse, and effects impell’d;
Since, hence, with ease the mind may, instant, trace
Why what is black this moment, should, the next,
Pour o’er the view with alabaster dye.

Thus, when loud tempests tear the tortur’d main,

While the latter asserts that

Here solid billows of enormous size
Alps of green ice in wild disorder rise.

Ep. to the Earl of Dorset.

So much, as Lucretius observes, a few verses above:

—imports th’ arrangement and the powers,
The kinds, connexions of primordial seeds,
Positions, impulse, and effects impell’d.

Dr. Hutton seems to suppose, that the water of
the sea, at a distance from the coasts, is generally of
a dark blue, and that it becomes green as it approac hes land, from an
intermixture of yellowish mud; the natural blue and the adventitious yellow
forming this colour. This, however, seems to be an
unsatisfactory solution of the phenomenon, and one
that will not universally apply. In quoting this
gentleman’s opinion, which I do from his translation
of Ozanam’s Recreations, I cannot avoid copying a
most singular appearance of the sea-water, as to its
assuming a variety of colours, which he himself
witnessed in his passage from Europe to Guyana, in
the year 1754, and which he thus relates:

“I do not recollect that we beheld the sea lumino us till our arrival between the tropics; but at that
period, and some weeks before we reached land, I
almost constantly observed that the ship’s wake was
interspersed with a multitude of luminous sparks,
and so much the brighter as the darkness was more
perfect. The water round the rudder was, at length,
entirely brilliant; and this light extended, gradually
diminishing, along the whole wake. I remarked,
also, that if any of the ropes were immersed in the
water, they produced the same effect.

“But it was near land that this spectacle ap peared in all its beauty. It blew a fresh gale, and
the whole sea was covered with small waves, which
broke, after having rolled for some time. When a
wave broke, a flash of light was produced; so that
the whole sea, as far as the eye could reach, seemed
to be covered with fire, alternately kindled and ex ti nguished. This fire, in the open sea, that is, at
the distance of fifty or sixty leagues from the
coasts of America, had a reddish cast. I have made
this remark, because I do not know that any person
ever examined the phenomena which I am about to
describe.

“When we were in green water, the spectacle
changed. The same fresh gale continued; but in
the night-time, when steering an easy course between
Vortitur in canos candenti marmore fluctus.

Dicere enim possis nigrum, quod sæpe videmus,
Materies ubi permixta est illius, et ordo
Principiis mutatus, et addita demptaque quædam;
Continuo id fieri ut candens videatur, et album.

Quod, si cæruleis constarent æquora ponti
Seminibus, nullo possent albecere pacto:
Nam, quoquomque modo perturbes, cærula quæ sint,
Numquam in marmoreum possint migrare colorem.

Sin alio atque alio sunt semina tincta colore,
Quæ maris ecficiunt unum purumque nitorem;
Ut sæpe ex aliis formis, variiisque figuris,
Ecficitur quiddam quadratum, unâque figurâ;
Conveniebat, uti in quadrato cernimus esse
Dissimileis formas, ita cernere in æquore ponti,

Quilibet alio atque alio terræ volvitur in canos
Candenti marmore fluctus.

The third and fourth degree of latitude, the fire above described assumed a form entirely white, and similar to the light of the moon, which at that time was not above the horizon. The upper part of the small waves, with which the whole surface of the sea was curled, seemed like a sheet of silver; while on the preceding evening it had resembled a sheet of reddish gold. I cannot express how much I was amused and interested by this spectacle.

"The following night it was still more beautiful; but at the same time more alarming, in consequence of the circumstances under which I then found myself. The ship had cast anchor at a considerable distance from the land, waiting for the new moon, in order to enter the harbour of Cayenne. Being anxious to get on shore, I stepped into the boat with several other passengers; but scarcely had we got a league from the ship, when we entered a part of the sea where there was a prodigious swell, as a pretty smart gale then prevailed at south-east. We soon beheld tremendous waves, rolling in our wake, and breaking over us. But what a noble spectacle, had we not been exposed to danger. Let the reader imagine to himself a sheet of silver, a quarter of a league in breadth, expanded in an instant, and shining with a vivid light. Such was the effect of these billows, two or three of which only reached us, before they broke. This was a fortunate circumstance, for they left the boat half filled with water, and one more, by rendering me a prey to the
The dashing surge is rob'd in dazzling white, 
This mayst thou fathom hence, and prove precise 
Why, oft though black, from combinations new 
Of its primordial atoms, added these, 
And those withdrawn, oft, too, the deep should wear 
A vest contrasted, whit'ning to the day. 
But were its primal atoms ting'd themselves 
Black, or but blue, concussion ne'er could change 
The fixt result; nor turn the black or blue 
To the pure polish of the marble bust. 
Nor urge from seeds of varying tints, perchance, 
Springs, when combin'd, the main's resplendent face; 
As in the cube mechanic many a shape 
Diverse unites to rear its frame complete. 
For as the keen sight in the cube surveys 
Those varying figures, so the splendid deep,
Aut alio in quo vis uno puroque nitore, Dissimileis longe inter se variosque colores. Praeterea, nihil obsciunt, obstantque, figurae Dissimiles, quo quadratum minus omne sit extra: At variei rerum impediunt prohibentque colores, Quo minus esse uno possit res tota nitore.

Tum porro, quae ducit et inllicit, ut tribuamus Principiis rerum non numquam, caussa, colores, Obcidit; ex albis quoniam non alba creantur, Nec, quae nigra cluent, de nigris; sed variis de. Quippe et enim molto proclivius exorientur Candida, de nullo, quam nigro, nata colore; Aut alio quo vis, qui contra pugnet, et obstet.

Praeterea, quoniam nequeunt sine luce colores Esse, neque in lucem existunt primordia rerum;
Or aught of equal lustre, would evince,  
The varying tinctures whence that lustre flows.  
The diff’ring forms, moreo’er, the cube contains  
Mar not its unity, but diff’ring hues  
A blended tinge create, by each divers’d.

A cause like this, too, all effect destroys:  
Since white or black springs not from seeds so dy’d,  
But seeds commixt of various dyes possest.  
Though, doubtless, white flows rather from the want  
Of each existent tincture, than from seeds  
With black, in part, imbu’d, or aught besides  
Of equal contrast, and as firm a foe.

And, since all colours live but in the light,  
Were hues essential to the seeds of things

the phenomenon of white will be equally produced  
by a skilful mixture of seven different powders, each  
containing one of the seven prismatic colours enumerated above, and proportioned to each other, as the seven differently coloured rays are found to be proportioned in a beam of light; or a circular piece of card may be stained with distinct lines of the same different hues, in the order in which they occur when divided by a prism; and when swiftly twirled round by a pin driven through its centre, the eye, from the general intermixture of the colours that will necessarily ensue, will perceive the whole assemblage converted into a white. This white, however, will, in neither instance, be perfectly pure; for it is not easy to apportion the colours to each other with precision, nor can the colours themselves be supposed to possess the vivacity of the natural and essential hues of the solar rays. And hence the hue which is derived from these experiments, instead of being a pure and perfect white, will appear muddy, or as though intermixed with some portion of black. Bodies, therefore, which produce no alteration in a beam of light, when thrown upon them, but reflect all its colours equally, without absorbing any one, must inevitably appear white themselves: while those, on the contrary, that absorb the whole equally, and reflect no colour at all, must give the appearance of black; and thus, by destroying the light altogether, that impinges upon their own surface, must, as far as that surface extends, produce the effect of total darkness. The theory of Des Cartes on colours was not correct, but he appears to have been the first philosopher who rationally accounted for the origin of the white and black hues of bodies: and, in this respect, he has the advantage of Lucretius.
Scire licet, quam sint nullo velata colore.
Qualis enim cæcis poterit color esse tenebris,
Lumine qui in ipso mutatur, propterea quod,
Rectâ aut obliquâ percussus luce, refulgêt?
Pluma columbarum quo pacto in sole videtur,

Ver. 800. Hues born of sun-beams,—] Pindar is as correct in his philosophy, as he is elegant in his poetry, in the expression:

the purple beams of light.

Nor ought we to forget the appropriate and beautiful address of Cowley to Light, in his celebrated hymn on this subject:

All the world’s bravery that delights our eyes,
Is but thy several liverys:
Thou the rich dye on them bestow’st.
Thy pencil paints this landscape as thou go’st.
A crimson garment in the rose thou wear’st,
A crown of studded gold thou bear’st.
The virgin lilies, in their white,
Are clad but with the lason of almost naked light.

Yet Tasso himself was not the inventor of it. For we thus trace it, verbatim, in Virgil, who applies it to Aeneas, as Tasso does to Godfrey:

Purpureum, et lutos oculis afflaret honores.
L. i. 594.
The sprightly grace and purple light of youth
Beam’d from his eyes.
The term purple, in all these instances, refers obviously to its original and more extensive meaning of magnificent, superb, or beautiful. It is in this sense Milton himself appears to have used it, in a passage strikingly parallel:

Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings.

Par. Lost.

Ver. 811. Thus the gay pigeon, as his plumes he waves,
Drinks in new tinctures from the noon-side blaze;
So the truly classical Gray, in his “Bard”:

—and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-colour’d wings.

The whole description is thus beautifully and closely copied by Tasso:

Cosi piuma talor, che di gentile
Amorosa, colomba il collo cinge,
Ma non si sorge a se stessa simile;
Ma in diversi colori al sol si tinge.
Or d’accessi rubin sembra un monile:
Or di verdi smeraldi il lume finge:
Or insieme gli mesce: e varia, e vaga,
In cento modi, i rignardanti appaga.

Garus. Cant. xv. 5.
These, too, would die in darkness: for, resolve,
What hues exist beneath the midnight gloom?
Hues born of sun-beams, changing but their shades
As, playful, changes the refracted ray?
Thus the gay pidgeon, as his plumes he waves,

Mr. Hoole's version of this passage is elegant, but
so general as to lose all sight of the original; and the
reader must, therefore, accept of the following:

Such, oft, the lovely colours that bedeck,
Amidst his am'rous sport, the pidgeon's neck.
No constant hue it keeps, but ever plays,
With tints diverse, beneath the solar rays.
Now all the ruby in rich necklace glows;
Now its own light the verdant emerald throws;
Now close they blend, and vague, and various still,
The gazer's eye with countless beauties fill.

The beautiful multiplicity of colours which are
thus produced, and perpetually variegated, results
from the resemblance of the filaments of the plumes
to prisms; and the nearer this resemblance can be traced,
both with respect to shape and transparency,
the more numerous will be the colours refracted, and the
greater their vivacity and richness.

With respect to the colours of precious stones, it is a fact, now fairly decided in chemistry, that all of them depend upon a solution of some peculiar metal in some peculiar acid; and that, of the various metals, iron is more frequently employed by nature than any other. But the immediate substance, or preparation of iron, by which the ruby and the emerald acquire their appropriate hues, is altogether a modern discovery, and was, I believe, first detected by M. Vauquelin, in his analysis of the aigue marine, or beryl. The investigation unfolded to him a new earth, which is the basis, both of this jewel, and, as he afterwards ascertained, of the emerald and ruby. This new earth bears a considerable resemblance to alumine, but, nevertheless, differs from it in several radical properties: from the sweetness of its taste the French chemist assigned it the name of Glycine.

When to this terreine basis is added some portion of that peculiar preparation of iron which is denomina-
ted the oxyd of chrome, and which bears a great re-
semblance to lime, the beryl, the emerald, and the ruby become the produce of the combination: and the colour or specific gem depends upon the degree of oxydation this chameleon-like metal has sustained; when highly oxydated, producing a red tincture, and a green when the oxydation is but small. For a far-
ther account of this process, see the French Annales de Chymie, vol. xxv.

The admirable picture before us, of the changeful colours in the plumes of the peacock, cannot but remind us of Thomson's equally excellent description of the opal:

—all combin'd
Thick through the whitening opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several from the surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues
As the site varies in the gazer's hand.

Every one is acquainted with the very correct and exquisite delineation of the pheasant in Pope's Wind-
sor Forest; which was translated into French verse no later ago than 1798, with considerable accuracy and spirit, by M. Viel de Boisjolin. If we compare it with our own poet's description of the pidgeon, there is a resemblance which may justly induce us to sus-
pect that Pope himself had Lucretius in his recol-
clection at the time of composing it:

See! from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
And mounts, exulting, on triumphant wings:
Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
Flutters in blood, and, panting, beats the ground.
Ah! what avails his glossy varying dyes,
His purple crest, and scarlet-circled eyes.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Quae sita cervices circum collumque coronat.
Namque aliqua fit, utei claro sit rubra pyropo;
Inter dum quodam sensu fit, utei videatur
Inter curalam virideis miscere smaragdos.
Caudaque pavonis, larga quem luce repleta est,
Consimili mutat ratione obvorsa colores:
Quei quoniam quodam gignuntur luminis icntu,
Scire licet, sine eo fieri non posse putandum.
Et, quoniam plagae quoddam genus excipit in se

The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold.
Without wandering from the subject, the reader may, with this, compare the following description of Mr. Mason:

supreme in glittering state
The peacock spreads his rain-bow train, with eyes
Of sapphire bright, irradiate each with gold:
Meanwhile, from every spray, the ring-doves coo.

ENGLISH GARDEN.

These admirable verses cannot but remind the Portuguese reader of a similar description of Camoens, in his Lusiad:

Olha de Banda as ilhas, que se esmaltao
Da varia cor que pinta o roxo fruto
As aves varidadas que ali saltao
Da verde noz tomando seu tributo.

Here Banda's isles their fair embrod'ry spread
Of various fruitage, azure, white, and red;
And birds of every beauteous plume display
Their glitt'ring radiance, as from spray to spray,
From bower to bower on busy wings they rove,
To seize the tribute of the spicy grove.

MICKLE.

There is a bold and energetic illustration of this same phenomenon, of the intermixture and conversion of the solar hues, in Mr. Cumberland's Calvary, derived from a very different quarter; and which I shall introduce by way of contrast. Satan is represented as having received the annunciation of his final doom from our Saviour; his whole figure is immediately changed; and even the attendant demon Mammon,

in ghastly silence stood,
Gazing with horror on his chieftain's face,
That chang'd all hues by fits; as when the north,
With nitrous vapourscharg'd, convulsive shoots
Its fiery darts athwart the trembling pole,
Making heaven's vault a canopy of blood.
So, o'er the visage of th' exorsist's fiend
Alternate gleams, like meteors, came and went.

Ver. 819. And as the stimulus the sight that strikes] In the note on ver. 740 I have already enumerated the opinions of the principal sects of Grecian philosophers, as to the origin of colours; and have stated the resemblance which the theory of Epicurus bears to that of Sir Isaac Newton, and which is now almost uniformly adopted by philosophers in every European nation. It is not, however, in the origin or cause of colours alone that these two sages concur, but also in the mode by which the sight becomes sensible of them. It was an axiom, first advanced by Epicurus, and since nearly universally acquiesced in, that bodies can only operate upon each other by contact, or an approach so near as to answer the purpose of contact: but the coloured substances we behold, so far from touching our eyes,
Drinks in new tinctures from the noon-tide blaze:
Now glows the ruby, and now, ting’d with blue,
Sports the green emerald o’er his glossy neck.
Thus, too, the peacock, as direct, or bent
Falls the full beam, wears each prismatic dye.
Since, then, th’ impinging light each hue creates,
So, without light, each, instant, must expire.
And as the stimulus the sight that strikes

are generally at a considerable distance from them. Epicurus, therefore, conceived, that to produce in
the sight the sensation of colour, minute elementary
particles, infinitesimal as the corpuscles of light, were
perpetually thrown off from the coloured substance,
which, impinging upon the retina, became a stimulus
to the sensation that immediately succeeded, whether
it were a sensation of violet, green, or any other
colour. When Des Cartes established his system of
a plenum upon the ruins of that of Aristotle, he
approved, in some measure, of this Epicurean prin-
ciple of contact, but contended, as I have before
observed, and especially in the note on ver. 166 of
the present book, that there was no such thing as
a transmission of minute and viewless particles from
one body hereby operating upon another; maintaining;
instead of such a doctrine, that where two sub-
stances at a distance acted upon each other, it was
in consequence of a vibratory motion extended
through the elastic medium of the atmosphere, ex-
cited by the acting substance, and hereby affecting
the substance acted upon. This was his general
theory; and hence he applied it to the subject now
under our consideration. Denying, as he did, the
transmission of extreme particles from a coloured
body to the retina of the eye, he maintained, that
the sensation and idea of colours arose from a pecu-
lar vibratory motion excited in the atmosphere by
bodies of peculiar colours, and communicated, in
consequence, to the retina. Newton, however, who
adopted the theory of Epicurus, respecting the
materiality of light, and the perpetual emission of its
particles from the sun, extended, along with Epicu-
rus, this same theory to the solution of the sensation
of colours as well.

Mr. Locke is also full upon the same hypothesis,
to which he most cordially assented: and as it is
impossible to give a clearer explanation of the mean-
ing of Lucretius in the present instance, and more
especially as it will serve to elucidate many succeed-
ing phenomena to which he advertis, I shall take the
liberty of transcribing from this most accurate phi-
losopher, the following passage. He has just been
speaking of the qualities of bodies, which, like Lu-
cretius, he denies to exist in the bodies themselves:

"The next thing to be considered is, how bod-
dies produce ideas in us: and that is manifestly by
impulse, the only way we can conceive bodies to ope-
rate in.

"If then, external objects be not united to our
minds when they produce ideas in it, and yet we
perceive these original qualities in such of them as
singly fall under our senses, it is evident, that some
motion must be thence continued by our nerves, or
animal spirits, by some parts of our bodies, to the
brain, or the seat of sensation; there to produce in
our minds the particular ideas we have of them.
And since the extension, figure, number, and mo-
Pupula, quom sentire colorem dicitur album; 810
Atque aliud porro, nigrum quom, et caetera, sentit;
Nec refert, ea, quae tangis, quo forte colore
Prædita sunt, verum quali magis apta figurâ;
Scire licet, nihil principiis opus esse colores,
Sed variis formis varianteis edere tactus.

Præterea, quoniam non certis certa figuris
Est natura coloris, et omnia principiorum
Formamenta queunt in quo vis esse nitore:
Quur ea, quæ constant ex illis, non pariter sunt
Omnigenis perfusa coloribus in genere omni?
Conveniebat enim corvos quoque sæpe volanteis
Ex albis album pennis jactare colorem;
Et nigros fieri negro de semine cycnos,
Aut alio quo vis uno, varioque, colore.

Quin etiam, quantum in parteis res quæque minutas
Distrahitur magis, hoc magis est, ut cernere possis
Evanescere paullatim, stinguique, colorem:
Ut fit, ubi in parvas parteis discernitur aurum,

on our senses. For it being manifest that there are
tion of bodies of an observable bigness, may be per-
cieved at a distance by the sight, it is evident, some
singly imperceptible bodies must come from them to the
cy, and thereby convey to the brain some motion
which produces these ideas, which we have of them
in us.

"After the same manner that the ideas of these
original qualities are produced in us, we may con-
ceive, that the ideas of secondary qualities are also
produced, viz. by the operation of insensible particles
of bodies, and good store of bodies, each whereof is so
small that we cannot, by any of our senses, discover
either their bulk, figure, or motion, as is evident in the
particles of the air and water, and others extremely
smaller than those, perhaps as much smaller than the
particles of air or water, as the particles of air
or water are smaller than peas or hail-stones; let
us suppose at present, that the different motions and
figures, bulk and number, of such particles affecting
Varies, from things that varying dyes educe,
Black, white, or aught besides, and nought imports,
Change how it may, th' existing hue, but sole
The diff'rent figures whence those hues are rear'd:
Hence useless colours to the seeds of things,
From varying forms by varying frictions rous'd.
Since, too, no seeds defin'd with tints are stain'd
Defin'd alike, and every shape concurs
In all that springs, whate'er the hue evinc'd,
Whence flows it, then, that every class alike
Reflects not every tincture?—whence that crows
Robe not in white from seeds that white create?
Or that the downy swan, in black array'd,
Or hues as hideous, ne'er the sight appals?

As things, moreo'er, to parts minute divide,
Th' anterior tincture fades. Thus fades away,
To dust impalpable reduc'd, the dye
Of gold refulgent: thus the Tyrian woof,

It is obvious, that this hypothesis of Locke is a part of the very system of Epicurus and Lucretius; and was employed by them, as will soon appear more at large, in the solution of all sensations and ideas whatsoever. This system, moreover, when minutely examined, tends, in no inconsiderable degree, to explain the Berkleian dogma, that the image of an object in the eye is altogether different from the object itself. But, for a more explicit account and examination of this latter doctrine, and its deductions, I must refer the reader to various notes on Book IV. of this poem.
Purpura, pœniceusque color clarissimus multo,
Filatim quom distractus est, disperditur omnis:
Noscere ut hinc possis, prius omnem ecflare colorem
Particulas, quam discedant ad semina rerum.

Postremo, quoniam non omnia corpora vocem
Mittere concedis, neque odorem; propterea fit,
Ut non omnibus adtribuas sonitus, et odores:
Sic, oculis quoniam non omnia cernere quimus,
Scire licet, quædam tam constare orba colore,
Quam sine odoreulloquædam, sonituque remota:
Nec minus hæc animum cognoscere posse sagacem,
Quam quæ sunt alii rebus privata notarum.

Sed, ne forte putes, solo spoliata colore
Corpora prima manere; etiam secreta teporis
Sunt, ac frigoris omnino, calidique vaporis;
Et sonitu sterila, et suco jejuna, feruntur;
Nec jaciunt ullum proprium de corpore odorem.

Sic ut amaracini blandum stactæque liquorem,
Et nardi florem, nectar qui naribus halat,
Quom facere instituas; cum primis quærere par est,
Fritter'd to threads, its purple pride foregoes;  
Hence proving clear that hues from things concrete  
Evanish total ere to seeds dissolv'd.  

From many a substance sound, or odour fine  
Flies never; nor the race of man bestows  
Odours, or sounds on all things.  
Judge then, hence  
That, since not all things the keen sight discerns,  
Full many a substance, too, as void exists  
Of varying hues, as these of scent, or sound:  
Things, than which nought the mind more clear perceives,  
Whate'er the powers possest of, or denied.  

Nor deem primordial seeds devoid alone  
Of hues prismatic.  Heat, and cold severe,  
Moisture, and sound, these, too, they never know;  
Nor aught of fluent odours, to the sense  
Hateful or sweet.  Thus when, to please the fair,  
Some rich perfume the skilful artist plans,  
Drawn from the fragrant nard, the dulcet powers  
Of marjoram, and myrrh, with studious heed

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composition de marjolaine, de myrre, et de nard,  
et que vous y meliez la douceur de jasmin.  This essence  
of jasmine, I apprehend, was a favourite perfume of  
the baron's; at least, I can guess no other reason  
why he should have introduced it into his version;  
for, most assuredly, not the remotest allusion to the  
jasmine, or to any other than the three odoriferous  
shrubs enumerated antecedently to it, are to be met  
with in Lucretius.  Much doubt has been entertained  
by critics respecting the species of nard which was  
in repute among the ancients as an elegant perfume,  
and which is generally described under the character  
of Nardos Gapanica, or nard from an Indian pro-  
vince named Gapan.  Our all-accomplished coun-
Quoad licet, ac possis reperire, inolentis olivi 
Naturam, nullam quae mittat naribus auram: 850 
Quam minume ut possit mixtos in corpore odores, 
Concoctosque, suo contactos perdere viro.

Propterea, eadem debent primordia rerum 
Non adhibere suum gignundis rebus odorem, 
Nec sonitum; quoniam nihil ab se mittere possunt 855 
Nec simili ratione saporem denique quemquam, 
Nec frigus, neque item calidum tepidumque vaporem. 
Caetera, quae quom ita sunt tamen, ut mortalia constent, 
Molli lenta, fragosa putri, cava corpore raro, 
Omnia sint a principiiis sejuncta, necesse est; 860 
Inmortalia si volumus subjungere rebus 
Fundamenta, quibus nitatur summa salutis: 
Ne tibi res redeant ad nihilum funditus omnes.

Nunc ea, quae sentire videmus quomque, necesse est, 
Ex insensilibus tamen omnia confiteare 865 
Principiis constare: neque id manifesta refutant,
From the pure olive first a juice he seeks
Void of all scent, for nature such prepares,
Lest, with th' effluvia thus selected choice,
Aught else combine, and mar th' harmonious whole.

Thus void of scent primordial seeds must spring,
Thus void of sound; and hence nor scent, nor sound,
Can give to things created: for themselves
Nought can transmit but what themselves possess.
And hence, moreo'er, the powers of heat, or cold,
Vapour, or taste, these never can bestow,
Nor aught alike destructive, aught survey'd,
Viscous, unfirm, or fragile; aught educ'd
From bodies soft, putrescent, or relax'd;
These thou must sever from primordial seeds
If things created on a base be built
Immortal, whence the world's vast fabric lives,
And nought to nought can waste with utter death.

This full premis'd, now, Memmius, mark what flows;
That all the sentient forms the sight surveys,
Whate'er their powers, from senseless atoms spring.
mere combination of material atoms, but of atoms organized in a peculiar mode; and that the whole is, hence, equally perishable, and must equally dissolve at death. The former part of the proposition alone, the creation of perception and sense from impercipient atoms, is discussed in the remainder of the present book; the latter part, or the mortality of the percipient principle, together with a variety of moral and philosophic deductions, unrivalled in their beauty and sublimity, form the basis of the ensuing.

In advancing this proposition, our poet had to contend equally against the popular creed, and the systems of other philosophers; but with a consistency which, I think, must be allowed him, even by those who differ from him in opinion, he follows up his principles through every legitimate avenue, and develops a chain of reasoning from vital facts and experiments, which has been seldom equalled by any philosopher upon the same subject since, and, as far as I am acquainted, surpassed by no one. From the Christian scriptures, indeed, those oracles of divine and unerring reason, we are clearly taught, in my apprehension, not only that there will be a resurrection of the body, properly so called, but that the soul does not perish with the body at death; surviving its ruins, and being admitted, if virtuous, to a state of separate felicity. In this respect, therefore, the result of our poet’s argument is erroneous; but, so far as it relates to the common origin of the whole man, to the materiality of the soul itself, it appears to me altogether unanswerable, and by no means contradictory to revelation. To render the soul immortal, why is it necessary that it should be immaterial? If, at the resurrection, the body at large will itself become immortal, why may not that portion, or arrangement of it, which is the source of thought, be immortal from its birth? Or why should it be supposed more difficult for thought to originate from matter, than gravitation, or any other property which it unequivocally possesses? In every instance in which the soul is represented in the Scriptures to have appeared after death, it has appeared in a material form;—nor could it, indeed, have been otherwise the subject of material vision,—im palpably attenuated and refined, but still material, and capable of identification; freed from the laws of gravity, and able to permeate the pores of grosser substances. There is an insuperable difficulty that attaches to the doctrine of two distinct substances united in the human frame, of powers and qualities in every respect adverse to, and inconsistent with, each other, and possess of no common medium of action; and the war between Materialists and Immortalists, as hitherto conducted, can never terminate. Admit that matter is competent to the whole; that, in a certain arrangement or modification, it can think; that, in the same state it becomes attenuated, ethereal, or spiritualized; that such a modification of it is immortal from its first development, and every difficulty appears to vanish: a point of union is discoverable for antagonists, who seemed to be incapable of conciliation, and the sublime doctrines of revelation become coincident with human reason.

The grand motive for superadding an immaterial principle to living animals, is, because it is conceived that mere matter can never possess the power of sensation or thought. But why can it not possess such a power? Unquestionably, it cannot, in its state of utmost decomposition and simplicity: for, thus reduced, there is scarcely a power of any kind it can possess at all. But whoever minutely attends to the progressive chain of powers it acquires by progressive arrangements and organizations, from the simple possession of gravitation to that of chemical affinities, and fibrous irritability, must, I think, be led eventually to admit that it may ultimately prove the source of perception and thought, as well as of such other qualities. Mr. Locke declared openly, that he saw no impossibility in the production of thought from a solid substance, and conceived, (Book II. chap. 23 of his Essay,) that “created spirits are not totally separate from matter.” It is hence triumphantly said, that Mr. Locke himself sought, even upon his own principles, to have been a Materialist. For, to suppose the en-
This every fact of every day, if scannd’d,  
Far from resisting, proves a truth most firm;

employment of two or more substances, where one is  
amply sufficient, is altogether unphilosophic, and in-  
consistent with the simplicity of nature.

I have said that matter, in its utmost state of de-  
composition and individuality, is divested of all power  
whatever. The simplest and the most general  
power of which we find it posses, is that of gravitation.  
But a monad or individual atom of primitive  
matter, if placed alone in the immensity of space,  
could not possess even the property of gravitation:  
for gravitation implies the existence of two or more  
particles mutually attracting each other: and Newton  
has justly ridiculed the idea of innate attraction  
as an absurdity. Matter, in all its compound forms,  
necessarily therefore evinces the property of gravitation:  
it must, however, be in a compound state, or  
even this simplest and most general of all properties  
could not be evinced. But the modes in which the  
different particles of matter combine, may be varied  
almost to infinity: and a different power must of ne-  
necessity be educed by every variation that occurs.  
Modified in one way, matter evinces the power of  
magnetism; in another way, that of electricity; in a  
third, that of chemical affinities; and in a fourth,  
that of vegetable or fibrous irritability; till, at length,  
it acquire the strong stimulative perfection of the  
mimosa pudica, or the dinneza muscipula; and will  
either shrink from the touch of the intruding insect,  
or contract its fibres, and kill it by a clench. When  
then we ascend thus high, in what should seem to  
be the natural scale of sensation, it is attended, I  
think, with no great difficulty, to suppose, that ani-  
mal as well as vegetable irritability is the result of a  
peculiar organization of simple and unirritable ma-  
terial corpuscles.

But let us examine, in a few words, the first or-  
gin of animals, and their mode of acquiring exist-  
ence. In what does it differ from that of the ve-  
table world? The most severe scrutiny of man  
can trace no kind of irritability in the seeds of any  
description of plants. There is a peculiar organi-  
zation; but no species of feeling or irritability what-  
ever—not even in those of the plants I have just before  
made mention of, the mimosa, or the dinneza musci-  
pula, or even the hedysarum movens, which exhibits a  
perpetual motion in the sun-shine. But these seeds  
are entrusted to the earth; by the action of the earth  
their filaments are either evolved or augmented; a new  
state of organization, a new modification of matter  
is produced, and a new property, that of irritability,  
is created. In the same manner, the new-lain fe-  
cundated egg of an oviparous animal has no more of  
either irritability or sensation than the seed of a  
plant. It consists merely of matter in a peculiar,  
but certainly an insensate, state of organization.  
What then is superadded to it to produce the per-  
ception it is shortly destined to possess? The mother  
broods over it for a certain period of time; but the  
mother communicates nothing but heat, which is it-  
self a material substance: for a common oven, judi-  
ciously warmed, will hatch the inclosed chick just as  
soon, and as safely. A change, therefore, is pro-  
duced in a given time by the application of a definite  
quantity of heat, or of matter differently arranged in  
the organization of the interior substance of the egg,  
in the same manner as in that of the vegetable seed;  
and from a new modification of its matter is produced  
a new and superior property: the fetus becomes  
gradually endowed with the power of sensation.

It is precisely the same thing in man. When the  
embryon descends from the ovarium into the uterus,  
upon one system of physiology, or when the seminal  
fluids of the male and female unite in the uterus, and  
form the first filaments of the fetus, upon another  
system, it is obviously at this time devoid of all sen-  
sation whatever. The placenta supplies it with oxy-  
gen, the liquor of the uterus, perhaps, with nutri-  
ment, though this is uncertain; yet no research  
whatever can trace any thing added to it, but differ-  
cent material substances. In process of time, how-  
ever, a new organization is gradually produced; for  
the first ovum, or embryon filaments, no more resem-  
lies the future fetus, than the seed or the egg resembles  
the future plant or bird; and, with the production of
a new organization, we trace the production of a new power, that I mean of sensation. From sensation, we afterwards discover the origin of ideas and thought. There is an admirable simplicity in the laws and operations of nature. It is the grand characteristic of creation: and we are sure to err in our reasoning, when we pre-suppose a greater complexity in the cause, than is necessary to produce a definite effect. I do not here follow up the vague opinions of Dr. Darwin, with respect to vegetable life, and vegetable sensations; because, if they be not founded upon fancy alone, there is too little ground for admitting them as philosophic truths. Those, however, who are acquainted with his Botanic Garden and Temple of Nature, but more especially with his Phytologia, well know that he contends, not only for the existence of a corporeal structure in vegetables, consisting of arteries, veins, lymphatics, muscles, umbilical vessels, sexual and respiratory organs, but also for that of nerves, and a common sensorium or brain; and the senses of love and hatred, pleasure, pain, and sleep. See chapter viii. of this last entertaining publication. Yet, the doctor himself has been in some degree exceeded by M. Patrin, who equally contends for a similar kind of sensation, if not of structure, in the mineral world; and conceives, from their assimilations and elective attractions, that minerals are as much organized in their own way, as any vegetables whatever; from the stone which we call brute, because we perceive not the relations which connect it with the rock from which it was separated, to the beautiful mineral vegetation denominated flos ferri, which so much resembles marine productions, and appears to be one of the intermediate links which nature has placed on the confines of her different kingdoms, to connect them with each other. See Nouveau Dictionnaire et Hist. Naturelle appliquée aux Arts, tom. xiv.

From these observations it should seem then that gravitation, chemical affinities, irritability, sensation, thought, all equally and progressively flow from various modifications of matter, and from matter alone. Nature indeed appears to show, and Lucretius, who is the poet of nature, undertakes to affirm, that no modifications of matter can continue for ever, and consequently that at death the dissolution must be entire; and the thinking principle of man, the material spirit which animates him, as necessarily perish as any other part of his frame. But the glorious revelation which "has brought life and immortality," the knowledge of the soul, and of a future resurrection "to light," teaches us, in a voice "which cannot lie," that matter may and will continue for ever uncorrupted and in an organized form: it establishes the triumphant belief, that the body at large shall hereafter arise from its grave, to the inheritance of eternal life; and that part of it which constitutes the soul is immortal from its very birth. For a continuation of this subject, see note on Book III. v. 100.

Ver. 880. *Thus into life tb' insensate dunghill rears*  
*The race of worms,*]  
So Darwin:

Hence, without parent, by spontaneous birth  
Rise the first specks of animated earth;  
From nature's womb the plant or insect swims,  
And buds or breathes, with microscopic limbs.  

*Templ. of Nat.* i. 247:

Nor widely different Thomson:

Full nature swarms with life: *one wondrous mass*  
Of animals or atoms organized!  
*Waiting the vital breath, when Parent Heaven*  
Shall bid his spirit blow.  

Summer, 287.

The two English as well as the Latin poet obviously inclined to the doctrine of equivocal or spontaneous generation; the production of animals from the heat of the sun, or other adventitious stimuli, acting upon a proper nidus, without the express copulation of male and female: and it is wonderful to observe the necessity zoologists have felt themselves under of late years, to return in some measure to the doctrine advanced in the text. The creed is generally conceived to have been of Egyptian birth; and was in universal vogue among all the philosophic schools of Greece and Rome. It followed, however, as a natural
consequence from the first principles of Democritus and Epicurus, and all those who, denying the immediate superintendence of a Divinity in the formation of the world, traced the production of all things, animals as well as vegetables, from certain apparently anomalous organizations of matter alone. The popular creed and the mythology of the poets coincided in the same hypothesis. When Ovid, therefore, who has copied from Hesiod his account of the antediluvian ages of the world, relates at length the destruction of every species of animals by the deluge, with the single exception of Deucalion and Pyrrha; he supposes the whole human race regenerated; and this, in obedience to the command of the oracle consulted on the occasion, not from coition of the surviving pair, but from casting the stones of the earth backwards over their shoulders, which suddenly softened and became possess of human features: for, he observes, he,

Magna parent terra caela: lapides in corpore terrae
Ossa recens dicit. Metam. 1. i.

Our mighty mother is the earth; the stones
Upon her surface doubtless are her bones.

In this fact, however, we trace at least the co-operation of man and woman, in the re-production of the human race. But nothing of the kind occurred, according to the same tradition, in the renewal of every other species of animals. For the poet shortly proceeds to inform us that,

Cetera diversis tellus animalia formis
Sponte sua piperi; postquam vetus humor ab igne
Percaluit solis; caenunque, uadaxque paludes
Intumere estu; facundaque semina rerum
Vivaci nutrirta solo, seu matri in alvo,
Creverunt, faciemque aliquam cephe morando.

Catre diversis tellus animalia formis
Sponte sua piperi; postquam vetus humor ab igne
Percaluit solis; caenunque, uadaxque paludes
Intumere estu; facundaque semina rerum
Vivaci nutrirta solo, seu matri in alvo,
Creverunt, faciemque aliquam cephe morando.

All other tribes, however diverse of make,
Earth bore spontaneous; and as down direct,
Th' establish'd sun his radiant ether threw,
And the foul slime, the stagnant marsh below

Swell'd with his fire, the genial seeds of things
New bulk assum'd, new forms of life display'd.

Such was the opinion of the people, and such that of almost every school of philosophy. Aristotle, among naturalists in general, strenuously contended for this power of spontaneous generation; and having had the good fortune to become more popular throughout every European state, after the dissemination of the Christian religion, than any other philosopher, this doctrine likewise descended with his general code of tenets, till about a century ago the whole fabric sustained a severe assault from the united labours of Des Cartes, Bayle, Malbranche, and Newton, who maintained, that all animal life must necessarily be propagated by sexual commerce alone; and be continued either viviparously or oviparously.

But by experiments and observations which have since been made, and that with the most undeviating attention, it should seem that these are not the only means by which animal life is generated: that sexual commerce is by no means absolutely necessary in every instance, and that succeeding races are propagated in modes altogether as numerous and as diverse as in the vegetable world. The resemblance in this respect, between the two departments, is indeed most striking and astonishing; and it is equally certain in both cases, that although sexual intercourse, and oviparous and viviparous gestation, the medium I mean of seeds and bulbs or buds in the vegetable kingdom, and eggs and living fetuses in the animal, are generally employed by nature for this purpose, yet in each department there are also other modes of propagation, by no means unfrequently adopted. The armed polypus or hydra of Linneus multiplies its species, like the water-lentil, by sending off lateral shoots from the body of the parent reptile. The bell-polypus or hydra stentora increases by splitting longitudinally; and these divisions, and every succeeding race of divisions, continue to re-split every twenty-four hours, till the original stock in a few days produces an innumerable offspring. The funnel-shaped polypus
Stercore de tetro, putorem quom sibi nacta est, 
Intempestivis ex imribus humida, tellus.

multiplies by splitting transversely; and every species of it, as well as many other animals of the order Gymnarthridia, as the asterias and hirudo viridis, may be propagated by sections, with as much ease as the most simple plant whatever; and these sections may be perpetually renewed without the failure of an individual part. The dart millepes affords increase by a spontaneous separation, about two-thirds below the head, into two distinct and perfect animals; and we know of no other mode by which it can continue its species. The animalcules found in infusions of animal and vegetable substances, and indeed, all microscopic animalcules, multiply by continued divisions and subdivisions, something in the same manner; and various minute experiments of Saussure sufficiently prove, that sexual copulation, even if a difference of gender subsist among them, which has never been traced, and in all probability does not subsist, has no effect in the present instance: for animalcules of this class taken away, on the moment of separation from the parent insect, and put separately into distinct drops of water, still continue to exhibit the same prolific property without any diminution of power. There is another species mentioned by Bonnet, as existing in the infusion of hempsseeds, that divides crosswise, and separates in every new generation, into four distinct and perfect animalcules at the same time. It is probable, that all these are without sexual distinctions; and notwithstanding the general adherence of the disciples of Linneus to a contrary doctrine, it is equally probable that a vast variety of vegetables exist, which are in like manner devoid of sexual character. The bread-fruit tree of Otaheite, artocarpus incisus of Linneus, is a case completely in point; the propagation of which is highly curious and entertaining, but would occupy too much space to be minutely described in the present note. And although such sexual characters have been traced among many plants, inserted by the Swedish naturalist, in the order Cryptogamia, since his decease, yet it is a very numerous order still, and I apprehend will ever continue so.

Many vegetables have a power of propagating both by seeds and bulbs as well as buds, at the same time; that is, both oviparously and viviparously: and the aphis puceron or vine-fretter has been detected by Bonnet to possess a power perfectly similar, its young being viviparous in the full heat of summer, and oviparous in the latter and more chilly months of autumn. There are various other families of flies that are supposed to be equally gifted. The capability of ingrafting is not peculiar to vegetables; the fresh-water polypus and the sea-nettle (actinia) will endure the process with an equal degree of ease and effect.

The young of many animals are brought into the world in a state of extreme imperfection, without the sense of sight, or the use of their limbs; in other instances, they are able to assist themselves from the moment of their birth. So, while the seeds of most plants fall upon the earth in a dormant state, and require much care to render them productive, in the festuca vivipara and a few others, they begin to vegetate in the parent plant, and drop upon the soil with roots ready formed, perfect in all their powers, and capable of immediate increment.

Most plants that are propagated by sexual connexion possess hermaphrodite corollas; that is to say, every individual corolla possesses both the male and female organs of generation in itself. The corollas of the cucumber, however, as well as all other plants of the class Monoezia, are male and female separately, and require the conjoint faculties of the two to propagate their kind. There are other plants, again, that are male or female through every flower produced: and of consequence, unless the female herb be situated in the vicinity of the male, it will be barren through the whole term of its existence. Such is the order Diccia of Linneus. Among animals we seldom meet with more than the organs of a single sex attached to each individual. Reports of hermaphrodites have not been uncommon, indeed, both amidst quadrupeds and mankind; and nature certainly appears to have sported occasionally in this way, but never in such a manner as to have rendered the possession of
The race of worms, when once the mingling show'd
Wakes the warm ferment through the putrid mass.

The two sexes perfect in the same subject. But the earth-worm, dew-worm, snails, cels, oysters, and many other species of shell fishes, are complete hermaphrodites; and the number of animals of this class is so considerable, that M. Poupart believes it to exceed that of those which are divided into sexes. See Mem. de l'Acad. des Sciences. While these propagate their kinds from their own single exertions, there are other shell-fishes, as we learn from Mr. Adanson, in his account of Senegal, that require the union of not less than three individuals for the same genial purpose. In like manner it has lately been proved by M. Girtanner, that the conferva fontinalis, first noticed by Dr. Priestley, requires heat, light, and water, though nothing else, for the production of this vegetable.

The hermaphrodite power of many of the animals here enumerated, has been long known to the world. It is mentioned by Homer and Athenaeus, but more particularly in the following verses of Oppian:

\[ \text{Αλλ' οὐκ ἐν καλλίστων ὄμοιοι, οὐδὲ καλείσιν}
\text{Οὐτ' οὐν παυλυκτίσια γαμον τιλος, οὐτί κιλαίν}
\text{Μυρίαιν λεχων ἐν ταμητροποιῶν οἰκαί ἱκουσιν.}
\text{Αὐτοίνοι δέ καγαμοντοι σειραλίοις κυρωσιαι}
\text{Εὔχλειους, δίμης γηις αναστρφωσι δαμιάς, &c.}
\]

Alciot. i. 513.

Not thus conchs, cels, and polypi embrace,
Nor purple lampreys rear their embryo race.
In selfish coils, hermaphrodite, they sit,
And their own powers the vital spume emit,
Which gradual dropp'd on sands or slimy mud
A silver offering render to the flood.

Spalanzani detected many vegetable seeds, extremely diminutive in their form, the vitality of which it is almost impossible to destroy either by heat or chemical solvents. In like manner, he discovered the eggs of many animalcules confined in vegetable seeds, still possessing a power of producing their definite orders of insects, after such seeds had been exposed to the most intense heat of burning coals, and even the blow-pipe itself; and, although reduced into the most subtle powder, after having hereby been converted into calces. Thus, too, many animals and vegetables have an equally wonderful power of resurrection after apparent destruction: among the latter may be mentioned the nostoc and tremella, which perpetually spring up after they have seemed to perish; and among the former the chaos redivivum, the vorticella or wheel-animal, the sloth, and the tile-eel, a new species discovered by Spalanzani in the impalpable dust of bricks and tiles. In the case of this last insect, the alternate process of death and resurrection was carried on with success, and with the same animalcule, for not less than eleven times, by keeping it dry and without sand, and afterwards moistening it with water. Eggs and seeds, after a torpor of months or even years, are occasionally revived on being moistened with warm water; and in like manner, some shell-snails in the cabinets of the curious have revived on the same application, after having been kept in a dry state for ten or twelve years.

It was in consequence of such experiments, that the Count de Buffon established a system which appears strongly inclined to resuscitate the doctrine of equivocal generation contended for by Lucretius. According to this celebrated naturalist, all matter swarms with organic germs or molecules, which serve for the nutriment of organized bodies, till they acquire a state of maturity, and augmentation ceases; and for their seminal stores afterwards. But independently of seminal secretion, he contends that when large quantities of these prolific germs are collected in any part of an animal body, wherever such germs are compelled to remain together, they create certain orders of living beings, which have always been regarded as real animals. The tenuis, the ascariides, all the worms found in the veins, in the liver, in wounds, in pus, and most of those discovered in putrid flesh, have, according to this system, no other origin. The cels in paste and vinegar, the tadpoles in the male semen, and all the pretended microscopic animals, are only different forms assumed, according
Praeterea, cunctas itidem res vortere sese:
Vortunt se fluviei in frundeis, et pabula laeta
In pecudes; vortunt pecudes in corpora nostra
Naturam; et nostro de corpore sæpe ferarum
Augescunt vires, et corpora pennipotentum.
Ergo omneis natura cibos in corpora viva
Vortit, et hinc sensus animantum procreat omneis:
Non alia longe ratione, atque arida ligna
Explicit in flammas, et in igneis omnia vorsat.
Jamne vides igitur, magni primordia rerum
Referre in quali sint ordine quæque locata,
Et conmixta quibus dent motus, acdipiantque?

Tum porro, quid id est, animum quod percutit ipsum,
Quod movet, et varios sensus expromere cogit;

to circumstances, by this active matter, which has a perpetual tendency to organization. Hist. Naturelle tom. iii. See also note on Book IV. v. 1264, and Book V. v. 1104, of this poem.

When the conserva fontinalis, or green matter that grows at times so rapidly upon the surface of stagnant waters, was first discovered by Dr. Priestley; and, I believe still later, when the mucor or mouldiness which was first observed by Mr. Ellis to grow on the surface of all putrefying vegetable or animal matter, it was the fashion to suppose that these vegetable substances were produced from seeds floating in the atmosphere, and hence deposited on the waters or putrefactions where they were generated. But the experiments of Dr. Ingenhouz have long falsified this idea; and these have since been confirmed by some very curious and important ones by M. Patrin, who has completely succeeded in establishing the spontaneous generation of these very simple and newly discovered vegetables. See Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle appliquée aux Arts, tom. xiv. Dr. Darwin, who never suffered a system to lose any thing, when once imbribed by himself, seems to have carried this of spontaneous vitality to a most immoderate extreme. The reader may form some idea of its extravagance from the following passage with which he concludes one of his essays upon this subject. “But it may appear too bold, in the present state of our knowledge on this subject, to suppose that all vegetables and animals now existing, were originally derived from the smallest microscopic ones formed by spontaneous vitality; and that they have,
Thus all things change to all things: foliage, fruits,
And the gay glebe to flocks, and herds convert;
And flocks, and herds to man; and man, in turn,
Feeds the soul strength of birds, and barb'rous beasts.
From every food, thus nature's chemic pow'r
Builds up the forms of life; in every class
Thus wakes the senses every class avows;
As through the winter-stack full oft she spreads
The rushing blaze, and turns the whole to fire.—
Seest thou not hence, then, of what vast concern
The modes in which primordial seeds combine,
Act, or re-act, give motion, or accept?
This creed what hinders? what perverts thy mind,
And locks thy senses from a truth so plain
That sentient things from things insensate flow?
What but that stocks, and stones, and earth's dull clod,
By innumerable re-productions, during innumerable
Centuries of time, gradually acquired the size,
Strength, and excellence of form and faculties, which
They now possess; and that such amazing powers
Were originally impressed on matter and spirit, by the
Great Parent of Parents, Cause of Causes! Ens
Entium?" Additional notes to Temple of Nature.
This theory of spontaneous vitality has been, how-
ever, expressly controverted by Redi, the father of
Experimental entomology, as well as by Trembley and
Bonnet. But the general force of the argument ad-
vanced by the Roman bard does not depend upon its
Truth or falsehood. The fact remains the same,
Though the mode of accounting for it be different. It
Is equally true that

__into life th' insensate dung-hill rears__
The race of worms:—
Whether we believe they spring equivocally from or-
Ganic molecules, swarming throughout the putrid
And fermenting substance of the dunghill; or that this
Latter affords nothing more than a proper nidus for the
Deposition of the fecundated eggs of flies and worms,
Which, in process of time, are hereby thrown into
Action, generate a new organization, and produce the
New power of sensation. For no one, I apprehend,
Will contend that the eggs of the fly or worm, when
First deposited, are possess of more sensation than the
Substance of the dunghill itself; and, thus which
Theory soever we imbibe, the position of Lucretius
Follows equally as a truth,
That sentient things, things void of sense create.
Ex insensilibus ni credas sensile gigni?
Nimirum, lapides, et ligna, et terra, quod unâ
Mixta tamen nequeunt vitalem reddere sensum;
Illud in hiis igitur fœdus meminisse decebit,
Non ex omnibus omnino, quæquomque creant res,
Sensile, et ex templo me gigni dicere sensus:
Sed magni referre, ea primum quantula content,
Sensile quæ faciunt, et quâ sint prædita formâ;
Motibus, ordinibus, positurus denique, quæ sint;
Quarum nihil rerum in lignis, glebisque, videmus:
Et tamen hæc, quom sunt quasi putrefacta per imbreis,
Vermiculos pariunt; quia corpora materiai,
Antiquis ex ordinibus permota novâ re,
Conciliantur ita, ut debent animalia gigni.

Deinde, ex sensilibus quom sensile posse creari
Constituunt, porro, ex aliis sentire suëti,
Molliæ confaciunt: nam sensus jungitur omnis
Visceribus, nervis, venis, quæquomque videmus
Molliæ mortali consistere corpore creta.

Sed tamen esto jam, posse hæc ætërna manere:
Nempe tamen debent aut sensum partis habere,
Aut simileis totis animalibus esse putari.
At, nequeant per se partes sentire, necesse est;
Namque alios sensus membrorum respuit omnis:
Boast no sensation though alike educ’d?—
Yet mark, attentive, the sage muse ne’er yet
Has urg’d that all things doubtless must alike
Spring forth percipient, and with sense endu’d:
But that of vast concern, as hence alone,
Sensation ceaseless flows—the modes diverse
Of motion, order, form, with which, through time,
Primordial atoms blend:—modes the dull clod
Knows not, its frame unorganiz’d and rude.
Though the dull clod, or sapless root as dull,
When the moist show’r the putrid strife has rous’d,
Themselves the vermin race in crowds create;
Chang’d, then, their nature, from arrangements new,
And full empower’d perceptive life to rear.

Those, too, who hold that sentient forms throughout
Spring but from sentient seeds, those seeds must deem
Soft and unsolid, since unsolid all,
And soft each region, where sensation reigns,
Th’ interior bowels, and the flesh without;
And hence such seeds must doubtless waste to nought.

Yet grant their dates eternal: such must then
The total sense possess of things they rear,
Or sense of sep’rate parts: but parts alone
Have no perception, nor alone can live.
Each leans on each; the loose dismember’d hand
Nec manus a nobis potis est secreta, neque ulla
Corporis omnino sensum pars sola tenere.
Linquitur, ut totis animalibus adsimilentur;
Vitali ut possint consentire undique sensu.
Qui poterunt igitur rerum primordia dici,
Et leti vitare vias, animalia quem sint,
Atque, animalibus in mortalibus, una eademque?

Quod tamen ut possint, ab cœtu concilioque
Nihil facient præter volgum turbamque animantum:
Scilicet, ut nequeant homines, armenta, feraeque,
Inter sese ullam rem gignere conveniundo.
Sic itidem, quà sentimus, sentire necesse est.

Quod, si forte suum dimittunt corpore sensum,
Atque alium capiunt; quid opus fuit adtribui id, quod
Detrahitur? Tum præterea, quo fugimus ante,
Quà tenus in pullos animaleis vortier ova
Cernimus alituum, vermeisque ecfervere, terram
Intempestivos quom putor cepit ob imbreis;

---

Ver. 943. — from the warm ferment Of earths putrescent, by the clouds bedew'd, The vermin nations rise, with soul replete,] Thus again Thomson, still evincing the same doctrine of spontaneous vitality: —— from the swampy fens
Drops pow’rless; nor can aught itself sustain,
From the full form, the total sense that flows.
What then remains but that each seed exists
An animal complete, endow’d throughout
With vital functions? but resolve, how then
Prove they th’ immortal principles of things?
Whence draw the pow’r, possesst by nought that breathes,
To live through time, and brave th’ attacks of fate?

But grant e’en this: their combination still
No forms could rear, but those of sentient life;
Nor men, nor herds, nor savage beasts produce
Aught but themselves; the sense generic shown
Varying as varies the generic frame.

Nor urge that sentient seeds, at times, perchance,
Lose all sensation, and insensate live;
Why with an attribute so soon destroy’d
Robe them at all then? Rather, mark how soon
Th’ insensate yolk incipient life betrays,
And springs a vital chick: mark, as the muse
Has earlier sung, how from the warm ferment
Of earths putrescent, by the clouds bedew’d,
The vermin nations rise, with soul replete,

Where putrefaction into life ferments,
And breathes destructive myriads.

And Ovid, consistently with the same hypothe-
sis, represents the putrescent carcase of an ox as giv-
ing birth to crowds of busy insects:
Scire licet gigni posse ex non sensibus sensus.
Quod, si forte aliquis dicet, dum taxat oriri
Posse a non sensu sensus, mutabilitate,
Ante, aliquo tamquam partu, quam proditur extra;
Huic satis illud erit, planum facere, atque probare,
Non fieri partum, nisi concilio ante coacto;
Nec quidquam conmutari sine conciliatu

The putrid carcase now ferments amain,
And thousands spring to life for one that's slain.

Ver. 952. But from the sympathy of primal seeds :) The more minutely we become acquainted with the operations of nature, the more clearly we perceive, that in her physical as well as her moral department, there exist certain inexplicable sympathies and antipathies which no exertion of man can possibly destroy. Gravitation itself may be adduced as an instance of general sympathy pervading every particle of matter, and compelling it to associate for the common good. The operation of the magnet upon iron, or their mutual desire of approximation, may be regarded as a particular sympathy: so also may the power of metallic substances to attract the electric aura. But as the attachment of this subtle fluid to metals at large appears stronger in every instance than its attachment to any other kind of substance, so does it seem to give a preference to some metals beyond what it discovers toward others: while, in the mean time, it evinces an insurmountable antipathy to silk, wax, glass, and all similar substances; the degree of antipathy towards one substance exceeding that towards another. The philosophy of chemistry unfolds this doctrine in a light still more conspicuous: and while it opens to us substances which will never combine, and between which there appears to subsist an eternal and insuperable dislike, it presents us also with substances attached to each other by every possible degree of affinity and elective attraction. Chemistry discovers to us, that oil will unite with alcohol, but not with water; that alcohol will unite with water, but not with alkali; that there is a sympathy, affinity, or elective attraction between water and calcareous earths, which enables the former to embrace, or dissolve in its pores, a definite quantity of the latter; that there is a stronger affinity between calcareous earths and acids, since a larger quantity will here be absorbed in proportion to the acid employed; while the menstruum, at the same time, remains limpid: and that again, there is an affinity far stronger than either, between acids and alkalis, which may literally be said to destroy each other by their embraces: and hence, when a due proportion of alkali is added to an acid, in which calcareous earth has been previously dissolved, the acid will immediately take hold of the alkali in preference to the earth; its former connexion will be relinquished, and the calcareous solvend will be precipitated to the bottom of the vessel. It is impossible, indeed, to pursue this subject, to notice the different elective attractions and repulsions, in many instances duplicated, and even triplicated, that chemistry unfolds to us, without being astonished at the faculties exhibited throughout the whole world of brute, unanimated matter.

From unanimated matter these peculiar and mysterious affections ascend to vegetable life, and display to us germs, molecules, and fibrils, uniting, not at random with germs, molecules, and fibrils, but each selecting the other, the female the male, and
Thus spreading sense where sense was none before.

Nor deem sensation senseless seeds create
Sole from some change anterior, long educ'd
Ere into birth the sentient being springs.

What more fallacious? since nor birth complete
Nor aught of change can Nature's self create
But from the sympathy of primal seeds:

the male the female; and this with the nicest discrimination of their specific powers of crassitude or tenacity, and consequently of reciprocal adaptation, without which no vital entity would ensue. So much imports it in the beautiful language of our poet, Book IV. 1320.

—that the seeds of life

With seeds should mix symphonic, that the gross
Condense the rare, the rare the gross dilute.

Let us mount still higher, and we shall perceive in the animal kingdom, even in man himself, that a variety of substances possess a kind of idiopathic influence over some member or organ of the corporeal frame, which they never exert, or at least in a subordinate degree over every other. Alcohol has a specific connexion with the liver; turpentine with the kidneys; cantharides with the neck of the urinary bladder; jalap with the intestinal canal, opium and peruvian bark with the whole nervous system; the former diminishing sensation, and the latter preventing the recurrence of the spasm of intermittent fevers.

In a manner somewhat similar, one member or organ of the percipient frame appears to possess a species of intimacy or connexion with some other member or organ, though considerably remote from itself, which it does not discover towards the system at large. Thus, physicians trace a sympathy between the liver and the left shoulder, which is said to be frequently possessed of peculiar uneasiness during a decay of the former. The same kind of sympathy subsists between the head and the stomach;—between the stomach and the external capillary vessels; and between these, and the glands of the kidneys: an affection of the one producing generally an affection of the other, and vice versa.

The same kind of inexplicable sympathy may, perhaps, subsist between mind and mind, even allowing the mind itself to be material. And the view I have just taken of the natural world will, in some measure, unfold to us, I think, the cause of that species of moral affection, which has been termed pure, or platonic love, an elective attraction of mind to mind, which has been often denied by philosophers, and ridiculed by wits, and in many cases most justly, but which, if I mistake not, these observations seem to prove, may have a real foundation in nature. How mind operates upon mind we know not: into sensible contact it can never come; but neither does the sun or the moon in their operations upon the earth. The operation of motives and arguments is a long and circuitous mode of exciting reciprocity of affection: and it will often be found at last, that the affection thus produced, is of far inferior force, and indeed, of a nature altogether different from that excited by a certain indescribable sympathy, which sometimes compels the soul to feel more pleased with a person of less intellectual, and perhaps, even moral worth, than with another person whose endowments are confessedly superior. This view of the subject may be carried still further, and affords some foundation for the belief of an occasional intercourse between ourselves and the spirits.
Principiōm; nequeunt ullius corporis esse
Sensus ante ipsam genitam naturam animantis:
Nimirum, quia materies disjecta tenetur
Aëre, fluminibus, terris, terrâque creatis;
Nec, congressa modo, vitales convenienteis
Contulit inter se motus, quibus omne tuentes
Adcensei sensus animantium quamque tuentur.

Præterea, quam vis animantem grandior ictus,
Quam patitur natura, repente adfigit, et omneis
Corporis atque animi pergit confundere sensus:
Dissoluuntur enim posituræ principiorum,
Et penitus motus vitales impedituntur;
Donec materies, omneis concussa per artus,
Vitales animæ nodos e corpore solvit,
Disparsamque foras per caulas eicit omneis.

Nam quid præterea facere ictum posse reamur
Oblatum, nisi discutere, ac dissolvere, quæque?

Fit quoque, utei soleant, minus oblatō acriter ictu,
Reliquiæ motūs vitalis vincere sæpe;

of our departed friends—between this world and
others around us. But I am aware that I am bor-
dering on the regions of fancy; yet am I supported
in my excursion by the very system of Epicurus
himself, and consequently of our own poet, which
admits, that some such intercourse with superior
beings may be obtained by deep retirement, and men-
tal abstraction; and, what is of far more importance
to me, by the clear and unequivocal intimations of
revelation: the Jewish and Christian scriptures both
equally presupposing the superintendence of indi-
viduals, of distinct churches, nations, and the world
at large, by spirits or angels expressly delegated to
their respective offices. But I must leave the sub-
ject, which it would be, nevertheless, pleasant to
pursue. The reader may consult, if he chuse to
extend it farther, a German volume which has lately
been brought forwards, but I believe, not yet trans-
Nor, till the frame percipient be combin’d,
Can e’er perception flow; since wide through space,
In earth, in air, in streams, and lambent fire,
Are spread the rude materials, unarrang’d,
And void of social bond, whence first exists
Each vital motion, whence each guardian sense
Springs, and the complicated frame protects.

When too, abrupt, falls some tremendous blow,
Throughout the system suffers, every sense
Of soul, and body discompos’d alike.
Then fails th’ arrangement of primordial seeds,
Each vital action fails; and, shook severe
Through every limb, the principles of life
Dissolve each fond connexion, quit their post,
And through th’ external pores fly off at large.
For what but this can force extreme effect?
The dread solution, and the death of all.

But oft, when less the violence display’d,
The vital motions left may triumph still, 

---translated into English, entitled “Dokimion oder Prac-
tischer Versuch, &c.” “A practical Essay on the
real Relation subsisting between the Living and the
Spirits of the Departed.” The author has con-
ducted his inquiry with so small degree of ability,
and has advanced many positions that are entitled to
serious attention, though his conjectures are occa-
sionally extravagant, and too little restrained.

Sympathy then seems to be a power, though often
an inexplicable one, pervading all nature; acting
alike on body and on soul. And it is with peculiar
propriety, therefore, our poet traces its existence in
the very first creation, and the simplest elements of
all things:

Nor birth complete,
Nor aught of change can nature’s self create
But from the sympathy of primal seeds.
Vincere, et ingenteis plagæ sedare tumultus,
Inque suos quidquid rursus revocare meatus;
Et quasi jam leti dominantem in corpore motum
Discutere, ac pene amissos adscendere sensus.
Nam, quâ re potius leti jam limine ab ipso
Ad vitam possint, conjectâ mente, revorti;
Quam, quo decursum prope jam siet, ire et abire?
Præterea, quoniam dolor est, ubi materiaë
Corpora, vi quadam per viscera viva, per artus,
Solicitata, suis trepidant in sedibus intus;
Inque locum quando remigrant, fit blanda voluptas:
Scire licet, nullo primordia posse dolore
Tentari; nullamque voluptatem capere ex se:
Quandoquidem non sunt ex illis principiorum
Corporibus, quorum motus novitate laborent,
Aut aliquem fructum capiant dulcedinis almae:
Haud igitur debent esse ullo praedita sensu.

Denique, utei possunt sentire animalia quæque,
Principiis si jam est sensus tribuendus eorum;
Quid? genus humanum propritim de quibus auctum est,
Scilicet et risu tremulo concussa cachinnant,
Et lacrumis spargunt rorantibus ora, genasque;

Ver. 988. *From those, forsooth, incited quick to laugh,
Those down whose cheeks perpetual tears did stilt, &c.]* These verses are borrowed, al- most verbatim, from the first book; where the reader will find they run thus:
And quell the mighty tumult, and recall,
From the rude grasp of fate, each active power
Marshal’d anew, and every sense relume.
For else, why rather should those powers retreat
Back from destruction with recruited strength,
Than still proceed, and burst the bars of life?

As pain, too, springs when, midst th’ interior frame,
Or limbs extreme, by sudden force convuls’d
Each vital atom shakes through all its course,
But yields to pleasure when the shock subsides,—
Since primal seeds can ne’er such shock sustain,—
No pain they know, nor e’er the fruit can pluck
Of dear delight; hence nought of sense is theirs.

But if, that things sensation may possess,
Their seeds primordial must possess the same,—
Say, from what seeds, then, springs the race of man?
From those, forsooth, incited quick to laugh,
Those down whose cheeks perpetual tears distil,

---For then must seeds
Hold powers adverse, and laugh, and shake their
sides,

While tears of anguish down their cheeks distil.

Ver. 1011.
Multaque de rerum mixturâ dicere callent,
Et, sibi proprorro quæ sint primordia, quœrunt :
Quandoquidem totis mortalibus adsimilata,
Ipsa quoque ex aliis debent constare elementis;
Inde alia ex aliis, nusquam consistere ut ausis.
Quispie sequar, quodquomque loqui ridereque dices,
Et sapere, ex aliis eadem hac facientibus, ut sit.
Quod, si delira hæc furiosaque cernimus esse,
Et ridere potest non ex ridentibus auctus,
Et sapere, et doctis rationem reddere dictis,
Non ex seminibus sapientibus, atque disertis:
Qui minus esse queant ea, quæ sentire videamus,
Seminibus permixta carentibus undique sensu?

Denique, coelesti sumus omnes semine oriundi;
Omnibus ille idem pater est; unde alma liquenteis

Ver. 1001. *All spring from heav'n, etherial, all that live. - The sirs of all is Ether:*—[So far the system of Epicurus agrees with the creed of those philosophers who contended for the ever-present operation of a divine power, as well as with the popular mythology of Greece and Rome: for the supreme Jupiter, the father of gods and men, was peculiarly denominated the god of ether, or the air. The terms *Æther* and Jupiter, are very generally, therefore, convertible expressions: thus, in the first Ode of Horace, *sub Jove frigido*, can only be translated *in the cold Air,* or *atmosphere;* and thus Virgil, in the following verses, which have been already remarked upon as an imitation from Lucretius in note on Book I. v. 287, manifestly uses the word *Æther* for Jupiter.

Tum pater omnipotens fœcundis imbribus *Æther* Conjugis in gremium lacte descendit, &c.

**Georg. II. 325.**

Or, as it still more explicitly occurs in another passage of the same poet:

*A Jove principium, Muse: Jovis omnia plena.*

_Ecl. iii. 60._

Jove hymn we first, for all is full of Jove.

Consimilar to, and almost synonymous with which, are the following exquisite verses, that open the *Phaenomena of Aratus*:

*Ex Διος αρχιμεθά, τον οὐδ’étos' ανδρει ενμιν* Ἀρρητος μισταὶ δὲ Διὸς παται μεν αγωνί, 
Παντας ἄ σωματον αγοραζ μισθι τι τις Σαλασια, 
Και λημνας παντι δε Διος χιχυμεθα πανις τινος γαρ και γενεις εσμαι*
And those deep-vers’d in causes, and effects,
Discussing grave the seeds that rear themselves.
For grant this system, and whate’er exists
Must spring from seeds minuter, endless urg’d,
And draw, progressive, every power display’d
Of thought, or laughter, from the parent stock.
This if thou smile at, and contend that things
With pow’r endow’d of laughter, speech, and thought
Still rise from seeds that no such pow’rs avow,
Why not concede, then, sentient things alike
May flow from seeds of total sense devoid?

All spring from heav’n, ethereal, all that live:
The sire of all is Ether: he, full oft,

From God we spring—whom man’can never trace,
Though heard, seen, tasted, felt in every place.
The loneliest path, by mortal seldom trod,
The crowded city, all is full of God;
Oceans, and lakes—for God is all in all—
And we are all his offspring.

This is the passage which St. Paul so successfully
refers to, and quotes in his animated oration to the
Athenians on Mars-hill: “For, in him, we live and
move, and have our being; as certain also of your
own poets have said, For we are also his offspring,”
Acts, xvii. 28.

This quotation cannot but remind us of the follow-
ing consentaneous verses in Pope’s Essay on Man:
All are but parts of one stupendous whole;
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;

That chang’d through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th’ ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

This kind of general proposition, only differently
interpreted, will apply therefore, as I have before
observed, to the tenets of most philosophers, ancient
or modern, as well as to the Christian system. It
constitutes an important doctrine in the ordinances of
Menu, and is particularly applied to the eternal
Gayatri, or mother of the Veda, “that divine and un-
paralleled light,” as she is there denominated, “which
illumines all, delights all; from which all proceed;
Humorides guttas mater quom Terra recepit,
Feta parit nitidas fruges, arbustaque lacta,
Et genus humanum; parit omnia secla ferarum;
Pabula quom praebet, quibus omnes corpora pascunt,
Et dulcem ducunt vitam, prolemque propagant:
Quapropter merito maternum nomen adepta est.
Cedit item retro, de terrâ quod fuit ante,
In terras; et, quod missum est ex ætheris oris,

to which all must return; and which alone can irradiate our intellects." Sir William Jones, vol. iii.

62. So, in the Upanishad, translated into Persian by the order of the emperor Dara Shecu, we are told, that "The universal soul filleth all time; is present in every place: he is the sight of sights, the hearing of hearings, the thought of thoughts, the science of sciences; and hence, can neither be seen, comprehended, or learned: he is the root and principle of all things." See the Latin version of this book by Anquetil du Perron, tom. I. Paris, 1802. As also note on ver. 665, of the present book.

In the earlier part of his life, Virgil was, undoubtedly, an Epicurean; and his sixth elegy, in which the principles of this philosophy are briefly developed, is supposed, by the critics, to be nothing more than the substance of a lecture delivered to himself and his friend Varro, by Syro, their common tutor, of whom Cicero makes mention in his Epist. Famill. I. vi. 111, under the fictitious names of Silenus, Chromis, and Mnæus. There is nothing extraordinary, therefore, that the writings of Virgil at this time should be consonant with those of Lucretius: but Virgil appears afterwards to have been converted to the system, either of Plato or Pythagoras, philosophers who, in the main, seem not to have differed very essentially from each other. When, therefore, at this period of his life, he meets with another opportunity of developing the origin of the universe, as he does in book VI. of his Æneid, and in the person of Anchises, he publishes the doctrine he had lately embraced, and discards those parts of his former tenets which are inimical to it. But the passage of Lucretius now before us, as well as that which is a continuation of the same theory, beginning at Book I. v. 287, will as readily accord with the opening of Virgil's new creed, as of his old. The commencement of this new creed, however, is beautiful, and I shall copy it:

Principio cælum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum luna, Titanique astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.
Inde hominum pecudumque genus, viteque volantum,
Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquo punctus.
Ignus est ollis vigor, et celestis origo
Seminitus.

Æneid, I. vi. v. 724.

Know, first, that heaven and earth's compacted frame,
And flowing waters, and the starry frame,
And both the radiant lights, one common soul
Inspires and feeds, and animates the whole.
This active mind, infused through all the space,
Unitus, and mingles with the mighty mass.
Hence, men and beasts the breath of life obtain;
And birds of air, and monsters of the main.
Th' ethereal vigour is in all the same,
And every soul is fill'd with equal flame.

Warton.
In dulcet drops descends of genial rain
And the bland Earth impregnates. Timely, then,
Rises the glossy blade, the joyous leaf
Shoots forth, and man and beast, in countless tribes,
Fed from the various banquet of the fields,
Live their gay hours, and propagate their kinds.
Maternal, hence, is Earth most justly nam’d.
Thus all things rise, thus all again return:
Earth takes what earth bestow’d; and back to heaven,

Ver. 1002. — Earth: be, full oft,
In dulcet drops descends] More exquisitely still
is the same idea conveyed by the Psalmist, lxviii. 8.

The earth shook; the heavens also dropped;
Even Sinai itself at the presence of God,
At the presence of God, the God of Israel.

Ver. 1009. Maternal, hence, &c.] On this subject
the poet descants more at large in Book V. 810, and
following; where the same idea recurs almost in the
same words; as it also does in Book V. v. 838.

It is to this and the ensuing verse that Klop
stock appears to have had his eye directed, in the
opening of the third book of his Messiah; and his
paraphrase is truly beautiful:

Sey mir gegrüsst! ich sehe dich wieder, die du
mich gebahrest,
Erde, mein mütterlich land, die du mich in külen
dem schoosse
Einst bey den schlafenden Gottes begräbst, und
mich gebeine
Sanst bedeckest.

Once more I hail thee, once beheld thee more,
Earth! soil maternal! thee, whose womb of
yore
Bore me; and soon beneath whose gild
breast
These limbs shall sink in soft and sacred rest.

Ver. 1010. Thus all things rise, thus all again return:
Earth takes what earth bestow’d; and, back
to heaven, &c.] Epicharmus has a passage
to this effect, which, it is probable, our poet had in
his recollection, when he composed these verses:
Σωικρίδη sees he, of the dead man, και δειπνο, και
απολίθε ως ως τοις παλιν, γα με ες γη, συναμ χε αιω.

“ The component substance is now decomposed,
and returned to the different quarters whence it
sprang; its earthy parts to earth, its spirit to heaven
above.” In the following verses of Euripides, the
same idea, and probably derived from the same
source, more nearly still approaches the passage of
Lucretius now under our consideration:

Οδε δε εκατος ες το σωμα ανεκετο,
Εν τω επιλη συναμ μει προς αυθηρη,
Το σωμα δε ες γην.

When man returns to matter, whence he rose,
He severs total; to the heavens ascends
The spirit, and the grosser corse to earth.

The doctrine was entirely that of Epicurus; and Du
Rondelle has hence attempted to prove that Epicurus,
notwithstanding a host of expressions apparently to
the contrary, was, in reality, a believer in the immor
tality of the soul. But such a deduction is altogether
fanciful, and completely disproved by the whole of
Book III. of the poem before us.
Id rursum coeli relatum templam receptant:
Nec sic interimit mors res, ut materiae
Corpora confaciat, sed coetum dissipat ollis:
Inde aliis aliud conjungit; et ecquit, omnes
Res ita convortant formas, mutentque colores,
Et capiant sensus, et puncto tempore reddant;
Ut noscas referre, eadem primordia rerum,
Cum quibus, et quali positurâ, contineantur,
Et quos inter se dent motus, adcityiantque:
Neve putes æterna parum residere potesse
Corpora prima, quod in summis fluitare videmus
Rebus, et interdum nasci, subitoque perire.
Quin etiam referit, nostris in versibus ipsis,
Cum quibus, et quali sint ordine quæque locata.
Namque eadem coelum, mare, terras, flumina, solem,
Significant; eadem fruges, arbusta, animanteis.
Si non omnia sint, at multo maxuma pars est

*Ver. 1015.* — *every form commutes,*
*And every tint; perception springs again,*
*And, instantaneous, wastes again to naught.*] It is to this passage the cardinal Polignac directed his eye, when, in the fourth book of his poem, in opposition to the Epicurean system, he endeavoured to prove, from this perpetual change and transformation of things into things, that the world could not be eternal: an attempt which, so far as relates to Lucretius himself, was almost useless; since his first book is totally occupied with proofs, that all things have had a beginning, and he is immediately, in the present book, about to demonstrate, that the world itself, at least the present arrangement of the world, must have a termination. The verses, to which I refer, are as follow:

Semina de arboribus, de semine provenit arbos.
Nulla arbos igitur, nullum quoque semen ab ævo.
Sic ortum coepisse diem noxtemque necesse est:
Remount th’ ethereal dews from heav’n that fell.
Yet death destroys not the prime seeds of things,
But scatters only; atoms hence commix
With stranger-atoms, every form commutes,
And every tint; perception springs amain,
And, instantaneous, wastes again to nought.
Of such vast moment are the modes diverse
In which primordial seeds their posts arrange,
Act, and re-act, give motion, and accept:
For deem not seeds thus floating most minute
Through the vast whole, now obvious to the view,
Now quick dispersst, can ne’er eternal live.
Such then, the moment, as already urg’d,
With which the types, these numbers that compose,
Change their positions, and retreat, or blend.
Thus the same letters, or with variance small,
Heaven, earth, and water, seas, and suns express,
Fruits, plants, and mortals; common are the types,
The terms but change from combinations new.

Nempe dies noctem sequitur; sequiturque diem nox.
Ver. ii. iv. 1377.
Seeds spring from trees, the tree from seeds ascend,
Hence of eternal date can neither boast.
So night from day, and day from night must flow,
For midnight, noon, and noon-tide night succeeds.
Spring, summer, autumn, winter, lead the year
Around, harmonious; and with joint acclaim
The world demonstrate but of recent birth.
Things yield to things alternate; nor can aught
Be traced through nature nothing ne’er that rears.

Ver. 1024. Such then, the moment, as already urg’d,
With which the types, these numbers that compose,
See Book I. ver. 918, and Book II. 698.
Consimilis; verum positorum discrepant res:
Sic ipsis in rebus item jam materiae
Intervalla, vae, connexus, pondera, plagae,
Concursus, motus, ordo, positura, figurae
Quom permutantur, mutari res quoque debent.

Nunc animum nobis adhibe veram ad rationem:
Nam tibi vehementer nova res molitur ad aureis
Adcidere, et nova se species obtendere rerum.
Sed neque tam facilis res ulla est, quin ea primum
Difficilis magis ad credendum constet; itemque
Nihil adeo magnum, neque tam mirabile quidquam,
Quod non paullatim minuant mirarier omnes.

Principio, coeli clarum purumque colorem,
Quemque in se cohibent palantia sidera passim,
Lunamque, et solis praecellent luce nitorem:
Omnia quae nunc si primum mortalibus essent,
Ex improviso si sint objecta repente;
Quid magis hiis rebus poterat mirabile dici,
Aut minus ante quod auderent fore credere gentes?
Nihil ut opinor; ita haec species miranda fuisset:
Quam, tibi jam nemo, fessus satiate videndi,
Subspicer in coeli dignatur lucida templ.

Ver. 1031. Thus change material things: their primal seeds
In seire, connexio, interval of space, &c.] This position our poet has likewise had occasion to refer to before. See ver. 734, of the book before us.
Thus change material things: their primal seeds
In scite, connexion, interval of space,
Position, motion, weight, attractive power,
In these as varying, varies the result.

Now bend thy mind to truths profounder still:
For stranger doctrines must assault thine ear,
And a new scene of wonders yet unfold.
Whate'er is new, though obvious and defin'd,
Gains not an easy credence; but when once
Flies the fresh novelty, th' unsteady soul
Yields its full faith to facts mysterious most.
The vault of heav'n cerulean, spangled thick
With stars, and with th' effusive lustre chear'd
Of sun, and moon refulgent—were, at once,
This scene celestial o'er the race of man
To burst abrupt—how would the nations start!
What wonders, then, be trac'd! with what vast toil
Would e'en the sage the prospect preconceive!
Yet now, full sated with the scene sublime,
Man scarce lifts up his listless eyes to heaven.

Ver. 1049. Yet now, full sated with the scene sublime,
Man scarce lifts up his listless eyes—] Aken-
Desine quapropter, novitate exterritus ipsâ,  
Exspuere ex animo rationem; sed magis acri  
Judicio perpende: et, si tibi vera videntur,  
Dede manus; aut, si falsum est, adcingere contra.  
Quærit enim rationem animus, quom summa loci sit  
Infinita foris, hæc extra mœnia mundi,  
Quid sit ibei porro, quo prospicere usque valet mens;  
Atque animi jactus liber sit, quo velit ipse.

Principio, nobis in cunctas undique parteis,  
Et latere ex utroque, infraque, superque, per omne  
Nulla est finis, utei docui, res ipsaque per se  
Vociferatur, et elucet natura profundi.  
Nullo jam pacto veri simile esse putandum est,  
Undique quom vorsum spatium vacet infinitum,  
Seminaque innumero numero, summâque profundâ,  
Multimodis volitent, æterno percita motu;  
Hunc unum terrarum orbem, coelumque, creatum:  
Nihil agere illa foris tot corpora materiaï;  
Quom præsertim hic sit naturâ factus, et ipsa,

—witness the neglect  
Of all familiar prospects, though beheld  
With transport once; the fond attentive gaze  
Of young astonishment, the sober zeal  
Of age, commenting on prodigious things.

Pleas. of Imag. v. 234, b. i.

Ver. 1055. Urg’d, ibrus, by truth, beyond the world’s wide walls.] The whole of this, and the three succeeding lines, are omitted in Creech’s version; but on what account I am totally at a loss to conjecture. The more accurate Marchetti gives us the following translation:

Essendo fuor di questo nostro mondo  
Spazio infinito; l’ anima ricerca,  
Ciò qu’egli sia fin dove può la mente  
Penetrare a veder: dove lo stesso  
Animo può spiegar libero il volo.
Cease, then, alarm'd by aught profound, or strange,  
Right reason to reject; weigh well the proofs  
Each scheme advances; if by truth upheld  
Embrace the doctrine; but, if false, abjure.  
Urg'd thus, by truth,—beyond the world's wide walls  
Since space spreads boundless, the redundant mind,  
Free in its flights, pants, ardent, to discern  
What fills those realms where sight can never soar.

And first, th' entire of things, above, below,  
Search where thou wilt, on every side alike  
Spreads unconfin'd: this, as already taught,  
Right reason proves, and many a clam'rous fact.  
Then deem not thou, since thus perpetual space  
Flows infinite, and infinite the seeds  
That, from exhaustless founts, in endless modes  
Fly through the void, by endless motions urg'd,  
Deem not this visual system of the heav'ns  
Alone exists, unparallel'd by aught,  
And that all matter elsewhere sleeps supine.

Ver. 1067. *Deem not this visual system of the heav'ns  
Alone exists, unparallel'd by aught,  
And that all matter elsewhere sleeps supine.*]
The plurality of worlds is a doctrine of ancient date;  
discredited, indeed, by Thales and Empedocles, and  
even by Pliny; but asserted and maintained by Demo-  
mocritus, Pythagoras, Epicurus, Heraclitus, Anaxi-  
mander, and a host of other philosophers, both  
Greek and Roman, whose names it would be easy to  
enumerate. Such, indeed, was the advance which  
some sages had made towards the Copernican system  
itself, that not only the diurnal motion of the earth  
round its own axis was maintained by many of them,  
a doctrine which, as we learn from Cicero, (Tusc.  
Quest.) was first introduced by Nicetas, of Syracuse;  
but Philolaus, one of the earlier disciples of Pytha-  
goras, actually discovered its annual motion in the  
ecliptic, and represented it as revolving, like a star,
round the central fire. With a conjecture, thus bold and accurate, thus capable of leading on to the full development of the grand and total fact itself, it is astonishing that mankind should have suffered themselves to have remained, for more than two thousand years afterwards, the dupes of system after system, alike unsatisfactory, perplexing, and even inapplicable: more especially when we reflect that, according to his own confession, it was this happy conjecture of the earlier Pythagoreans that, first of all, gave Copernicus himself the idea of that theory, which he so thoroughly unfolded, and by which he has so justly immortalised his name. Aristarchus, the Samian, indeed, as we are assured by Archimedes, revived the doctrine of Philolaus, about a thousand years after its first invention, but with an unaccountable want of success.

The first geometrical idea that appears to have been entertained of the world at large, as most co incidental with sensible appearances, was that of an immense but irregular plane, encircled on all sides by a boundless expanse, out of which the celestial luminaries daily ascended, forming an arch over the atmosphere by their quotidian path, and sinking every evening to repose. It was long after this, that the globular figure of the earth was demonstrated, or even imagined: but when once this latter opinion began to prevail, it was easy to conceive the existence of celestialspheres. The sun, the moon, and the planets, had now, therefore, three several spheres assigned them for their habitations; and the stars were supposed to be fixed, like gems, to the concave surface of an immense crystalline shell, which embraced the whole in its circumference. The spheres thus bestowed upon the celestial bodies, although capable of explaining some few of the phenomena that occurred, were very incompetent to an explanation of the whole, and other spheres were hence conceived, and added to those already acknowledged to exist. And so considerable were the multiplications of spheres bestowed on the heavens by Eudoxus, Callippus, Aristotle, and Fracastoro, that they amounted, in the era of this last philosopher, about two centuries ago, to no less a number than seventy-four: and the overloaded hypothesis became as intricate and inexplicable as the heavens were imagined to be themselves. The embarrassment was felt, and it was attempted to be relieved by another and a more artificial system, that I mean of Epicycles and Eccentric Circles. This, which was the original invention of Apollonius, received its last improvements from Ptolemy; from whom it has, in general, derived its name. In this system, the spheric motions were still continued, but every luminary, whilst revolving in its own orb, was supposed to have the centre of its orb carried at the same time round the circumference of another circle. By the introduction of this theory, several difficulties were undoubtedly removed; but multitudes still remained; and to obviate these was introduced the contrivance of the Equant, or Equalizing Circle. For a more full and particular account of which, as also for a more complete history of the whole of this branch of natural philosophy, I refer the reader to La Place's System de la Nature.

This system of Ptolemy, or of Epicycles and Eccentric Circles, continued, after its invention, till the new theory of Copernicus, introduced in the sixteenth century. Copernicus was highly dissatisfied with the theory in general use; its complications were most perplexing, and its multifarious corrections fatigued the imagination; nor did it solve half the difficulties which were perpetually arising. He resolved, therefore, with patient investigation, to examine all the different theories and conjectures on the same sublime subject, which had ever been entertained by philosophers, or of which any account could be traced. He, at last, arrived, as I have before observed, at the opinion of some of the first disciples of Pythagoras, respecting the revolution of the earth in the ecliptic; and from this moment he resolved to make this conjecture the basis of a new theory. Instead, therefore, of continuing motion to the sun, he resolved to conceive of the sun as a permanent body; and instead of
Since too, of its own nature the vast mass
Sprang forth spontaneous, rousing every pow'r

continuing the earth in a state of quietude, he transferred the motion of the former to the latter. And thus, by fixing the sun in the centre of the planetary system, by making all the planets revolve around it, in different orbits, and with different velocities, by comprehending the orbits of Venus and Mercury within that of the earth, and throwing those of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn beyond it; and, at the same time, by conceiving the revolution of the earth round its axis from west to east, while this axis remained always parallel to itself, though inclined, in some degree, to the plane of the earth's orbit, he solved, at once, almost every difficulty which no other system could solve; and introduced a theory, plain, simple, and intelligible, in the stead of crude, fanciful, perplexing, and unsatisfactory hypotheses. Whatever is new, however, as Lucretius has just before asserted, with much truth,

—though obvious and defin'd,

Gains not an easy credence.

Copernicus was convinced of this: he was fearful of the laugh of some philosophers, and of the hypercriticism of others; and, probably, foresaw the anathemas which the bigotry of the Roman church very shortly afterwards thundered out against his system: in consequence of which, he kept the entire plan concealed from the public eye for thirty years after its invention. At last, in the extremity of old age, he suffered it to be extorted from him; but died as soon as it was printed, and before it was published, being, as is generally supposed, terrified to death at the prospect of a persecution for heresy.

The mode in which the planetary system actually moves was thus established by the immortal labours of Copernicus. But the express difference and precise velocities of these motions, were reserved to be unfolded by junior philosophers: and as soon as the prejudices of the world, which were at first so powerfully excited against the new theory, began to subside, it is truly astonishing to notice the improvements which poured in from sages of almost every country in Europe, upon the Copernican doctrine, and the sudden blaze of information that irradiated the human mind. Amongst those, however, who most contributed to this increase of knowledge, I ought not to conceal the names of Tycho Brahe, Galileo, Kepler, and Des Cartes; and, last of all, the name of our own countryman, Sir Isaac Newton. But to pursue the history of the experiments and observations of these, and other philosophers of nearly the same era, and of high and deserved renown, would occupy too much space; and be deviating too widely from the main scope of the notes. Some further information on the same subject, however, as being more intimately connected with the Epicurean doctrines there referred to, will be found in note on ver. 528, Book V. of this poem. I cannot consent, however, to suppress the names of those three pre-eminent labourers in the philosophic vineyard, upon whom the whole spirit of Newton appears to have been poured forth after his decease: I mean Clairaut, Euler, and D'Alembert: all of whom pursued the doctrine of gravitation till they established it as a principle of universal action: to the two former of whom we are indebted for elaborate theories of the moon, as also of the derangements of Saturn and Jupiter; and to the latter, for the doctrine of the precession of the equinoxes.

With the astronomic or cosmogonic doctrine of the Hindus and other Oriental nations, we are not at present much acquainted. Some information, however, upon this subject, but principally connected with mythology, may be found in the note on Book I. v. 365. of this poem, in which I have observed that the Hindus, in conjunction with the Chinese, conceive the same kind of subtle spirit to pervade all natural bodies, and encompass creation, which was conjectured, with a trifling variation, both by Des Cartes and Newton; which invisible fluid, the Bramins denominate in their Vedas, a fifth element. But a much greater resemblance to the Newtonian system exists in the Hindu doctrine of the mutual and universal attraction of the elementary particles of matter. This doctrine is stated to occur in a variety
Tandem coaluerint ea, quæ, conjecta repente,
Magnarum rerum fierent exordia semper,
Terraï, maris, et coæli, generisque animatuum.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam taleis fateare necesse est
Esse alios aliebi congressus materiaï,
Qualis hic est; avido complexu quem tenet æther.

Præterea, quom materies est multa parata,
Quom locus est præsto, nec res, nec caussa moratur
Ulla; geri debent nimirum, et confieri, res.
Nunc, et seminibus si tanta est copia, quantam
Enumerare ætas animantum non queat omnis;
Visque eadem, et natura, manet, quæ semina rerum
Conjicere in loca quæque queat, simili ratione
Atque huc sunt conjecta; necesse est, confiteare
Esse alios alîis terrarum in partibus orbeis,
Et varias hominum genteis, et secla ferarum.

Huc adcedit, uti in summâ res nulla sit una,
To every mode of motion, rashly oft,
Oft vain and fruitless, till, at length, it form'd
Th' unchanging rudiments of things sublime,
And heav'n, and earth, and main, and mortals rose:
Hence doubly flows it, other systems still,
Like ours, must deck the vast ethereal void,
Enfolded in its avaricious grasp.

Ample, moreo'er, the matter thus requir'd,
The place at hand, the cause efficient full,
Whence new creations may for ever spring.
Since, then, so boundless the great mass of seeds
That endless ages ne'er could cast th' amount,—
Since the same pow'r presides, the nature still
That rear'd this visual system, and alike
Those seeds can mould to systems such as ours—
The fact flows doubtless, mid the void immense,
That other worlds in other parts must rise,
Peopled with reas'ning, and with brutal tribes.

Add, too, that nought, through universal space,
RERUM NATURA. Lib. II.

Unica quae gignatur, et unica solaque crescat; Quin aliquoius siet secli, permultaque eodem Sint genere: in primis animalibus indice mente Invenies sic montivagum genus esse ferarum, Sic hominum geminam prolem, sic denique mutas Squamigerum pecudes, et corpora cuncta volantum. Quapropter, coelum simili ratione, fatendum est, Terramque, et solem, lunam, mare, caetera, quae sunt, Non esse unica, sed numero magis innumerali; Quandoquidem vitae depactus terminus alte Tam manet haec, et tam nativo corpore constant, Quam genus omne, quod hiis generatim rebus abundans. Quae bene cognita si teneas, Natura videtur Libera continuo, dominis privata superbis, Ipsa sua per se sponte omnia diis agere express. Nam, pro sancta deum tranquilla pectora pace Quae placidum degunt aevom, multumque serenum!

Ver. 1102. These truths avow'd, all nature shines at once, Free in her acts, no tyrant to control, Self-potent, and uninfluenc'd by the gods.] But by what gods is she uninfluenced, and from whose tyranny is she now freed? Certainly, in the first place, she is uninfluenced by, and totally liberated from, that capricious and arbitrary tyranny to which the gods of the people were supposed to be perpetually subjecting her: exciting storms to avenge this man, and sun-shine to prosper that; actuated by their own passions, and unmindful of the common good. From the tyranny of these capricious deities, it was the laudable aim of Lucretius to represent the universe as for ever freed. But there were deities, or blessed and immortal spirits, admitted under his own system—spirits whose faculties were far superior to those of mankind, yet who were, nevertheless, incompetent to create or govern the world. From the inadequate power and authority of these, therefore, the poet, at the same time, asserts the world to be liberated: for, which of them, he inquires, is able to sustain the mighty labour, or fulfill the mysterious purposes that are daily accomplishing? But surely he meant not to deny all divine control whatsoever; for it was expressly affirmed by the Epicurean philosophy, that matter in a disorganised state is totally destitute of all sensation and intelligence; that
Springs single, the sole progeny produc’d,
The sole sustain’d; still countless every class,
Those, chief, percipient: the wild, mountain-herds,
The race of man consociate, the mute fish
With quiv’ring fin, and all th’ aërial tribes.

Hence, too, nor heav’n, nor earth, nor sun, nor moon,
Nor the broad main, nor aught besides, alone
Can live, but each unlimited in kind.
Each the same substance, the same seeds of death,
Bears in its frame, that stamp the ranks diverse
More obvious, gender’d by connubial love.

These truths avow’d, all nature shines at once,
Free in her acts, no tyrant to control,
Self-potent, and uninfluence’d by the gods.
For O, ye powers divine! whose tranquil lives
Flow free from care, with ceaseless sun-shine blest,—

there is no such thing as chance, (upon which subject, see the preceding life of Lucretius,) and that there certainly exists an unknown and unsearchable Being, to whom even the gods themselves are subject, and who exerciseth an unresisted authority among the inhabitants of the earth:

A Power unknown, who, from his awful, shades
O’turns all human grandeur! treads to dust
Crowns, ensigns, rods!—the proudest boasts of state!
And laughs at all the mockery of man!

Book v. 1260.

This inscrutable being Epicurus represented as enjoying all immortality, and beatitude: at his mere will and command, the heavens, the planets, and all the phenomena of nature were produced; and to him he exhorts that mankind cease not to address their prayers and adorations. See Appendix to the life of Lucretius. This sublime passage has been hitherto totally misunderstood, and, of consequence, totally misinterpreted, by all the commentators upon our poet, whom I have yet met with, whether in Italian, French, or English, who have uniformly, and with unpardonable indolence, followed each other, and represented their author as an absolute atheist.
Quis regere inmensi summam, quis habere profundi
Indu manu validas potis est moderanter habenas?

Ver. 1105. For O, ye powers divine! whose tranquil
lives
Flow free from care, with ceaseless sun-shine
bles,—] There is, in Mr. Cowper's Task,
an observation upon the doctrine here vulgarly supposed
to be advanced, so well though at the same time so
severely expressed, that I cannot avoid inserting it in
this place:
Some say that in the origin of things,
When all creation started into birth,
The infant elements receiv'd a law
From which they swerve not since. That under
force
Of that controlling ordinance they move,
And need not his immediate hand, who first
Prescrib'd their course, to regulate it now.
Thus dream they; and contrive to save a God
Wh' incumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
The great artificer of all that moves
The stress of a continual act, the pain
Of unremitted vigilance and care.
As too laborious and severe a task!

Ver. 1107. Who the vast whole could guide, midst
all your ranks?

Who grasp the reins that curb th' entire
of things?] There is a grandeur and
sublimity in this passage which it is perhaps impossible
to surpass. Yet it cannot but remind us of some
parts of the fearful and magnificent reply of the
Almighty to Job out of the whirlwind.
The following may suffice as an example:

4 Cap. xxxviii.

4. Say, where wast thou when first the world uprose
Fresh from its God? thy wisdom doubtless
knows!
5. Who plann'd its bulk, its limits, its design?
Stretch'd o'er its breadths the plummet and the line?
6. What forms its basis? props its nether pole?
Who rear'd the top-stone o'er the mighty whole,
7. When, at the sight, the stars of morning sang,
And heaven's high cope with shouts of rapture
rang?—
12. With thee coeval, is the dawn thy slave?
Springs, at thy nod, young phosphore from the
wave?
16. Hast thou the deep pervaded or descried
The dread abyss whence ocean draws his tide?
Who the vast whole could guide, midst all your ranks?
Who grasp the reins that curb th’ ENTIRE OF THINGS?

17 Are to thine eyes the gates of death reveal’d?
The gates where death’s dread shadows lurk conceal’d?
31 Canst thou the teeming Pleiades restrain?
Or break Orion’s icy bands in twain?
32 Whirl round th’ unedifying Zodiac? or the dance
Of bright Arcturus and his sons advance?
33 Knows’t thou the laws that regulate the spheres?
Is it from thee that earth’s power reverses?
34 Lift to the clouds thy voice, and will they swarm
Round thee in robes of show’rs and torrent storm?
35 Will, at thy call, the lightnings rush, and say,
“Lo! here we are,—command, and we obey?”

Chap. xi.
9 Hast thou an arm like God? like him to roll
The volleying thunders round th’ affrighted pole?
10 Come! cloath thyself with majesty and might,
Let glory gird thee with unsuff’ring light;
11 Shoot from thy nostrils flames of arrowy fire,
Search out the proud, and let them feel thine ire:
12 Search out the proud, and crush them to the dust;
With their own arms exterminate th’ unjust.

For the few variations from our standard text,
which are offered in this version, it is necessary to subjoin a remark or two.

Ch. xxxviii. 4.—“Thy wisdom doubtless knows.”
The common reading runs thus, conditionally: “Declare if thou hast understanding;” but the original rather implies an irony than a condition, and may be rendered with infinitely more force, “Declare, for doubtless thou hast understanding.” The particle יִדְעָה in the expression יִדְעָה יִדְעָה יִדְעָה יִדְעָה יִדְעָה is as clearly affirmative in the present instance, as in Hos. xii. 11. or Ps.cxxix. 19, where it is uniformly so rendered.

The astronomic terms employed in v. 31, and 32, have puzzled the critics in every age, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as well as those of more modern times. The synonymous renderings of the Septuagint seem nevertheless to be correct so far as they extend, notwithstanding the original is differently interpreted in several versions of greater antiquity. Admitting the Septuagint version, the Pleiades are elegantly opposed to Orion, as the vernal renovation of nature is opposed to its brumal destruction—the mild and open benignity of spring, to the severe and icy inactivity of winter. The Pleiades are a constellation of seven stars in the sign Taurus, and make their appearance in the spring-time, whence they are denominated by Virgil, Vergilii. The Hebrew term Chimaah (ךִּימָאָא), with which the constellation Pleiades is supposed to correspond, is peculiarly beautiful in its origin, and implies whatever is desirable, delightful or lovely, for such is the meaning of the radical verb קִים. It is probably from בְּכִים (Chisil or Orion) that the Hebrews derived the name of their first winter month which they denominate Chisleu, and which corresponds with a part of our own November: the constellation itself appears towards the latter part of November, through December, and a part of January, and hence offers a correct and elegant synecdoche for the winter at large. The Arabsians still employ the term כִּיסטָל (Chisil) to express coldness and inactivity: oium, torpor, frigus. This, however, is not the word introduced into the Arabic version of the passage before us, but אַלְמָנָרָה.

The translators of the Septuagint did not know the real meaning of the Hebrew term מָזָרוֹת (Mazaroth), and have therefore retained it without offering any synonym, in which conduct they have been imitated by our own standard bible. St. Chrysostom has given us two interpretations: מָצָרוֹת תַּכּוֹנֵת תַּכּוֹנֵת תַּכּוֹנֵת תַּכּוֹנֵת כוֹנֵּ
Quis pariter cœlos omneis convortere, et omneis
Ignibus ætheriis terras subfire feraceis;
Omnibus inve locis esse omni tempore præsto,
Nubibus ut tenebras faciat, cœlique serena
Concutiat sonitu? tum fulmina mittat, et ædeis
Ipse suas disturbet; et, in deserta recedens
Sæviat, exercens telum; quod sæpe nocenteis
Præterit, examinatque indignos, inque merenteis?

Multaque, post mundi tempus genitale, diemque
Primigenum maris, et terræ, solisque, coortum,
Addita corpora sunt extrinsecus, addita circum
Semina, quæ magnum jaculando contulit Omne:
Unde mare et terræ possent augescere; et unde
Adpareret spatium cœli domus, altaque tecta
Tolleret a terris procul; et consurgeret aér.
Nam, sua quoique, locis ex omnibus, omnia plagis
Corpora distribuuntur, et ad sua secla recedunt:
Humor ad humorem, terreno corpore terra,

obviously the Zodiac, and is so expressly rendered by
Sextus Empiricus, and many others. The two words,
moreover, are written alike in the Septuagint, as well
as by Theodoret; and in more than one Hebrew codex
the proper character is restored, the lamed being again
converted into a reish.

Of דים, or as it is written chap. ix. 9. שים (Aish),
there seems to be no doubt; almost every interpreter
and commentator having referred it to the star
Arcturus, in the constellation Boötes. It is supposed
to be the nearest visible star in the northern hemi-
sphere; and the expression "Arcturus with his sons,"
being hence understood as poetically descriptive of
the northern hemisphere itself, (the only part of the
heavens surveyed by the inhabitants of Idumæa,) it
forms a beautiful contrast with Mazaroth or the
Zodiac, as Chimah forms with Chesil.

The latter clause in v. 12, is rendered in our bible
version, "and tread down the wicked in their place."
This is borrowed from St. Jerom; "et conterre im-
Turn the broad heav’ns, and pour, through countless worlds,  
Th’ ethereal fire that feeds their vital throngs?  
Felt every moment, felt in every place.  
Who form the lousing clouds? the light’ning dart,  
And roll the clam’rous thunder, oft in twain  
Rending the concave?—or, full deep retir’d,  
Who point, in secret, the mysterious shaft  
That, while the guilty triumphs, prostrates stern  
The fairest forms of innocence and worth?

Long after the wide world had ris’n, the sun  
Shot his young beams, and earth and sea rejoic’d  
In infant being—still primordial seeds,  
From the vast compass of th’ entire, conjoin’d;  
Conjoin’d from ev’ry part; hence earth and main  
Increas’d; hence the broad mansions of the heav’ns  
Spread wider; and th’ ethereal dome was fill’d  
With new-born air; for all, harmonious, blend  
Kinds with their kinds, and thence those kinds augment.  
Earth from the seeds of earth, from fiery, fire,
Crescit; et ignem ignes procudunt, ætheraque æther:

Denique, ad extremum crescundi per sach finem

Omnia perduxit rerum Natura creatrix;

Ut fit, ubei nihil? jam plus est, quod datur intra

Vitaleis venas, quam quod fluit, atque recedit.

Omnibus hiis ætatas debet consistere rebus;

Heic, Natura suis refrenat viribus auctum.

Nam, quæquomque vides hilare grandescere ad auctum,

Paullatimque gradus ætatis scandere adultæ,

Plura sibi adsumunt, quam de se corpora mittunt;

Dum facile in venas cibus omnis inditur, et dum

Non ita sunt late dispersa, ut multa remittant,

Et plus dispendedi faciant, quam vescitur ætatas.

Nam certe fluere atque recedere corpora rebus

Ver. 1135 For all with gradual growth that swells, and thus

Climbs, by degrees, the scale of life adult, &c.] I have before had occasion to notice, in note on ver. 544, of the present book, that, upon the Epicurean theory, the world itself was regarded as an immense though disorganized system, and analogically compared, on account of many of its powers, to the system of animals themselves. Yet we must not conceive, from the verses before us, or any other, in which the same comparison or allegory is pursued, that Epicurus ever conceived the system of the world to be an animal in its own frame, or in any way endowed with perceptions or ideas. This, indeed, was the express creed of many of the Grecian schools, but it was always strenuously opposed by Epicurus himself. Thus, Xenophanes, the founder of the Eleatic sect, asserted, that God and the world are one and the same thing; and that whatever exists is an individual homogeneous being. Thus too, Pythagoras and Plato speak in almost the same terms of the universal spirit, while the Stoics advance the same of the soul of the world, the spiritus intus, by which all nature exists, and is supported. And when, in modern times, Spinoza informs us, that there is no difference of substances; that the whole, and every part of the material world, is a being necessarily existent, and that God himself is the universe—he does not essentially differ from the Stoics, from Pythagoras, or Plato. It is against all such systems as these, however, whether ancient or modern, that the Epicurean theory is immediately directed. With respect to the popular mythology of his countrymen, Lucretius is perpetually protesting against, and even, at times, deriding their credulity as to any divine power possessed by the earth, the main, or the stars: asserting, that if the multitude
Air from aërial, from the dewy, dew:
Till all-prolific Nature rears at length
To full perfection the vast frame of things,
And the gorg’d system can no more absorb
Than what flies casual from th’ external pores.
Then boasts the whole completion; Nature, then,
Restrains all progress, every power matur’d.

For all with gradual growth that swells, and thus
Climbs, by degrees, the scale of life adult,
Far less emits than what its frame receives.
Wide through the system flows the genial food
Tow’rs every part disperst: yet not so wide
That much transudes external, and the day
Thus loses larger than the day digests.

For still, though much evanish, ampler still

Choose, allegorically, to attribute the names of Cybele,
or mother of the Gods, of Neptune, Jupiter, Apollo,
and Diana, to the different elements and heavenly
bodies, they should still remember, that the whole is
fiction, and that, in themselves, these substances posses
no sensation whatsoever. See ver. 663, and following, of the present book. While he reminds
the philosophers more particularly, who, in different
modes, attached the idea of animation and divinity
to these material bodies, that, so far from being en-
titled to celestial honours, they

Full proof exhibit, rather, how devoid
Of vital action matter may exist:
And that not every compound frame alike
Boasts the high power of intellect and mind.

He tells them, expressly, that it is only from a pe-
cularly organized state of matter, sensation, and
thought, can ever ensue; and that even these qualities
do not equally pervade the whole system, when thus
organized, but are rather confined to the bosom
alone. See Book V. v. 144.

Since e’en in body then the soul and mind
Are fixt thus definite, we amply prove
That out of body, and a reasoning frame
In putrid glebes of earth or solar fire
In air or water, sense can never dwell.
And hence these ne’er divinity can boast,
Since e’en devoid of animated life.

When Lucretius, therefore, as in the present in-
stance, applies, to the general frame of the earth,
terms which more peculiarly belong to the frame of
animal life, it is obvious, that he only applies them
metaphorically: and that he means to describe her
as a systematic, but not a sentient being.
Multa, manus dandum est; sed plura addedere debent,
Donec alescundi summum tetigere cacumen.
Inde minutatim vireis et robur adultum
Frangit, et in partem pejorem liquitur, ætas.
Quippe et enim, quanto est res amplior, augmine adeptio,
Et, quo latior est, in cunctas undique parteis
Plura modo dispargit, et a se corpora mittit;
Nec facile in venas cibus omnis diditur ei;
Nec satis est, pro quam largos exæstuat æstus,
Unde queant tantum suboriri, ac subpeditare.
Jure igitur pereunt, quom rarefacta fluendo
Sunt; et, quom externis subcumbunt omnia plagis:
Quandoquidem grandi cibus ævo denique defit;
Nec tuditantia rem cessant extrinsecus ullam
Corpora confacere, et plagis infesta domare.

Sic igitur magni quoque circum mœnia mundi
Expugnata dabunt labem, putreisque ruinas.
Omnia debet enim cibus integrare novando,
Et fulcire cibus; cibus omnia subtentare.
Nequidquam; quoniam nec venæ perpetiuntur
Quod satis est, neque, quantum opus est, natura ministrat.
Jamque adeo fracta est ætas; ecfetaque tellus
Vix animalia parva creat, quæ cuncta creavit
Secla, deditque ferarum ingentia corpora partu.
The nutriment that spreads, till the full form
Gains by degrees, its point of perfect pow’r.—
Then back, by gradual march, its strength declines,
Its fond perfection; and, from day to day,
Melts all its vigour.—This the ceaseless course
Of things created. But those chief, with speed,
Waste into nought that boast a bulk immense;
Since wider, here, the surface whence, each hour,
Flies off the light effluvium, nor with ease
Winds the fresh food through all the mighty mass,
By ceaseless strife exhausted, and a store
Asking far ampler than the store receiv’d.
Thus all must perish, unsupply’d within,
And, from without, by blows tumultuous urg’d;
Blows that, resistless, from whate’er adjoins,
Ply their full vigour till the victim yields.
Thus shall the world’s wide walls hereafter sink
In boundless ruins: thus, though yet sustain’d
By food appropriate, and preserv’d entire.
For not for ever will her powers digest
The due recruit, nor Nature’s hand supply.—

E’en now her glory fades, and the faint earth,
That erst uprear’d such giant forms of life
In ev’ry class profuse,—scarce now protrudes,
DE RERUM NATURA.  

Lib. II.

Haud, ut opinor, enim mortalia secla superne
Aurea de coelo demisit funis in arva;
Nec mare, nec fluctus, plangentes saxa, crearunt;
Sed genuit tellus eadem, quae nunc alit ex se. 1155

Ver. 1168. For deem not thou some golden chain from heav'n
Each tribe conducted down to realms below ;—]
Most of my readers must be apprized that the poet,
in these verses, refers to the chain which Homer has
described in his Iliad, as connecting the earth with
the heavens, and from which gods and men are alike suspended:

Συν' χρυσιν ετε περιακών χρυσάτων:
Ποιετε τε εξαντληθείς βιον πασι χάραι.
Θ. v. 18.

It is generally conjectured by the critics, how-
ever, that the terms τυχει τοι, "the golden chain," are
here only employed metaphorically. Plato, there-
fore, conceived, that under this figure the poet meant
to represent the sun, whose animating influence, as
he travels through the ecliptic, connects and binds
the whole system together: while Macrobius asserts
it to typify the uninterrupted chain of causes and
effects which are continually linked together through-
out the universe. In this last sense, Pope himself
appears to have understood it, if we may judge from
the parallel passage in his translation, which is rather
indeed a paraphrase than a literal version; not a syllable
of the last of the two following lines being written
by Homer himself, excepting the word heaven:

Let down our golden everlasting chain,
Whose strong embrace holds heaven, and earth, and
main.  

Ver. 25.

Milton, however, has clearly conceived the de-
scription of Homer in its literal sense, as Lucretius
had done before him. For, with a manifest refer-
ence to the passage before us, he represents Satan as
looking towards the eternal throne, and beholding

—fast by, hanging on a golden chain,
This pendent world.  

Par. Lost, ii. 1051.

And it is an extraordinary fact, that many of the
modern Greeks, in the Archipelago, and all the
Turks, from the Mufti to the peasant, still literally
believe that the earth, as well as the fixed stars, are
suspended from the seven heavens, of which they
conceive the ethereal regions consist, by massy and
everlasting chains. They likewise conceive, accord-
ing to the account given us by Mr. Eton, in his
"Survey of the Turkish empire," that the sun is a
vast ball of culinary fire, about as large as the whole
Ottoman province, and that the eclipses of the moon
are occasioned by a great dragon's attempting to de-
voir this luminary.

The chain referred to by Lucretius, which reached
from heaven to earth, and conducted, according to
Homer, the race of gods, as well as the progenitors
of mankind, from the former to the latter, bears a
striking resemblance to the vision of the patriarch
Jacob in his journey to Padan-aram; "And he
dreamed, and behold! a ladder set from the earth;
and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold!
the angels of God ascending and descending on it."
Gen. xxviii. 12.

Ver. 1170. Nor from the boist'rous billows of the
main
That mortals sprung:  —] Lambinus con-
jectures that, in writing these verses, Lucretius had
in his mind that beautiful passage in the Iliad, in
which Patroclus upbraids Achilles on account of his
stern resentment against Agamemnon, and his obsti-
nate determination, not to engage any more in the
With utmost toil, a scant, and puny race.
For deem not thou some golden chain from heav’n
Each tribe conducted down to realms below;
Nor from the boisterous billows of the main
That mortals sprung: earth from herself produc’d
The various ranks that still herself sustains.

Trojan contest, although the Greeks were at this
moment discomfited, and on the point of ruin. “It
was impossible for thee,” says he, “to have sprung
from Thetis and the noble Peleus, but rather,
Some rugged rock’s hard entrails gave thee form,
And raging seas produc’d thee in a storm;—
So rough thy manners.

A conception which Virgil has imitated with much
felicity in his Æneid, Book IV. v. 365.

Frachetta, however, in his Italian exposition, as
well as our own learned countryman Mr. Wakefield,
has a different conjecture, and supposes the poet to re-
fer to the philosophic system of Thales, who main-
tained that all things were produced from water: of
which system, as well as of our poet’s opposition to it,
some account has already been given in Book I. ver.
785, and the note belonging to it.

These conjectures are both ingenious and elegant,
but to me they are not sufficiently satisfactory. As
to the former, no one in the time of Lucretius, or
indeed, at any other time, could possibly believe
that Homer meant to represent Achilles as having
actually arisen from the stormy sea: and to suppose,
therefore, the present verses designed to resist such
an opinion, is to suppose them designed to fight with
the air, and to resist an opinion that never was enter-
tained. The latter conjecture is entitled to superior
attention; but no reason is offered by the learned com-
mentators, and I suspect none can be offered, why
the poet should advert once more to this opinion
of Thales, rather than to those of Herachitus, Anaxime-
ess, Oenopides, or any other philosophers, whose

systems our poet has equally before discussed, and
endeavoured to subvert.

Following up the popular mythology to which he
manifestly adverts, in his first instance, of a golden
chain, he much rather appears to me to have that part
of the same mythology in view which represents the
gods at large, the creators or progenitors of man-
kind, and consequently mankind themselves, as ori-
ginally produced from this element: an opinion which
we know was held, from the following address of
Juno to Venus:

Ειμι γαρ οικομεν πολυφορου πιεσατα γαϊς
'Απειρα τι ζων γινεσι, και μετα Τηθυς,
Όμαι η σφυροκομικην ενυοτειαν ένθα αντιστοιχον.

For lo! I haste to those remote abodes,
Where the great parents, sacred source of gods,
Ocean and Tethys, their old empire keep,
On the last limits of the land and deep.
In their kind arms my tender years were pass’d.

Or, which is nearly the same thing, Lucretius may,
in these verses, allude to the birth of Venus indi-
vidually: Venus, who was the immediate parent of
the Roman people, and, who, with more appropria-
tion than any of the deities besides, may have been
said, upon the vulgar mythology of the day, to have
arisen from the ocean, the flactus piangentes saxa,
“the boisterous billows of the main,” as he expresses
himself in the very passage under consideration:
this goddess, who was the life of all life, and the de-
light of gods and men: under all which characters
our poet has represented her in his invocation at the
opening of the first book.
PRETEREA, nitidas fruges, vinetaque læta,  
Sponte suâ primum mortalibus ipsa creavit;

In reality, the two doctrines here referred to, of the origin of man from the sun, or the ethereal heavens, and from water, are parts of an almost universal mythology, and form two of the grand pivots on which nearly every system of ancient idolatry appears to have turned. Our poet refers to them again, in Book V. Sor, and almost in the same words.

It has been the object of Mr. Bryant's literary labours, to trace these doctrines to their fountain-head; and though his system seems, in many places, to require foundation, and to be too extravagant in its etymologies, it applies so ingeniously, both to the records and traditions of the most ancient times, and is so truly comprehensive and pertinent, that the reader will perhaps thank me for offering, in the present place, some analysis of it, as since enlarged and attempted to be confirmed by other writers.

These gentlemen begin with supposing, that the mythology of all nations, ancient or modern, ascends no higher than the period of the deluge; and that, whatever conceptions the Pagan world may have entertained of an ante-diluvian existence, such as those of a paradise, and a golden age, such conceptions are little more than mere isolated traditions, unconnected with the mythologic systems which were afterwards invented and multiplied. It is generally conjectured, upon this theory, that the first object of idolatrous deification after the flood, was the sun; that every species of Pagan theology has originated from solar worship; and that the name of almost every deity and fabulous hero of the Oriental world, as well as of those imported thence into Greece, is referable to the sun himself, or to some rite or ceremony appertaining to solar worship. Such is the conjecture generally entertained upon this theory, and which was contended for by Mr. Bryant himself: but there are others of the same school, who do not contemplate the worship of the sun as the most ancient species of idolatry, nor that from which every mythologic fable has originated. The mythology of the whole Pagan world is, by such inquirers, resolved into three grand systems of idolatry, each of nearly equal date, and all intertwining and combining with each other in every possibility of variety—the worship of the Ark—the worship of the Serpent,—and the worship of the Sun. Of these, the Arkite idolatry is conceived to be, in some measure, the most ancient; then the institution of Serpent or Ophite worship; and lastly, that of the Sun.

On the fall of the flood, and the resting of the ark upon mount Ararat, the vessel that had preserved the survivors of the human race from the destruction that prevailed around them, and the patriarch who had contrived and guided this wonderful machine over the shoreless ocean, were at first contemplated with gratitude and reverence: and when idolatry, or the worship of sensible images began, in a generation or two afterwards, to supersede the pure and spiritual worship of the Creator, both were defied, and the system of arkite idolatry commenced. Noah was regarded as a god, and the vessel in whose capacious womb the patriarch himself, with his family, and all that appertained to his family, was preserved, as a goddess, and the common parent of all things. Hence the origin of the fable of Venus, or the common parent of all things, rising from the flood; hence she acquired the name of Δεμέτερ, (Demeter,) or, according to the Chaldeans, Da-Mater, which is literally “the Mother” of Gods and men; a term, undoubtedly, long afterwards applied, under another system, both to Ceres and the Earth, but which, on its first invention, was the peculiar appellation of Venus, or the Egyptian Aphrodite. From the same historic fact we trace, too, the origin of the fable of the great mundane egg floating on the surface of the mighty waters, and containing, within itself, the rudiments of the future world. Hence, again, the origin of the worship of Isis and Osiris, and the ceremony among the Egyptians of the mystical enshrinement of the latter, a mere personification of Noah, in an ark or vessel, which was conveyed twice a year with great pomp and splendour through the public streets, and amidst the adoring multitude, under the name of the former. Hence, the Xuth, Zuth, or
Book II. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Then, too, spontaneous, from the soil she rear’d
Those luscious fruits, those vines that gladden life;

Oannes, the chief god of the Babylonians and Chaldeans, and the Dagon of the Canaanites, are often represented with the body of a man, and the tail of a fish; a figure precisely similar to that which the Hindus bestow upon their own deity Veeshna, during his incarnation, which comprizes the first avatar of their chronology.

The form of the ark was a source of additional idolatry, and laid the foundation for worshipping almost every thing that was possess of a circular, or crescent shape. Hence, the adoration paid to the moon, or to Venus Demeter, under the appellation of Diana; hence the representation of Isis, the Venus Demeter of Egypt, with a crescent upon her head, and the reverence on her account universally paid to the cow, as well as the apis, or bull, both which animals, from the crescent curvature of their horns, were deemed sacred to herself.

The element on which the ark floated, as well as the form of the ark itself, was also an object of idolatrous veneration; and when, after the dispersion of the Cushites, in consequence of their idolatry on the plains of Shinar, one branch of them travelled towards Egypt, and another towards Hindu, they equally carried with them the worship of water, and transferred the rites to which they had been accustomed, to the Nile and the Ganges. They regarded the annual inundation of these rivers as a type of the universal deluge; and the fertility which ensued upon their subsiding, as an emblem of the renewal of the world; and were punctilious in their devotions to these extraordinary streams, as well on their rise as their fall. From the Nile, the Indus and the Ganges, this river-worship was propagated to other streams, till, under the creative imagination of the Greeks, the minutest rill was supposed to be an object of divine adoration, and to be actuated by a peculiar genius, or godhead. Hence too, among the Egyptians more especially, the veneration that was paid to the Ibis, which is only another name for the ark, and which was an aquatic fowl of the crane kind, highly useful among themselves from its destroy-
Ipsa dedit dulceis fetus per pabula lāta:
Quae nunc vix nostro grandescunt aucta labore;

Hippocratia: whence, according to Hesychius, Hip, Hippa, Hippia, Hippos, are synonymous with Αρχαίος, which, as just observed, is obviously derived from the Babylonian Ereh, and is, altogether, parallel with the Egyptian Hip. Even in the Chaldaic vocabulary itself, we meet with Barsippa, which is generally interpreted a barge, ship, or ark, but which, more accurately, means the "son, or offspring of Ippa," or the ark, and may be easily made to apply to Noah, or any of his family, who were preserved in the maternal womb of this buoyant machine. From Ναυς the Greeks derived their Ναυς, and a vast variety of modern languages, a term of similar import: but without pursuing such deductions any farther in the present case, I shall refer the reader to the note on B. iii. 1048, where the same subject is resumed upon another occasion. I shall here only observe, that the Egyptian month, in which the Nile began to rise, and the procession of the sacred ark, or hip, of Isis to be exhibited, which corresponds with the 25th of our June, and constitutes the eleventh month in their calendar, was, in consequence, denominated Ναυς or Ναυτική which is only a duplication of the radical Ναυς, omitting the aspirate; and, as this radical was applied to sacred purposes, may be translated, consistently with Oriental costume, "the most sacred month, or season."

The Babylonians appear also to have had another word significative of an ark, which was Bad, or Boud, and hence, says Mr. Alwood, the ancient (Boeed) Boutus, which was sacred to Isis, or Aphrodite, and means no other than the city of the Bout, boat, or ark. Our own term boat, he derives from this radical, and perhaps the words bunt, and about, which imply a turning round, revolution, or circle, may, like the word are, on which I have commented already, be derived from the crescent form of this machine. Probably, also, the term (Borsip) Botrys, a city of Phoenicia, may be indebted to the same origin. But this Bout, Hip, or Ark, was, as I have already observed, deified and worshipped as the great origin of all things: and may we not hence derive the Boodh or divinity of the Hindus and Birmans, the Booden of the Ceylonese, and the Oden or Woden of the Goths; for the Boodh of India is the Dies Mercurii, Wednesday, or Wodens-day of modern Europe? This divinity of the Hindus is, by the Siamese, deominated Poorth, or Poo, and by the vulgar Poo: whence, probably, again, the Chinese Fo, or Foe: but the Siamese de nominate their own deity Gautma, or Gaudma, terms which, nevertheless, originate from the common radical Boodh, or Bout, and which not only serves as a basis for the Siamese Gautma, but in all probability for the German Got, and our own English terms God and good. In reality, a very little analytical examination will prove that almost all the names for the Supreme Being, both in ancient and modern times, may be traced to a Chaldaic origin, and had an embryo existence in Babylonia, prior to the destruction of Babel, and the dispersion of the sons of Ham towards Egypt and Hindustan.

Those I have already enumerated arise from the name of the ark, or vessel itself, in which the great progenitors of mankind were preserved in the midst of the unbounded deluge, and which was afterwards deified and admitted to divine rites. Yet divine rites were not only bestowed, in the idolatry of succeeding ages upon the ark itself, but, as already observed, upon the builder of the ark, upon the fabricator, as well as the fabric. Noah, among the Chaldeans, passes under the appellation of Thoth, Thet, or Thuth, or, as it is written by Herodotus, Xuth: in the idolatry of Babylon, he was deified as the supreme god: the origin of all things, "the father of gods and men." Hence, Thet, or Tuisto, is a father or progenitor in old German, even to the present day: hence the Tautus of Phoenicia, and the Teutates of the Celts. Noah, thus deified, became the chief divinity of Greece and Rome: from Thuth, or Xuth, they obtained Zeus (Zuus) or Jupiter; from Thoth, Thos (Θος), Dios (Δίς), and Deus: from Zeus (Ζεύς) Zeus (Ζεύς), which, by an easy commutability of gen der, was, as Hesychius informs us, a title for Venus,
Book II. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

And crown’d with pasture, and with glossy corn,
Those fields where man now toils almost in vain:

or Aphrodite Demeter, under the character of Diana. The word Dios is still the common term for God in the Spanish language; and hence the Italian Dio, and the French Dieu.

From the proper term Noah, the builder of the ship, the Greeks also derived the substantive (Navs) Naus, the “ship” itself, and Danias or Da-Naus which is literally “the ship or ark”; and the entire fable respecting whom, including the fifty sons and daughters, or priests and priestesses, that were united together, and the leaky vessel or ark that the latter were sentenced to pour water into for ever, originates, as is shewn in the note on Book III. 1046, from the arkite idolatry of Babylonia, or perhaps, more immediately from the religious rites of Isis and Osiris, which constitute but a type of the former. From the Greek term Naus (Navs) the Latins derive their navis; and it is curious to observe, that almost every modern language of Europe has acquired its name for a ship or water-vessel, either from Noah the builder of the vessel, or the hip or ark he constructed, from the fabricator or the fabric itself.

The deification which the idolatrous descendants of Ham conferred upon their common progenitor Noah, they also conferred upon Ham himself, and hence he too was regarded as the Thoth, Xuth, Zeus, or supreme god of his people. Surveying no object around them so powerful and glorious as the sun, these deities were next compared to the sun, and deduced their titles from him. Like the present princes of the East, they were denominated lords of the sun, the moon, or the stars, and often denominated the sun himself. Hence Ammon or Hammon (Ham-On,) is literally Ham the Sun; the shrine of whom, under the additional title of Jupiter Ammon, which was situated in the desert bordering upon Egypt, was the most renowned of any in antiquity. It is probable that the origin of all solar worship proceeded from such an appropriation of titles, and it easily accounts for that intermixture of terms which we meet with in many ancient names, obviously of Chaldaic origin, and the combination, and frequently the confusion, of these different systems of idolatry. Thoth and Ham, in consequence hereof, were regarded as the sun himself, or the pure ethereal heavens in which he resides, and whence he distributes his blessings; hence from Thoth, Thoth, or Thor, we derive (Ai-Thor) Æther, the region or temple of Thor, the Sun, or Jupiter: and hence Jupiter and Æther, amidst the Greeks and Romans, were convertible terms. But the supreme origin of all things, as I have before observed, was also represented, in arkite idolatry, under the feminine gender, as the Aphrodite, Venus Demeter, or common mother of all created beings. And hence the term Ai-Thor was also applied to this female divinity, who was denominated by the Egyptians Ἐτερ and Ἐτερ (Aithor); whence Ἐτερ Ὀρθία τῆς ἔρημου εἰς τήν θεάν ἢ τοῦ Ἰούδας άνθρωπον; the Xuth-Pi-Ait-Or, of Herodotus, lib. ii. 41; and Thyatira in Lybia. And whence, in all probability, the Thor or divinity of the Goths. The Gothic Thor, however, was a masculine deity, and of course synonymous with the Xuth of the Chaldæans, and the Xuth-Pi-Ait-Or, or, with a Doric contraction, Xu'-P'-Ait-Or (Jupiter, the place or region of inspiration of Xuth the Sun) of the Romans;—hence, in hebdomadal time, the Dies Jovis and Thursday or Thor’s day are appropriated to the same period. Xuth, according to Herodotus, vii. 94, had a son whose name was (Io) Ion, and the Ionians were denominated from him: but the true interpretation of the term Ion is “a dove”; and it is hence obvious, observes Mr. Alwood, whence this fable originates, the Ion or Dove having been put forth from the ark by Xuth in quest of dry land. Whence also the appropriation of this bird to Venus, who was a symbol of the ark defiled under a female form. Herodotus tells us in the same passage, that the inhabitants of Achaea, prior to the arrival of Danaius and Xuthus, were called Pelasgi Ægiales, but that on this event they changed their name to Ionians.

From the idolatry of the Babylonians, thus transferred to the sun and the starry firmament, proceeded
the worship of fire, which was justly supposed to be representative of the sun; a system of religion which, prior to the introduction of the Christian, pervaded almost all nations, and which is still predominant in South America, as well as in many other regions. The temples dedicated to the sun, or the deity of fire, were each of them denominated a Pyramid, which is almost literally Pi-Ur-Am-Ait, and with the contraction P-Ur-Am-Ait—"the place of inspiration of the radiant Ham," or "Ham the Sun." They were built upon one model, and it is easy to perceive that this model was deduced from the figure of an ascending flame of fire, which originates with a broad basis, and terminates in a pointed apex. Egypt and Hindu abounds with buildings of this description, and the pagodas of China do not essentially vary from it. Hercules, who is a deity of high antiquity among the eastern nations, and in reality is only another name for Jupiter or Ham, is denominated from radicals altogether analogous with the term Pyramid; for it is literally Ur-Cal-Es, "an eminence dedicated to the effulgence of fire;" or rather, "an ascending flame of fire." And the descendants of the Heraclids in India are to this day denominated Surya-Bans, which is literally "children of the Sun." This appellation indeed, children or descendants of the Sun, of Xuth, or Jupiter Ammon, was in a more restricted sense conferred upon the heroes of antiquity alone; but in a more general sense upon all mankind, since Hammon, or Ham the Sun, was worshipped as the common father of all. And hence the fable alluded to by our poet, in the verse immediately foregoing, of mankind having descended from heaven or the sun, by means of a golden chain appended from the ethereal regions for this purpose.

While the Sun was thus at first admired and afterwards worshipped for his splendour and power, the serpent also, in the very same period of the world, attracted an equal degree of notice as an emblem of providence and protection; and was supposed in consequence hereof to possess, in a superior degree, the qualities of wisdom and prudence. The beautiful and variegated scales of this reptile seem at first to have engaged the attention and admiration of mankind; and its power of enveloping its food or prey in a complete circle of defence, to have laid the foundation for its moral character, and the reverence which was paid to it afterwards. As an emblem of divine protection, we find it therefore hieroglyphically represented as encompassing the great mundane egg, while floating on the waters of the deluge, both in Egyptian and Hindu memorials. The serpent in some hieroglyphics, and particularly on the walls of the great temple of ancient Thebes, is exhibited with wings, or as a draco volans; and when sustaining this figure, the same emblem of providential protection is continued, by its hovering with its wings extended over the egg or ark that is represented as floating below. The Egyptians denominated the serpent (Ωφί) hoph, whence the Greeks derive their ὁφί. And when in process of time this reptile became deified, he was called Hob, Oub, or Ob-El, "the Serpent-God;" and the temples or buildings erected to his worship, which instead of being cones, like the pyramid or temple of the Sun, were cylindrical, were each of them termed an Obelisk, Ob-El-El-ca, "a temple of the radiant or illustrious Serpent God." From the name of this deity the Greeks derive their Pelops, P-El-Ops, "the oracle of the Serpent-God;" Pelope in Phrygia, Pelopia, Pelopea daughter of Thyestes son of Pelops, and a vast variety of other names. Pelops, in Dion. Sic. i. 317, edit. Wessel, is said to have been enamoured of Hippodamia, the beautiful daughter of Enomäus, and to have put all his rivals to death in order to obtain her; which he eventually accomplished. Who does not see in this fable, and under these names, an emblem of the ark or Hippa, built or created by Noah, and borne up and protected by a serpent or dragon, either hovering over it or coiled around it, together with its safe deposit on mount Ararat, and the triumph of the Serpent or Ophite worship? Enomäus is Ain-Am-Ees, "the fountains of Ham the Sun;" and Hippodamia, Hip-Ad-Am,
Where faints the steer, the ploughman faints fatigu'd,
And the keen share so wastes, mechanic art

"the ark of the supreme Ham." Ἐνομίας is, therefore, only another name for Ham, or Noah the progenitor of Ham: and Hippodamia was frequently an appellation for Aphrodite, Venus, or the fabric which Ham and his father constructed; and which may, with the utmost propriety, be entitled the offspring of either of them. The city of Pelopin mentioned above, was the same with Thyatira, which, as previously noticed, was sacred also to Venus.

I have already observed, that between the arkite and solar worship there subsisted the closest degree of intermixture and combination; and that, from the origin of solar worship itself, this must necessarily have been the case. But from the observations immediately preceding, it evidently appears that at least an equal degree of intimacy must have taken place between the arkite and the ophite idolatry; the serpent being regarded merely as the protecting power of the ark or ezech, enveloping it with its plant volumes, or hovering over it with its guardian wings. Yet, from the lustre and coruscation of its scales, and, more particularly still, from its occasionally forming the figure of a complete circle, it became also a type of the Sun himself, and was not unfrequently regarded as such. Hence the word Europa, is by analysis Eur-Op, or Eur-Oph, "the Serpent of the Sun." And hence we obviously account for the connexion, intertexture, and occasional confusion of these three distinct systems of idolatry, and not unfrequently trace a reference to all of them in the same proper names of cities or family. Thus Cecrops, king of Athens, means (Ca-Cur-Ops, and contractedly Ca-C'r-Ops,) "the temple of the Solar Ops," or, "the Serpent of the Sun." But Cecrops is feigned to have been the descendant of Eretechus, while Eretechus, on the contrary, is (Erech-Theus or Theut) "the Lord of the Ark of the ezech or ark." In like manner I have observed, that Venus and Theut or Theus were the same deity, only with a different gender; yet one of the sacrifices offered to Venus was entitled (Zaeopia) Zacoria, and her priests were entitled (Zaeopi) Zacorai; but Zacorai and Zacorai are obviously borrowed from Za-Cur, which radically means "the Sun," or, "the glorious Lord of day." From the Chaldaic term Cur, the Greeks derive their Κυρίς, which was a title of honour, and Κυρήα (the island of Crete), as well as Curium a town in Cyprus, both of which were sacred to Venus. From the same term, also, is derived the Κυρηάτης Curetes, Cur-Ait-Es, ("the emanations of the Supreme Sun,"!) or priests of Jupiter, to whose office our poet has already alluded, ver. 614 of the present book. Hence Creas or Creasna, "the Sun," in the Erse tongue; Cheres in the Egyptian; Coreis among the Persians; and Cura among the Peruvians. In like manner, Kircher applies the terms Baal and Bel, by which the idolatrous Canaanites designated their supreme deity, the Sun, to Venus, and represents him with his lower parts of the form of a fish: but Bel or Baal, being masculine, he is more properly Thoth, Oannes, or Noah. Yet Κύριαν (Cu-Bel, or "the temple of Bel") is an undoubted appellation of Venus in the character of Da-Meter, or "the great parent of all things."

From this ingenious theory, connected with a general survey of ancient history and mythology, on which I have dwelt the longer in an individual note, that I might bring the whole into one comprehensive point of view, it should seem that all the different systems of idolatry that have been exhibited in past, and are perhaps exhibiting in present ages, ramify from the three radical fountains of arkite, solar, and ophite worship: all of which were adopted at a very early period after the deluge, and were propagated over the globe, on the dispersion of the sons of Chus, in every different direction, after the ruin of their celebrated tower and city of Babel: and we see obviously from what quarter the two most popular opinions of the origin of mankind, here adverted to by our poet, were derived—to wit, their descent from the sun, or the ethereal regions; and their creation from the waves of the ocean. They were also occasionally stated, and that too not upon philosophic principles, but mythological fable, to have
Usque adeo pereunt fetus, augentque labore!
Jamque, caput quassans, grandis subspirat arator

arisen from the earth; but this was by no means so
general a belief as the two preceding, and was ordi-

narily confined to the Titans and giants, or to such
deified heroes as, like Erechtheus, were immediately
connected with the rites of Ceres, and the cultivation
of corn. See on the former subject, note on Book I.
767; and on the latter, note on Book VI. v. 1.
I have asserted, that these three systems of idola-
ty, though in themselves distinct and separate, yet
were perpetually blending and amalgamating; and I
shall subjoin, as an additional proof of such asser-
tion, that all the three types whence these idolatries
originated, were equally admitted as emblems, though
as nothing more, into the religion of the Jews. On
the reverence which was paid by this people to the
element of fire, I have already animadverted in the
note on Book I. v. 693. It was in the character of
a flaming pyramid or burning bush, that Jehovah
appeared to Moses on mount Horeb, and to the
Hebrews at large on the promulgation of the law
from mount Sinai. The formation of a memorial
ark was expressly commanded by God himself, on
the establishment of the written law, and an express
canon of ceremonies ordained on the occasion.
And when this rebellious people were deservedly
plagued, in their journey through the desert, with
disease and mortality, from the bite of multitudes of
venomous serpents sent among them for this purpose,
the Almighty commanded them to erect a fiery
serpent, upon a lofty pole or pillar, as an emblem of
his providence and healing power, by looking towards
which all who were diseased immediately became sound.
Other literary observations, in connection with the same
theory, the reader may find in the notes on Book I.
1214. Book V. 24, and 1483, and Book VI. 1.

Ver. 1171. ——earth from herself produc'd
The various ranks that still herself sustains.] Homer, desirous of paying a compliment to the
Athenians, thus represents Erechtheus, the founder of
this celebrated republic, as the immediate progeny of
the earth, although suckled by Minerva;

Δημος Ερεχθεος μεγαλοτορος, εν ποι' Αθην
Θεοις Δαι Θυγατη, τεκε έλιοιν απωρα.

Il. B. 544.
Athens the fair, where great Erechtheus sway'd,
That ow'd his nurture to the blue-ey'd maid;
But from the teeming furrow took his birth,
The mighty offspring of the fruitful Earth.

Pope.
Ovid, in the commencement of his Metamorpho-
sis, appears to be doubtful whether, in the formation
of man, he should incline to the system of Plato, or
of Epicurus, and, in consequence, writes thus:

Natus homo est: sive hunc divino semine fecit
Ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo,
Sive recens tellus, seductaque nuper ab alto
Æthere.

Then man was made, whose animated frame
Or God inform'd with a celestial flame,
Or Earth from purer heav'n but lately freed.

Ver. 1173. Then, too, spontaneous, from the soil the
rear'd
Those luscious fruits, those vines, &c.—] To
the same effect, Ovid:

Ver erat æternum, placidique tentepibus auras
Mulcebant zephyri natos sine semine flores.
Mox etium fruges tellus inarata ferbat,
Nec renovatus ager gravidis canebat aristis.

The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovok'd, did fruitful stores allow.
The flowers unseen, in fields and meadows reign'd,
And western winds immortal spring maintain'd.
In following years the bearded corn ensu'd
From earth unask'd, nor was that earth renew'd.

Dryden.
Can scarce supply th' exhaustion:—such the call
For labour now, so foods forbear to rise.
Thus musing, the rude husbandman shakes oft

In a passage, predicting the return of these happy
days, Virgil, as well as Ovid, has been indebted to
our poet:
Moli paulatim flavesct campus arista,
Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva,
Et duræ quercus sudabunt rosida mella.

ECL. IV. v. 28.

Pope's beautiful imitation of this passage, will
serve as a version of it:

The swain, in barren deserts, with surprize,
Sees lillics spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And starts amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear.

MESSIAH.

The opinion of a golden age, or anterior period of
superior happiness, is common to most nations, and
probably originated from different traditions concern-
ing the Garden of Eden. The modern Bramins
look back to such an epoch with as firm a belief in
its existence as the ancient Greeks: and the Saturn
of the latter is the Dushwanta of the former. There
is a poem in Sanscrit with this title, or rather entitled,
Dushwanta and Sacontala, which is said to be even
older than the era of Calidas, which thus refers to
this age of consummate beatitude. "During the
reign of Dushwanta, no one worked at the plough,
or in the mines, because the earth yielded her riches
spontaneously; nor any one offended against the law.
As the people delighted in justice, so they obtained
justice, and the object of their wishes. There was no
fear of thieves, no dread of poverty, no apprehension
of disease. The clouds rained in due season, the
fruits were full of juice, and the earth abounded with
herbs, and flocks, and every precious thing." Ori-
ental Repository, Vol. II.

An opinion, somewhat similar, is to be traced
among most of the Christian fathers. St. Cyprian
thus expresses himself, in an epistle to Demetrius:
Seire debes jam mundum non illis viribus stare qui-
bus prius steterat, &c. "Acquaint thyself with this
fact, that the earth is not now possesst of the same
degree of vigour which she possesst formerly. On
this subject, although the Scriptures, and our most
eminent divines, were silent, yet the world itself
would speak, and even testify the cause of so woeful
a change. We enjoy not in Winter the same abun-
dance or quantity of showers for fecundating the
scattered seeds which was formerly bestowed: we
feel not in Summer the same quantity of heat for
ripening the fruits of the earth. In the Spring it-
self we have less promise of plenty; and in the Au-
tumn the trees and general herbage are less abundant.
Even in the bowels of the earth, there are fewer
fossils and precious stones: less silver and gold; for
the metals themselves are diminishing, and their
veins of ore are contracting daily. There are fewer
harvest-men in the fields, fewer sailors on the ocean,
fewer soldiers in the camp. There is less innocence
in civil life; less justice in the municipal courts, less
constancy in friendship, less skill in the arts, less
discipline in our morals. All things, indeed, must
diminish, as they necessarily hasten to decay, and
will shortly attain their last hour of existence."

This is a dismal picture for succeeding gene-
rations to contemplate, and probably, the worthy
father has a little too highly coloured it. But the
principle advanced both by himself and Lucrètius, so
far as it relates to natural phenomena, is countenanced,
I think, in some measure, as well by physical and phi-
losophic views, as by divine revelation. Although
not an animalized, homogeneous being, the earth is,
at least, a systematized material substance; and it
seems totally contrary to the nature of things, that
a material substance of any kind should either con-
tinue for ever, or exist without gradual decay. Such
gradual decay, indeed, is the common course of
nature at large; for every thing, great or small, is
by degrees dissolving into its original elements. Nor
is this species of destruction confined to the globe we
inhabit. Suns, and whole planetary systems, have already disappeared from their stations in the horizon, dissolved, perhaps, to primitive non-entity, or resorbed in the material and central mass of universal nature, from which they were at first projected, and new creations have been discovered in their stead. What is there then, in the system of the earth itself, to enable it to resist the common fate? Upon every analogy of reasoning, it also must eventually yield, and it is probably decaying at the present moment. The increasing ingenuity of man may enable it to produce the necessaries of life to the last period of its existence; but without such increase, either of toil or ingenuity, its growing defects would become daily more conspicuous. In what manner this existence is finally to terminate, is of little consequence; most probably, by the operation of fire, and long anterior to the period of the earth’s total incapacity of production from any other cause. And such, indeed, is the opinion advanced by our poet himself in his fifth book. The elemental fire contained in its own central bowels, whether electric or culinary, is conceived, upon every geologic system, to be immense. Many philosophers of the first reputation in our own age, have calculated, that the great body of the earth derives, at least ten times as much heat from the extrication of these elemental and central fires, as it does from the operation of the sun. And the ravages the whole globe is sustaining from earthquakes and volcanoes, the sure and dreadful effects of such latent and most powerful causes operating upon confined gasses, and vast beds of combustible materials, are, in every respect, deeper and wider than those produced by any other cause. It is no improbable conjecture then to suppose, even prior to its total incapacity of production from mere age, that the immediate dissolution of the earth may be effected by the explosion of some immense and central volcano operating over every portion of the globe at the same moment, and perhaps converting it into the same species of comet which Buffon supposed it originally constituted. See note on Book I. 646. — It was from an explosion of this sort, occurring in the central and opake mass of universal nature, that Dr. Herschell conceives the earth originally, and indeed all the existent systems of the universe, were emitted. See note on Book I. 1112. And this idea of the dissolution of the earth, by a general conflagration, is corroborated by the express prophecies of the Scriptures, which inform us (2 Pet. cap. iii. v. 10—12.), that “the heavens shall be dissolved with fire, and shall pass away with a great noise: that the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.” See note on Book V. ver. 425.

It may, perhaps, be observed, in reply to the idea of this gradual decay and final dissolution of the earth, that although all compound material bodies do suffer such gradual decay, and are continually changing, yet that the essential atoms of matter cannot be conceived to suffer any change; a fact, indeed, contended for by Epicureans themselves; and that as, according to another of their principles, the destruction of one substance is but the generation of a second, the great body of the earth itself must, at all times, have the same quantity, and the same unvaried quality of material atoms as the means of recruiting its different forms and phenomena; in consequence of which, that we have no reason to conceive that the great body of the earth either gradually is decaying, or ever can experience such a change as may produce its total dissolution; and that Epicurus reasoned inconclusively upon his own principles when he formed such an idea. — But Epicurus reasoned from the living fact itself, a foundation upon which all philosophy should be built, as far as the fact was capable of applying, and from a close and obvious analogy where the fact ceased. Whoever examines nature must allow, that there is a sufficient quantity of elemental atoms to recruit the individual system of every animal and vegetable, as well as the general orb of earth itself: but the individual systems of animals and vegetables are not recruited for ever. New
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His weary head; his thriftless pains bewails,
Thriftless too sure: and, while his wand'ring thought

animals and new vegetables of the same orders and species, are continually springing up, it is true, and new worlds may, in like manner, be created from the ruins of the present. Why the individual systems of animals and vegetables are not suffered to be thus eternally recruited, we know not: but there is, through all creation, an express and determinate law of nature, or the God of nature, that this individual renewal of system shall not be perpetuated for ever. The Christian, indeed, looks forwards, with joyful hope, to a time when this law shall be done away: when "there shall be new heavens, and a new earth;" and "this mortal shall put on immortality:" and the principles of sound and genuine philosophy, as well as the veritable assurances of the sacred Scriptures, concur in justifying such an expectation. The former intimate to man, that such an event may occur; the latter, that it most decidedly will.

There is, I know, a school of philosophers in this country, as well as in France, who ridicule every idea of this sort; who, denying all evidence adduced from revelation, and confining themselves solely to the experienced train of events, the actual laws and phenomena of nature, strenuously contend, that there can be no such thing as a resurrection of the body. But what have these men of wisdom substituted in its stead? Why, truly, that nature, instead of degenerating, is becoming daily more kindly and prolific; and that the body itself, in its present mode of existence, is gradually attaining an increase of longevity, and will, in a few generations, acquire the possession of complete immortality: that man is becoming, and will become, more virtuous; that the universal passions of the soul are bending, by degrees, to the judgment and correction of the mind; that perpetual health will, in consequence, soon succeed to disease; tranquillity to war; the whole orb of earth be duly populated;—and there being no more necessity for the multiplication of the animal species, that the sexual organs themselves will gradually disappear, and vanish!!! And yet these are the men who, discarding every thing mysterious, or acquired by supernatural revelation, pretend, more than all others, to confine themselves to the experienced facts and events before them!! But it is useless to pursue such fanciful and absurd speculations any farther. They are undermined by the very first principles on which such pretended sages affect to build this philosophic Babel: for what one law, or phenomenon of nature, can they conjure up, to countenance such unfounded and puerile assertions? Every mode and variety of life, virtuous and vicious, tranquil and tumultuous, temperate and luxurious has been alternately resorted to; but man, in every instance, has still proved mortal. Every pretended nostrum and elixir, for the prolongation of existence, has been tried, and in many instances faithfully tried, according to the rules of the empirical prescriber, but all equally in vain. Yet these new and philosophic empirics boldly come forwards, and, though rigid adherents to the laws of nature, and the experienced train of events, without the addition of any one fact, and in direct contradiction to nature herself, pretend to assert, that they have discovered this stupendous secret:—that life and immortality depend, or will a few ages hence depend, upon the mere volition of the mind: and that the man, who ardently desires to live, may, even in this world live for ever!! See Condorcet's Essai sur le Progres de l'Esprit humain; and Mr. Godwin's Political Justice.

There is a greater degree of resemblance between these equalizing philosophers, and that sect of Christians, who are denominated Millenarian, than either are, perhaps, desirous of acknowledging. For interpreting in too literal a sense, a passage in the Revelations of St. John, these latter are looking forwards with holy hope, to a period in which righteousness and truth will prevail for a thousand years over the whole earth, to the utter exclusion of vice, error, and every mental and corporeal evil: a period in which the life of man will be elongated, and every one exist in the bonds of harmony and love. This belief, which was common in the first ages of the church, has never been without its adherents: and
Præteritis, laudat fortunas sæpe parentis.
Tristis item vetulae vitis sator, [acta peragrants]
Temporis, incusat numen, coelumque fatigat;
Et crepat, antiquum genus ut, pietate repletum,
Perfacile angustis tolerat finibus ævom,
Quom minor esset agri multo modus ante viritim:
Nec tenet, omnia paullatim tabescere, et ire
Ad capulum, spatio ætatis defessa vetusto.

if Origen opposed it successfully in his own era, our
own countryman, Whiston, inculcated it so strenu-
ously in his day, that even in the present, there are
no small numbers of Christians who admit the doc-
trine into their creed. And for this, they have, at
least, more reason than the philosophers, for main-
taining their absurd and preposterous tenet. The
former, although mistaken in their interpretation,
actually make an appeal to an accredited prophecy:
while the latter can make no appeal whatsoever: de-
serting revelation, they are totally opposed by the
facts and experience of revolving ages. I ought not
to omit, adding, in this place, that M. Kant appears,
in some measure, inclined to this idea of a perpetual
improvement and perfectibility. "Philosophy," says he, "has its millennium as well as Christianity,
in which, philanthropy is to be developed in all its
generous and extensive operations, and in which its
fairest projects are to be realized. This millennium
is daily approximating, and its arrival is accelerated
by moral and intellectual discussions." See, on this
subject, a small essay of the Professor's, imported by
De Boile, 1798, and entitled, Idée de qui pourrait
être une Histoire universelle dans les Mains d'un
Cosmopolit.

Ver. 1181. **Thus musing, the rude husbandman
shakes oft**

*His weary head;—* An action still fre-
quent in the present day, and constantly indicative
of sorrow, or some other evil. Virgil has copied
the phrase in the following instance:

**Tum quassans caput, hæc effudit pectore dicta:**

Æn. vii. v. 292.

*Her head then shaking, thus the goddess spoke.*

Ver. 1186. **Then, luckless planter of degenerate vines!**

*His day he curses, then all heav'n be tires,*] In the
manuscript copies in which the original of these two
lines occur, they are so marred, and so differently writ-
Weighs, with the present, the fair times elaps’d,
Envies the lot the men of yore enjoy’d.
Then, luckless planter of degenerate vines!
His day he curses, then all heav’n he tires,
Mutt’ring that earlier times, though virtuous more,
Should, thus, have more been favour’d,—thus have rear’d
An ampler harvest e’en from narrower farms,—

Heedless that all things by degrees must fail,
Worn out by age, and doom’d to certain death.

The entire passage cannot, perhaps, but remind
many of my readers of Hesiod’s description of the
fifth age of the world:

\begin{verbatim}
Mnver’iiriiT oi^eiXov lyui WE^xTrToia-i ^srsivai
Avdpxo’iv, aW*
tt^octQe SavEiv, »i ETrsTTX ytvi<rSxi.
ITavtrovTai KOtua/rov xa» otcvo^, ovd Ti vvktub,
Q^O’ApoiMivoi*;^aXE7raf Je 9fot ^u;{rov<rt ^cfifxyxc,
Oper. et DiER. 1. 1
\end{verbatim}

O! might I ne’er this fifth rude age survey,
Posterior born, or hurried first away:
This age of iron toil, degenerate grown,
Where night and day man lives but to bemoan,
Fruitless to labour, and to sweat, in vain—
For such th’ enormous ills the fates ordain.
THE

NATURE OF THINGS.

BOOK THE THIRD.
ARGUMENT.

From the nature and properties of atoms, discussed in the two preceding books, the Poet advances to a more detailed account of their results under different states of combination and modification. The book opens with a panegyric upon Epicurus; and a brief sketch of its chief object, viz. to root from the heart that undue attachment to life, which is the source of many of the worst passions of the soul. Of the nature of the soul:—its chief residence in and about the heart; its general extension to the body at large; in what sense it may be said to differ from the mind, and in what to be synonymous with it. That the soul is altogether material, and compounded of different gases inhaled from the atmosphere: in consequence of its materiality, that it is mortal, and perishes with the body. The anxiety and terror of mankind upon contemplating the prospect of death, whether as a state of annihilation, or of future punishment. No truth in the popular mythological fables respecting a posterior state of torment;—and hence, the absurdity of any undue anxiety on either account. The best means of moderating such anxiety, and consequently, of giving to life its truest relish and enjoyment.
DE RERUM NATURA.

LIBER TERTIUS.

O! Tenebris tantis tam clarum extollere lumen
Qui primus potuisti, inlustrans conmoda vitæ,
Te sequor, o Graiæ gentis decus! inque tuis nunc
Ficta pedum pono pressis vestigia signis;
Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem,
Quod te imitare aveo. Quid enim contendat hirondo
Cycnis? aut quid nam tremulis facere artubus hædei

Ver. 1. O glory of the Greeks! who first didst chase
The mind's dread darkness with celestial day,
In the following passage of Lope de Vega there is an
apostrophe so closely resembling the present, as to give
us the idea of a copy, whether the author intended it
or not. It is intrinsically beautiful, and needs no
apology for its citation:
O nueva luz! o claro sol! responde,
Del antiguo valor reliquias santas!
La escura noche que me vida esconde,
Ya que con rayos de oro te levantas,

Huya de mi, que con tu lumbre pura
Por medio de la muerte va segura.

Hermosura de Angelica, Cant. ix.

O glorious sun! O new resplendent light!
Remnant most saint of what was once ador’d—
The shades that wrap’d me deep in ten-fold
night
Fly now thine orb its golden beams have pour’d.
Who boasts the guidance of a ray so pure
Through secret deaths may march, and dangers
most obscure.
O Glory of the Greeks! who first didst chace
The mind's dread darkness with celestial day,
The worth illustrating of human life—
Thee, glad, I follow—with firm foot resolv'd
To tread the path imprinted by thy steps;
Not urg'd by competition, but, alone,
Studious thy toils to copy; for, in powers,
How can the swallow with the swan contend?

In the common editions of the original, half the
spirit of this address is destroyed by making the first
line commence thus: "E tenebris tantis."—The
Bodleian and Cambridge copies, and one of the two
Leyden MSS. formerly belonging to Isaac Vossius,
write, "A tenebris tantis!"—which certainly offers no improvement. The Vienna copy, an ancient
manuscript fragment in the same library, and the other
MS. of Vossius, give us, as in the text, "O! te-
nebris tantis." Mr. Wakefield has judiciously availed
himself of this animated variation, and no reader, I
trust, will condemn me for following him in its selection.

Ver. 8. How can the swallow with the swan con-
tend?] In adopting this antithesis, Lucretius
appears to have had his eye directed to Theocritus:
who, on the death of Daphnis, makes her lover ex-
claim:

κοιψαν τον σκυτης ανδριν γαμετην. Id. A. 136.

The mountain-howl with Philomel's sweet song
Shall now contend.

Creech, by some unaccountable error, has altered
the term swallow to larks, and hereby destroyed the
total sense and beauty of the passage:
Consimile in cursu possint, et fortis equi vis?
Tu, Pater! es rerum inventor; tu patria nobis
Subpeditas præcepta: tuis ex, include, chartis,
Floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia limant,
Omnia nos itidem depascimur aurea dicta;
Aurea, perpetua semper dignissima vitâ.

---for how can larks oppose
The vigorous swan? they are unequal foes.
Admitting the feigned musical note of the swan,
The lark might still vie with him; but the broken
Chirp of the swallow could have no such pretensions.
It was, moreover, a very general belief among
The multitude in Greece and Rome, that the swan, when
dying, sang more melodiously than any bird; while
The harsh and idle twittering of the swallow was held
In the utmost contempt. Thus, Anacreon, addressing
Himself to the latter, inquires,

Τι συνίσταται τωντοι οὖν
Τί κατάλαχι χίλιοι

ODE 12.

Which Cowley has thus translated, or rather paraphrased:

Foolish prater! what dost thou
So early, at my window do,
With thy tuneless serenade?

And thus also Nicostratus:
Εἰ τὸ σουίκας καὶ τὸλλα καὶ τὰρκες Αλίαν
Ην τοις θρακίας παρασαίμοι, τοίχας
Εικόνι σεν ἐκεῖνοι παρασίτες παλαν.

If in prating from morning till night
A sign of our wisdom there be;
The swallows are wiser by right,
For they prattle much faster than we.

WHilst such, on the contrary, was the high esteem
Entertained for the supposed music of the swan, that
The poets were, uniformly, fond of arrogating this
Appellation to themselves. Pindar, Virgil, and many
Others, have been often thus denominated; and it is
to the swan that Horace refers in the following verses:

Jam jam resident cremibus asperæ
Pelles, et album muto in alium
Superno, nascenturque laèves
Per digits humerosque plumeæ.

LIB. II. Ode 20.

Now, now harsh scales my legs invest;
A whitening bird, above, I grow:
O'er all my fingers, arms and crest,
I feel the downy plumage flow.

There is a passage in the first book of Cicero's
Tuscanian Questions, that forms so admirable a com-
ment upon this comparison of Lucretius, that I can-
not avoid translating it. "The chattering and im-
portunate swallow," says he, "is an emblem of the
ignorant; but the swan that never sings till he feels
the approach of death, seems to possess some pre-
sentiment that death is not without its blessing;—
hence he becomes an emblem of the wise."

The Abbé Delille, in his description of this magni-
ficient bird, has alluded to the same popular tradi-
tion, in the following elegant verses:

Au milieu d'eaux s'éleve, et nage avec fîerté
Le cygne au cou superbe, au plumage argen-
eté;
Or the young kid, all tremulous of limb,
Strive with the strength, the fleetness of the horse?
Thou, sire of science! with paternal truths
Thy sons enrichest: from thy peerless page,
Illustrious chief! as from the flow’ry field
Th’ industrious bee culls honey, we alike
Cull many a golden precept—golden each—
And each most worthy everlasting life.

—Lucrétius,” says he, in a note on this passage,
“regards the discoveries of Epicurus as a present
made to all Greece.” How much more classical is
the interpretation of Marchetti:

Tu di cose inventor; tu padre sei;
Tu ne porgi paterni insegnamento, &c.

Ver. 14. —we alike

Cull many a golden precept——] It is known
to every one, that the moral verses of Pythagoras
were denominated Θυροειδές, “golden verses:” and
Faber conjectures, with much propriety, that Lu-
cretius refers to this appellation in the present simile.
Dyer has an allusion to the same passage, drawn from
the sweet employment, and the indefatigable industry
of the bee. The English bard is referring to his
own clerical capacity:

For me, ’tis mine to pray that men regard
Their occupations with an honest heart,
And cheerful diligence; like the useful bee,
To gather for the hive not sweets alone,
But wax, and each material. Fleecer, b. n.

Mason has employed a similar figure in his impres-
sive Elegy on the Death of Lady Coventry. He is
addressing the vain, the young, and the proud:

—while borne on busy wing
Ye sip the nectar of each varying bloom,
Nor fear, while basking in the beams of spring,
The wint’ry storm that sweeps you to the tomb;
Think of her fate!
Nam, simul ac ratio tua coepit vociferari
Naturam rerum, divinâ mente coortam,
Diffugiunt animi terrores; moenia mundi
Discedunt, totum video per inane geri res:
Adparet divôm numen, sedesque quietæ;
Quas neque concutient ventei, nec nubila nimbis
Adspargunt: neque nix, acri concreta pruinâ,
Cana cadens, violat: semper sine nubibus æther
Integer, et large diffuso lumine, ridit.
Omnia subpeditat porro natura, neque ulla

Ver. 17. For as the doctrines of thy god-like mind
Prove into birth how nature first arose,
Thus rendered by Marchetti:
E non si tosto a sparger cominciossi
Tuo parer: che dagli Dei creatà
Le cose non sia l'alma natura.
By Creech, as follows:
For when I hear thy mighty reasons prove
The world was made without the powers above.
The difference between these versions, and in the text, is so obvious and considerable, as to render it necessary for me to justify the change I have introduced. Marchetti and Creech have both followed the common, but erroneous reading, which runs thus:
Nam simul ac ratio tua coepit vociferari
Naturam rerum baud divina mente coortam.
The term baud is, unquestionably, an interpolation; it is not to be found in any of the most ancient, and correct copies: and is totally inconsistent with the plain and obvious sense of the poet himself. Mr. Wakefield has hence justly discharged it from its post. The divina mente indubitably refers to Epicurus, but some conceited and mistaken editor, apprehending it applied to an eternal intelligent mind, whom, in this case, Lucretius would openly admit to be the creator of the universe, which it has been generally, though, in some sense, falsely conceived he did not admit,—with a most licentious, and unpardonable use of the pen, attempted, by introducing the negative baud, to make sense of what is much better sense without it. The ingenious device, as it was conceived, soon multiplied, and has hence found its way into the greater number of modern editions. Without repeating in this place what appears to have been the real creed of Lucretius respecting the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, and primary Creator, I beg leave to refer the reader to the biography prefixed to the volume before him, and to the notes on Book II. v. 182, and v. 1100. It is from such errors, and wilful perversions of the text, as that now under consideration, that Lucretius has often been made to assert propositions, and uphold doctrines, which, in reality, by no means appertain to his system. In the present instance, the original meaning is first misconceived;—then the text is hardly and unnecessarily transformed; and at last, with idle triumph, advances a commentator upon this spurious passage, and declares, that the writer of it hereby asserts, that Epicurus has insegnato la natura non dipendere da Dio: "that Epicurus taught, the world did not proceed from God." Frachette Spositione, Lett. iii.
For as the doctrines of thy godlike mind
Prove into birth how nature first uprose,
All terrors vanish; the blue walls of heaven
Fly instant—and the boundless void throughout
Teems with created things. Then too we trace
The powers immortal, and their blest abodes;
Scenes where the winds rage never—unobscur’d
By clouds, or snow white-drifting,—and o’erspread
With laughing ether, and perennial day.
There nature fills each want, nor aught up-springs

Ver. 19. *All terrors vanish;—* It is to this passage Bruno alludes in the following exultation: Spentò a fatto il terror vane e puerile della morte, si conosco una parte della felicità chi apporta la nostra contemplazione secondo i fondamenti della nostra filosofia: atteso che lei togli il tusco velo de pazzo sentimento circa l’orco, ed avaro Caronte, onde il piu dolce della nostra vita ne si rape, ed avvelena. Della Causa, Principio, &c. “The vain and puerile fear of death is extinguished, when once a man is acquainted with but a single part of that felicity which a contemplation of the principles of our philosophy essentially produces; for till then, the thick darkness of idle conjecture respecting hell, and avaritious Charon, hurries him away, empoisoning, and totally destroying almost all the happiness of his life.”

Ver. 25. *Scenes where the winds rage never—unobscur’d*
By clouds, or snow white-drifting,—and o’erspread
With laughing ether, and perennial day.] I have had occasion to observe before, in note on Book I. v. 57, that the state of tranquillity and beatitude, attributed by Lucretius to the angelic natures who form his secondary gods, perfectly coincides with

various descriptions of Homer respecting the gods of the people. The passage before us is obviously imitated from the following:

‘H μεν α’, άς ευπόροι, απιθανὴ γλαυκωνίς Ἀττιν
Οὐλομένοις, οὐδ’ ἔσοτε διήν, ἀφαλές αυτοι,
Ἐρμίναι δι’ αἰματοι τιμωται, ουτε τοι’ αμήρω
Δικαιος ουτε χιριν επιφυλασσαι, άλλα μαλ αἰθήν
Πιπτομαι αμφίλοι, λυκη θ’ επεζήσας ανίμην.

Odyss. Z. 42.

The seat of gods, the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease:
There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, nor snowy vapours rise;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose
While the bright heaven with living lustre glows.

Pope.

Not widely different Mr. Cumberland, in the following verses, which comprize a part of the dialogue between Satan and Gabriel:

Heaven knows no winter; there no tempests howl:
To breathe perpetual spring, to sleep supine
On flowery beds of amaranth, and rose,
Voluptuous slavery, was Gabriel’s choice.
Res animi pacem delibat tempore inullo.
At contra nusquam adparent Acherusia templar;
Nec tellus obstat, quin omnia despicientur,
Sub pedibus quæquamque infra per inane geruntur.
Hiis ibi me rebus quædam divina voluptas
Percipit, atque horror; quod sic natura, tuâ vi
Tam manifesta patens, ex omni parte retecta est.

Et, quoniam docui, cunctarum exordia rerum
Qualia sint, et quam, variis distantia formis,
Sponte suâ volitent, æterno percita motu;
Quoque modo possint res ex hiis quæque creari:
Hasce secundum res animi natura videtur,
To mar th’eternal harmony of soul.
Yet nought exists of hell’s infernal reign:
Nor hides the solid earth the scenes from sight
Spread through the void beneath.—On these vast themes
As deep I ponder, a sublime delight,
A sacred horror sways me—Nature thus
By thy keen skill through all her depths unveil’d.
Since, then, we erst have sung the make minute
Of primal seeds; how, in spontaneous course
Re-active urg’d, their various figures fly,
And, hence, how all things into life ascend,
Next let our daring verse the frame unfold

—Ossian, cap. xxviii. v. 8. ἐξέδιδωσεν τὰς αὐτὸν τοῖς μνήμοιον μετὰ ΦΟΒΟΥ καὶ ΧΑΡΑΣ μεγάλα. “And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy.”

Thomson was a steady and philosophic observer of nature; he saw the beauty and propriety of the passage in question, and in the following verses has studiously copied it:

Deep-rous’d, I feel
A sacred terror, a severe delight,
Creep through my mortal frame.

SUMMER, v. 540.

Armstrong, in his Art of Preserving Health:

Vol. I.

Thus, Homer:

Τὴν δ᾽ αυτὰ ΧΑΡΜΑ καὶ ΑΓΟΣ ἀπερείων.

On. T. 471.

Delight and Horror seize the soul, conjoin’d.

So, in that exquisite delineation of the feelings of the afflicted and pious females who, while examining our Saviour’s sepulchre, were consoled by the appearance of an angel, informing them of his resurrection, cap. xxviii. v. 8. ἐξέδιδωσεν τὰς αὐτὸν τοῖς μνήμοιον μετὰ ΦΟΒΟΥ καὶ ΧΑΡΑΣ μεγάλα. “And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy.”

In the following exquisite passage of Ossian, we meet with a similar, and equally beautiful contrast of feeling: “He retired in the sound of his song. Carrcil joined his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul.”

Battle of Lora.

In like manner, and equally true to nature, the sentimental Wieland:

Verszeyht mir, junger mann! Es war ein augenblick,
Ein traum aus bessrer zeit! so iüé! und auch so bitter!

—a dream of happier days
So sweet, yet ah! so bitter!—o’er me came.

SOTHEBY.

Ver. 32. —Nature thus

By thy keen skill through all her depths unveil’d.

The commentator upon Creecch has well observed,
DE RERUM NATURA. Lib. III.

Atque animae, claranda meis jam versibus esse;
Et metus ille foras preceps Acheruntis agundus,
Funditus humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo,
Omnia subfuscans mortis nigrore; neque ullam
Esse voluptatem liquidam, puramque, relinquit.

Nam, quod saepe homines morbos magis esse timendos
Infamemque ferunt vitam, quam Tartara leti;
Et se scire animae naturam, sanguinis esse,

that Butler appears to have parodied this verse of our poet, in the following lines:

— he profess'd
He had first matter seen undress'd;
He took her naked, all alone,
Before one rag of form was on.
The chaos too, he had described,
And seen quite through, or else he lied.

Hudibras.

This effusion of real wit will apply, however, with, perhaps, more pertinency, to many of our modern cosmogonists, than to Lucretius, or Epicurus.

Ver. 39. —chase, far chase
Those fears of future torment that distract
Man's total being; with the gloom of death, &c.

See, in note on ver. 19 of this Book, the comment of Bruno upon this, and a similar passage.

—there could I rest
And sleep secure, his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears, no fear of worse
To me, and to my offspring, would torment
With cruel expectation.

Par. Lost, Book X. v. 778.

The uncertainty of a future state, and more especially of the happiness or misery with which it might be pregnant, produced, in many instances, an undue dread of death among the philosophers of ancient times, and often embittered the life, and destroyed the courage of the most worthy and the most virtuous. A posterior existence was seldom accredited without much hesitation and doubt; and hence, even among those who did admit the questionable tenet into their creed, it was judged necessary to fortify the mind against the approach of dissolution by other considerations and arguments. Hence, by some philosophers, the value of life was unnecessarily depreciated; its pleasures were represented as being, even in their state of utmost perfection, unsolid, unsatisfactory, and evanescent; and life itself, as a gift scarce worthy of the Supreme Giver; a possession which might reasonably be resigned without regret. While others, allowing to the pleasures of life the full scope of their value, purposely abstained from indulging in them, lest they should become so en- moured of existence as not to quit it, or even to endure the thought of quitting it, without horror. They deadened their desires by a series of perpetual abstinences and mortifications, till at length, by habit alone, they lost all relish for enjoyment, and became indifferent to every change that might chance to occur. Neither of these, however, formed the system of Epicurus. Conceiving that the arguments deducible from nature were considerably more cogent in the disproof than in the support of a future existence, instead of suffering himself to become a perpetual prey to the alternate preponderancies of hope and fear, he boldly relinquished the doctrine altogether; and, freed from this anxiety, felt himself at liberty to calculate the real blessing and value of life, as it relates to the present world. Instead of despising exist-
Of soul, and reasoning mind;—and chase, far chase
Those fears of future torment that distract
Man’s total being; with the gloom of death
Tinge all things; nor e’en suffer once the tide
Of present joy to flow serene and pure.

For though, full oft, men boast they far prefer
Death to disease, or infamy of name,
Assert they know the soul but springs from blood,
Aut etiam venti, si fert ita forte voluntas,
Nec prorsum quidquam nostræ rationis egere;
Hinc licet advortas animum, magis omnia laudis,
Jactari caussam, quam quod res ipsa probetur:
Extorres iidem patriâ, longeque fugatei
Conspectu ex hominum, fedatei crimine turpi,
Omnibus ærumnis adfectei denique, vivunt;
Et, quoquomque tamen miserei venere, parentant,
Et nigras mactant pecudes, et manibus divis
Inferias mittunt; multoque in rebus acerbis
Acrius advortunt animos ad religionem.
Quo magis in dubiis hominem spectare periclis
Convenit, advorsisque in rebus noscere, quid sit:
Nam veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo

Ver. 47. Or, if the humour urge them, is but air.] The corresponding line in the original is as follows:

Aut etiam venti, si fert ita forte voluntas.
In the common editions, this line is placed two lower than in the present, being v. 46, instead of v. 44, where it has remained for ages a stumbling-block to the ingenuity of every commentator who has endeavoured, in that situation, to give it a meaning. For its present change, the reader is indebted to a critic of consummate judgment, whose name and act are thus noticed by Mr. Wakefield: "The idea of this valuable transposition, which cannot be estimated too highly, is due alone to the sagacity of Bentley, and is well worthy of such sagacity. How would Lucretius hail him for it! How happily are the idle comments of former interpreters surrendered hereby in a moment to darkness and oblivion!"

On the doctrine, that the soul originates from ar, or aerial auras, see the ensuing note on v. 100.

Ver. 53. —fell new victims, and th' infernal powers
Implore with black oblations;] The sacrifices offered to the infernal deities, or manes of deceased persons, to obtain their favour, were denominated inferie, and were always selected of a black colour. Hence Virgil, in the tale of Aristæus:

Inferias Orphei lethæa papaveræ mittes,
Placatam Eurydiceæ vitulæ venerabere casâ,
Et nigrum maetabis ovem, Geor. iv. v. 545.
To Orpheus deadly poppies strew, appease
With heifer shorn, and black devoted sheep
Eurydice's next spirit.

This practice of offering sacrifices, both to the superior and inferior gods, has been common in every country that has acknowledged the existence of a good and evil principle; whether these principles have consisted of two, or of a greater number of deities: to the former sacrifice, the people being urged by gratitude, to the latter by fear. Such was the practice among
most Oriental nations, and even the Druids of our own country. Zoroastres commanded the offering of prayers to Arimanus the principle of evil, as well as to Oromasdes the principle of good: and the bramins of the present day, adore Seeva, the destroyer of things, as well as Veahnu, the creating and preserving spirit; and regard him, indeed, as coequal and coeternal with the latter. The Jews themselves were not unfrequently guilty of the same idolatrous conduct: and even Solomon, in the midst of his prosperity, did not refrain from paying divine honours to Moloch, the evil demon of the Ammonites. See 1 Kings, cap. xi. v. 7. Hence Milton, speaking of this idol:

"the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence,
And black Gehenna called, the type of hell."

Par. Lost, Book I.

**Ver. 56. Through doubtful dangers, hence, through straits severe**

_Pursue the race of man; then sole ascends
Truth from the lowliest bosom._

To the same effect, Ariosto, in the following stanza:

"Alcun non puo saper da chi sia amato
Quando felice in su la rota siede:
Però, c’ha i veri, e i santi amici a lato,
Che mostran tutti una medesma fede.
Se poi si cangia in tristo il lieto stato,
Volta la turba adulatorice il piede:
E quel, che di cuor ama, riman forte,
Ed ama il suo signor dopo la morte."

Orlando Furioso, Cant. xix.

None see the heart when placed in prosperous state,
On Fortune’s wheel, such numbers round them wait
Of true and seeming friends; when these no less
By looks declare that faith which those possess.
But should to fair, succeed tempestuous skies,
Behold! how soon each fawning suppliant flies:
Eliciuntur; et eripitur persona, manet res.

Denique, avarities, et honorum caeca cupidio,
Quae miserops homines cogunt transscendere fineis
Juris; et interdum, socios scelerum atque ministros,
Nocteis atque dies niti praestante labore
Ad summas emergere opes: hae volnera vitae
Non minumam partem mortis formidine aluntur.
Turpis enim ferme contemptus, et acris egestas,
Semota ab dulci vita, stabilleque, videtur;
Et quasi jam leti portas contarier ante.
Unde homines, dum se, falso terrore coactei,
Ecugisse volunt longe, longeque remosse;
Sanguine civili rem conflant, divitiasque
Conduplicant avidei, caedem caede acumulantes:

While he who truly lov'd, unmov'd remains,
And to his patron dead his love maintains. Hoole.

Ver. 60. E'en restless avarice, and love of fame,
So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce.] Trachetta and Faber have bestowed a most high and deserved applause upon these, and the thirty ensuing verses, in which the poet justly and forcibly portrays many of those envenomed passions which are excited in the bosom from an undue dread of death.
The following lines of Dr. Young are in strict consonance with the same delineation:

Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man;
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
We deserve Nature for a span too short;
That span too short we tax as tedious too;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To lash the lingering moments into speed,
And whirr us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.
Art, brainless Art, our furious charioteer,

Drives headlong towards the precipice of death,
Death most our dread, death thus more dreadful made.

Night Thoughts.

Ver. 61. So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce,
And spread the growing guilt from man to man.] It is well worth while to compare, in this place, Erccilla's Address to Avarice, with the present painting of Lucretius:

O incurabil mal! o gran fatiga!
Con tanta diligencia alimentada;
Viejo comun, y pegajosa liga,
Voluntad sin razon desenfrenada:
Del provecho, y bien publico enemiga,
Sedicieta bestia, hydropea hinchada,
Principio y fin de todos nuestros males,
O insaciable codicia de mortales.

Arancan. Cant. ix.

O cureless malady! O fatal pest!
Embrace'd with ardour, and with pride carest;
Flies all profession, and the fact unfolds.

E’en restless avarice, and love of fame,
So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce,
And spread the growing guilt from man to man,
By ceaseless toil urg’d on, and night and day,
Striving, the crowd t’ o’ertop—these pests of life
Draw half their vigour from the dread of death.

For infamy, contempt, and want severe,
These chief embitter mortals; these, they deem,
Death’s foremost train; and, studious these to shun,
Far off they fly, still wand’ring from the right,
Urg’d on by fear, and kindle civil broils,
And murder heap on murder, doubling thus,
Ceaseless, their stores insatiate: raptur’d high

Thou common vice, thou most contagious ill,
Bane of the mind, and frenzy of the will!
Thou foe to private, and to public health;
Thou dropsy of the soul, that thirsts for wealth,
Insatiate Av’rice! ’tis from thee we trace
The various mis’ry of our mortal race. Hayley.

So in the Hitépadéa of Vishnusarman, as translated by Sir Wm. Jones: “Through covetousness comes anger; through covetousness comes lust; through covetousness come fraud and illusion: covetousness is the cause of all sins.”

Ver. 70. — And murder heap on murder, — ] This description of culprits our poet first enters upon his list, as deeming them first in magnitude of guilt. A bard of our own nation, of no contemptible abilities, appears to have been of the same sentiment; and in a poem on the Day of Judgment, having seated the Almighty on his throne, and led forwards the culprits of the earth, he asserts:

— First among these
Behold the mighty murderers of mankind;
They, who in sport, whole kingdoms slew, or they
Who, to the tottering pinnacle of pow’r,
Waded through seas of blood! Glynn.

Ver 71. — doubling thus,
Ceaseless, their stores insatiate: — ] Juvenal has obviously copied this verse of the original:

— per fraudes patrimonii conduplicare.
Doubling by fraud their patrimonial stores.

Sat. xiv. 229.

Ver. 72. — raptur’d high
When breathes a brother his last languid groan; — ] Macrobius justly observes (Saturnal. Lib. vi. cap. 2.) that Virgil has imitated this verse of Lucretius in the following:

— gaudent perfusi sanguine fratrum,
Georg. ii. v. 510.

Stain’d with the blood of brothers, they rejoice.
Crudeles gaudent in tristi funere fratris; 
Et consanguineum mensas odere, timentque.

Consimili ratione, ab eodem saepe timore
Macerat invidia: ante oculos illum esse potentem, 
Illum adspectari, claro qui incedit honore; 
Ipsei se in tenebris volvi, coenoque, queruntur. 
Intereunt partim statuarum, et nominis, ergo; 
Et saepe usque adeo, mortis formidine, vitae
Percipit humanos odium, lucisque videnda,

And the whole description reminds us of a passage
in Hesiod, the former part of which I have already
quoted in the note on Book II. v. 1178.

οὐδὲ ταῖς πετεῖσθαι ὕμνοις, οὐδὲ τὶ πειθέσθαι,
οὐδὲ ξιοί: ξειδόμενοι καὶ ἵππαιρο ϊπαρον, 
οὐδὲ καταγίνοντο ὑπὸ ἠστία, ὧν τὸ πάρον πιπ' 
Αἰὼν ἐκ γαρ σαρκοδοτες κατέμειον τονκι' 
Μιμοῦται δ' ἑρμος χαλίστως: ἐξαιτοι ἠστία 
Σχίθονει, οὐδὲ τίνι εὖν ἐδοτες.


Nor sire the son, nor son the sire attends,
Nor host with host, nor friends unite with friends;
Nor love fraternal triumphs, as of late;
Endearments mutual chang'd to mutual hate.
The graceless youth reviles his father's years,
Loads him with taunts, nor heaven's omniscience
fears.

Ver. 74. And e'en, suspicious, and, with secret dread,
Joining the feast——] Thus Juvenal, more
at large, and forming an excellent comment upon our
text:

Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat illum
Facti crimen habet. Cedo, si conata peregit?
Perpetua anxietas, nec mense tempore cessat;
Faucibus, ut morbo, siccis, interque molares

Difficili crescente cibo. Sed vina misellus
Exspuit: Albani veteris pretiosa senectus
Disperiet. Ostendas melius, densissima ruga
Cogitur in frontem, velut acri ducta Falerno.

Sat. xiii. 208.

He works a crime in secret who but plots.—
But say, if work'd, the doom that heav'n
allots?——
O! his is endless anguish. Parch'd with heat,
His fav'rish palate hates the banquet's treat:
Slowly his mouth the gathering morsel churns;
Wine makes him sick:—Albania's best he spurns;
Still nobler bring; his ruggly front is wrung
As though, his lips, Falernian verjuice stung;
To the same effect, the following deprecation
of the psalmist: Ps. lxix. 22, 23.

May their own table, when they are present, prove a
trap.

And, by way of retribution, a snare!
When breathes a brother his last, languid groan;
And with mistrust, through ev'ry nerve alarm'd,
Joining the feast some jovial kinsman forms.

From the same source; the same deep dread of death,
Springs Envy poisoning all things: mortals, hence,
Lament to power that this, to glory that,
Crown'd with the people's plaudits, should ascend,
While all unnotic'd, 'mid the croud obscure
Themselves still jostle; pining ev'ry hour,
For names, for statues; and, full oft, so strong
From dread of death, hate they the light of heaven,

*Ver. 77. Springs Envy poisoning all things:*—]
The poetical patriarch of Greece, from whom I have just quoted, has, in the same book, a bold and correct personification of the same passion, which he represents as perpetually haunting mankind in the midst of all their pursuits, while Modesty and Justice retreat from the world to their native skies, and leave it a prey to every calamity:

**The following verses of Thomson are more full in their delineation of the same passion, in conjunction with others, which are closely connected with it:**

*Convulsive Anger storms at large; or pale
And silent, settles into fell Revenge.*

*Base Envy withers at another's joy,*

*And hates that Excellence it cannot reach.*

*Depunding Fear, of feeble fancies full,*

*Weak and unmanly, loosens ev'ry power.*—

*Then dark Disgust, and Hatred, winding Wiles,*

*Coward Deceit, and Russian Violence:*

*At last, extinct each social feeling, fell*

*And joyless Inhumanity pervades,*

*And petrifies the heart.*

**Spring, 281.**

*Ver. 77.*

**—mortal, hence,**

*Lament to power that this, to glory that,*

*Crown'd with the people's plaudits, should ascend.*] To the same effect, Pope, in his

**Essay on Man:**

In pride, in reasoning pride our error lies.
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies:

Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,

Men would be angels, angels would be gods.

*Epist. 1.*
Ut sibi consciscant moerenti pectore letum;
Oblitei fontem curarum, hunc esse timorem;
Hunc, vexare pudorem; hunc, vincula amicitiae
Rumpere; et, in summâ, pietatem evortere suadet:
Nam jam sæpe homines patriam, carosque parenteis,
Prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templâ petentes.
Nam, velutei puerei trepidant, atque omnia cæcis
In tenebris metuunt; sic nos in luce timemus
Interdum, nihil quæ sunt metuenda magis, quam
Quæ puerei in tenebris pavitant, finguntque futura.
Hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque, necesse est,
Non radiei solis, neque lucida tela diei.

Ver. S2.  ——so strong

From dread of death, hate they the light of heav'n,
That, sick at heart, through their own breasts
they plunge
The fatal steel: ——] Martial has an epigram
founded upon the same idea, and entitled to a quota-
tion in the present place:

Hostem cum fugeret, se Fannius ipse peremit,
Hic rogo, non furor est, ne moriæ, mori?
L. ii. Epig. 80.

The foe pursu'd, and Fannius quick
Destroyed himself while flying.
Yet who besides a lunatic
Would flee from death by dying?

This strange and inconsistent effect of fear is well
commented upon in the following verses of Butler:
who tells us, that it will often

Do things not contrary alone
To th' force of nature, but its own:
The courage of the bravest daunt,
And turn poltroons to valiant.
For men as resolute appear
With too much as too little fear;
And when they're out of hopes of flying,
Will run away from death by dying. Hudibras.

The passage in our own poet, however, bears a
much nearer affinity to one in Ercilla's Araucana, and
an affinity that seems to indicate an allusion on the
part of the Spanish bard. He compares the Indians,
who were surprized in their fort, to the villain who
is continually trembling for his fate, and conscious
of merited punishment:

Como los malhechores, que en su officio,
Jamás pueden palar parte segura,
That, sick at heart, through their own breasts they plunge
The fatal steel: heedless that this alone,
This pungent dread, engenders all their cares,
Nips the keen sense of shame—turns friends to foes,
And bursts the bonds that harmonize the heart.
For, goaded hence, hell ever in his sight,
Man oft betrays his country; and, for gold,
Yields up the rev'rend form that gave him birth.
For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,
Trembles and starts at all things—so, full oft,
E'en in the noon, men start at forms as void
Of real danger as the phantoms false
By darkness conjur'd, and the school-boy's dread.
A terror this the radiant darts of day
Can ne'er disperse. To truth's pure light alone,
Much of this passage is imitated, though feebly, by Blackmore, in his Creation:
Carus, we grant no man is blest but he
Whose mind from anxious thoughts of death is free;
If dread of death still unsubdu'd remains,
And secret, o'er the vanquish'd victor reigns
Th' illustrious slave in endless thralldom bears
A heavier chain than that his captive wears
What are distinctions, honours, wealth, and state? &c.

Ver. 92. For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies.] With this simile, certainly a very pertinent one, Lucretius appears to have been particularly delighted; for he repeats it in this place, from Book II. v. 55, and recurs to it once more in Book VI. v. 35.
Discutiant; sed Naturae species, Rarioque.

Primum, animum dico, mentem quem saepe vocamus,

Ver. 99. *And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.*] The following idea of Molière is perfectly parallel, and his advice, when applied to the subject before us, is well worth attending to.

Consulte ta raison, prens sa clarte pour guide,
Voi si de tes soupçons l’apparence est solide;
Ne demen pas leur voix.

D. Garcia de Navarre, Act II.

Consult thy reason; be her lamp thy guide; Weigh well thy views; let reason still decide; Her voice abjure not.

Ver. 100. *First, then, the mind, the spirit nam’d at times.*] It is enough to confound the pride of the most confident philosopher, if it be not deemed libellous to the character of a philosopher to conceive that he can be confident, to reflect on the very little he knows, after all his reading and researches, of the substance that constitutes the existence, either of himself, or of external objects. Matter, even in its simplest form, inactive as it may appear to be, is the most fugitive thing imaginable; and, although the atomic system, which reduces the whole to primordial and extreme corpuscles, equally devoid of all properties but those of solidity and motion, and which conceives, that all compound bodies whatsoever, are but different combinations of such corpuscles,—be most consistent with the experiments of modern chemistry, and form a grand principle in the Newtonian theory,—yet, when we have advanced thus far in our researches, we are but upon the threshold of natural philosophy; a thousand phenomena are incessantly crowding upon us, which still demand explanation, and baffle the most enterprising efforts of curiosity and conjecture. Such then being the disappointments to which we are exposed in our investigations into the external world; it cannot be a matter of surprise, that when we ascend higher, and endeavour to develop the world of sensation and thought,—to unlock its secret springs, and trace its delicate dependencies, we should be still more subject to miscarriage, disagreement and error. One general conclusion however, it becomes us to draw from our discrepancy and ill-success, and that is, to entertain a generous and liberal complacency for the presumptions and conjectures of each other.

Lucretius, who has endeavoured to demonstrate in the last book, v. 873.

That all the sentient forms the sight surveys,
Whate’er their powers, from senseless atoms spring,
now enters upon the great business of applying this axiom to the peculiar constitution of man; hereby maintaining, that the human soul, or principle of vitality and thought, is as purely material, as essentially derived from simple primordial corpuscles, as any other part of him. This he undertakes to prove in a series of twenty-eight arguments, extending from the present passage to v. 858 of the book before us: after which he deduces from such an established doctrine a variety of moral reflections, which, in point of wisdom, sublimity, and poetic excellence, never have been surpassed by any poet or philosopher whatever; and which are possessed of this peculiar advantage, that they are of universal application, let our system of ethics or religion be what it may. Respecting all these arguments, however, Frachetta has most illiberally declared, in his Exposition, sonti in guisa redicula, che non porta il preggio di rigittarle—“they are, in themselves, so ridiculous, as not to be worth the expense of refuting them.” But he nevertheless attempts a refutation, and proves the absurdity of so general and dogmatic an assertion, by completely failing, if I be not mistaken, in the whole of his attempt.

In pursuing the scope of his inquiry, our philosophic poet first endeavours to develop the substance of the soul; secondly, its more immediate seat, or presence-chamber; and, thirdly, its durability: and it may be of use to the reader, previous to his entering into the general detail of this important subject, to be made acquainted, by as brief a sketch as possible, with its leading ideas and dependencies.

The immateriality of the soul, strictly and properly
And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.

First, then, the mind, the spirit nam'd at times,

so called, is a conception altogether modern: yet few, even in modern days, embrace the conception in a state of unmixed and perfect purity. Berkeley, who denied the existence of a material and external world, was, unquestionably, a proselyte to this belief; for, if there be no such thing as matter, the soul itself cannot be material. Des Cartes was a proselyte in an equal degree; for he not only maintained the existence of the soul's immateriality, but denied that it had any one property in common with matter. The difficulties, however, attendant upon these two hypotheses, and which I have endeavoured concisely to enumerate in the preceding life of our poet, are so extreme, that I believe few are to be found, in the present day, who profess them to their utmost extent. Generally speaking, some degree of materiality, such, at least, as will enable the soul to assume a material configuration, or to be capable of occasional vision to material organs, some phantasm, shade, or shadowy appearance, some capacity for the enjoyment of corporeal delights, however spiritualized and refined, are uniformly supposed to attach to it, even after its separation from the body. With such, the soul is not strictly immaterial: it cannot exist without an etherial or gaseous substratum, or vehicle: in reality, it cannot exist in a state separate from matter; and the poet before us has no contest with such persons otherwise than as to its powers of durability or incorruption, concerning which a revelation, posterior to his own era, has clearly ascertained to us that he was mistaken; but which nothing but such a revelation could have ascertained. Such persons may, therefore, peruse every argument which the text discloses, without dismay; they may admit their truth, without shuddering for the result: since the result to which nature and the poet would equally lead us, we now know to be subverted by a law of incorruption, communicated to us by the Christian Scriptures.

Coeval with our poet, there were as few who had a right to differ from him, so far as his principles applied, as there are in the present day. The generality of his contemporaries unquestionably, as among ourselves, believed in the soul's survival after the dissolution of the body; but they did not believe in its survival as a spirit strictly immaterial, or in a state of actual separation from matter. The soul conceived of by the multitude was a compound substance, sometimes supposed to consist of a shade and spirit, and sometimes of a shade, spirit, and ghost, to each of which a distinct and separate region was allotted, as I have already observed in the note on Book I. v. 136: but each of which was, at the same time, apprehended to be possessed of a material configuration, as well as organs, and subject to material pleasures or pains. The soul of the philosophers, notwithstanding all their boasting, was, in reality, as little exempt from matter, and as little capable of a separate existence, as that of the people. Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras, equally held the soul to be a compound being, of which a part, at least, was material. According to the opinion of the first, the human soul consists of an emanation of the Deity, united to a portion of the material soul of the world; and on its separation from the body, it is still surrounded by an εἴρημα, or material vehicle, till the resorption of the divine emanation into the divine nature, and the return of its mundane elements to the soul of the world, whence they issued. In consequence of which, it is not only necessarily material in a part of its constitution, but altogether incapable of a separate existence, or existence per se, strictly so called. The theory of Aristotle was not widely different; and, with respect to Pythagoras, from whom there can be no doubt that both Plato and Aristotle derived their ideas, he not only conceived the human soul to be a compound of an immaterial mind, and of sensitive matter, the former of which he denominated γνῶμα, and maintained to be immortal; and the latter ἐνέργεια, and to perish with the body; but imagined that the γνῶμα, or immaterial mind, when it quitted the body upon dissolution, was still surrounded by an εἴρημα, or vehicle of material ether, in a circumvolution of which it continued till some other body was
In quo consilium vitae, regimenque, locatum est,
Esse hominis partem nihilo minus, ac manus, et pes,

prepared for it, being totally incapable of existing by itself, or in a state of total separation from matter.

In effect, each of these philosophers equally believed in the existence of a soul, or intelligible principle in the material world, independently of any communication from the supreme, or immaterial divinity; and, thus believing, they indirectly maintained, that matter of itself, under some modification or other, was capable of sensation and thought. But if pure, unmingled matter, be capable of such results, why have recourse to a second substance for that which matter alone is competent to exhibit? Why complicate causes, and multiply the machinery beyond the necessity of the case? Such appear to have been the views of Epicurus, and consequently of our own poet, upon this abstruse subject; and hence they discarded from the soul, or principle of thought and intelligence, every thing but simple, unalloyed matter. In the gradual operations of nature, they traced from matter alone, the origin of general gravitation, magnetism, irritability, and sensation: and, they hence saw no occasion for the introduction of a foreign substance, in the formation of thought, the mere result of this last quality, when sufficiently accumulated, or concentrated.

On these accounts, therefore, the system of Epicurus had to oppose, both the belief of the people, and the dogmas of other philosophers, who, as appears above, united in the conception, that an immaterial, as well as a material principle, was concerned in the creation of the human soul. But there were certain classes of materialists, as well as immaterialists, whom the present system had equally to counteract: and especially those who, like Aristoxenus, maintained the soul, or sentient principle, to result from the harmonious adaptation of organ to organ, and limb to limb, as a whole; and those who, following the tenets of Democritus, conceived that it consisted alone of a certain number of perceptive primordial atoms, interspersed throughout the body in the midst of a much larger mass of imperceptible.

In opposition to these two last opinions more especially, Lucretius attempts to prove, in the first place, that the sentient principle consists alone of a combination of certain ethereal gasses, or auras, imbied with the breath from the atmosphere, secerned in due proportions by the bronchial vessels and lungs, and hence conveyed to the heart; and, secondly, that in consequence of such mechanism, the heart and precordia are the chief seat of the soul, or intelligent spirit; hence radiating, as from a centre, towards every organ and extremity of the entire system. Modern chemistry, applied to modern anatomy, has, in many instances, as the reader will perceive in the prosecution of the present work, made a very considerable approach towards the former of these dogmas; it has proved, that the blood, as well as various other fluids, after their union with these secerned gasses, is possessed, in the language of M. Blumenbach, of a kind of perpetual bildungstrieb, or formative nidus, while through the whole course of the nerves it has enabled us to trace a secretion and incessant efflux of what is, in our own day, denominated pure galvanic aura: a fluid which is probably separated by the vast gland of the brain, and which we now know, to a certainty, constitutes the living principle, or spirit of animation.

From the immense importance of the heart and brain to the preservation of life and health, it has, under almost every theory, been conceived, that the mind or soul, whether material or immaterial, resides more immediately in the one or the other of these organs, than in any different part of the human system. In modern times, the brain has had the greater number of votaries; and some physiologists have pretended to view it with so microscopic an eye, as to detect the particular portion of the brain which it condescends more directly to occupy. This, by Des Cartes, was supposed to be the pineal gland; while Bonnet asserted it to be the corpus callosum. Others, on the contrary, and by far more
That which controls, which measures sentient life,
Forms of this mortal make a part as clear
generally of late, have regarded the whole mass of
the brain as equally constituting the mental presence-
chamber; or, in other words, as being equally con-
tributory to the production of sensorial power. Hence
it was maintained by Dr. Priestley, not only that the
brain at large is the grand sensorium, or residence of
the mind, but that the quantity of intelligence, in
every instance possessed, depends upon the quantity
of the brain compared with the bulk of the respective
animal: and Dr. Soemering, a German physician of
considerable ingenuity, pursuing the same idea, has
attempted to prove, by a variety of observations and
experiments, that the degree of intelligibility is al-
ways in proportion to the bulk of the brain compared
with that of the nerves; the comparison, in both in-
stances, accounting for the superiority of intellect in
man: while Dr. Gall, of Vienna, whose lectures on
cranioscopy were lately suppressed by the emperor of
Germany, as supposed to be derogatory to various
doctrines of the Catholic religion, at the same time
that he apprehended the entire brain to be of equal and es-
sential service in the production of general intelli-
gencc, imagined also that different portions of this
prodigious viscus are appropriated to different pas-
sions and affections, and that the excess of such pas-
sions and affections was in proportion to the inordi-
nate bulk of those parts which engendered them;
whence he conceived the idea, that by collecting a
considerable number of human skulls, and especially
of those remarkable for any very prominent quality of
the mind, he would be able, from the comparative
indentations or impressions which such appropriate
and augmented compartments of the brain must ne-
cessarily have excited in the bones of the cranium in
their earlier and infantine softness, to determine the
precise divisions of the brain, in which every affection
and passion was generated; and vice versa, from no-
ticing, in the living subject, the prominence which
such luxuriances or excesses had produced in the
form of the cranium, to carry to perfection the art of
physiognomy, and ascertain the ruling passion and
degree of intelligence of every man, upon his first
appearance.

To examine the merits or demerits of these va-
rious conjectures, in the present place, is impossible;
and I hasten, therefore, to observe, that however
widely the idea may be propagated in modern times,
that the brain is the chief seat of the mental func-
tions; it cannot be more general than the belief in
former periods, that the powers and affections of the
mind depended primarily upon the heart. So com-
mon indeed was this latter conception for a long pe-
riod, and so deeply imbued with it is every exist-
ing language, that ourselves, and every other nation,
still continue to ascribe to the heart, in popular and
colloquial dialect, every virtue and vice, every debased
and exalted feeling.

It only remains for me to observe, that, as Epi-
curus conceived the entire soul to be material, con-
sistently with what nature and experience point out
with regard to every other material substance, he
also conceived it to be corruptible, and of course,
that it perished with the body. A divine and glo-
rious revelation has since taught us, however, what
we could have been taught by nothing else, that
matter is not necessarily corruptible in any state of
organization; that the corruptible body itself shall
hereafter put on incorruption, and death be swal-
lowed up of victory. Such being, therefore, the fu-
ture and indubitable privilege of the material body,
there is no reason why, even from its birth, such
may not be the privilege of the material spirit; upon
which subject, I have already remarked at large, in
the life prefixed to the volume before us. Such an
idea, however, whether relating to the soul or the
body, could not readily suggest itself, either to Epi-
curus or Lucretius, or the suggestion must have
been instantly renounced, as inconsistent with the
dictates and phænomena of Nature. Left, as they
were, to the cold and comfortless belief, that the
present life is the whole range of being allotted to
mortals, and death the utmost limit and utter ex-
Atque oculei, partes animantis totius exstant.
Quam vis multa quidem sapientum turba putarunt
Sensum animi certa non esse in parte locatum;

...it is as capable of intelligence as of any other property. But why then have recourse to an immaterial spirit, if matter alone be competent to all the phenomena of intelligence and thought without it? The dilemma is obvious; and it has been repeatedly observed of Mr. Locke, that he must have been a materialist, if he had abided by the legitimate consequences of his own reasoning. The principles upon which he argues are entirely those of the Epicurean school; and Polignac, in his Anti-Lucretius, has attacked him with no small degree of asperity, and certainly, with no small degree of success, for his incongruity in this respect:

Mirari, satis hic nequeo, quis tetricus horror,
Despectusque sui, quaè mortis prava libido?
Lymphatas hominum mentes incesserit, ut se,
Corporum mortales cum sint natique sepulchros,
Mortales animo esse velint penitusque caducos.
Tantus amor nihil! tanta est vecordia!

Anti-Lucr. B. v. 1004.

With mute surprize I mark this dread deprav'd,
This self-contempt, this low-born lust of death.
That goads the cheated minds of men to wish.
Since born to die, and mortal in the flesh,
The soul may too be mortal, and expire.
Of blank annihilations such their love!
Their madness such!

The name of Locke is not mentioned by Polignac in this passage, although it occurs in several others: but M. Bougainville, the translator of the poem into French, who was intimately acquainted with the cardinal during the greater part of the time of his writing it, tells us openly, in his prefixed abstract, that Locke was the philosopher against whom this passage was immediately directed; and it cannot be denied, that the doctrines it refers to were his own.
Book III.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

As the keen eye, the finger, or the foot.
Here cleave we firm, though many a sage contends
The mental sense no part specific frames,

Ver. 104. — many a sage contends
The mental sense no part specific frames,
But springes the vital product of the whole.] To
this doctrine I have adverted in note on v. 100. It
is said to have been first invented by Aristoxenus, a
pupil, at first, of Lamptus of Erythrea, afterwards
of Xenophybus the Pythagorean, and lastly of Ari
stotle. He was most excellently skilled in music,
though by profession a physician; and to this ad
diction to music, we probably owe the name of
Harmony, by which he designated this peculiar doc
trine. This derivation of the term is countenanced
by our poet himself in v. 140; and its meaning is
thus more fully explained by Lactantius: sicut in
fidibus, ex intentione nervorum efficitur concors so
nus atque canus, quem musici harmoniam vocant;
ita in corporibus ex compagno viscerum et vigore
membrorum vis sentiendi existit. "As, in musical
instruments, an accord and consent of sounds, which
musicians term Harmony, is produced by the due
tone of the strings; so in bodics, the faculty of
perception proceeds from the due connexion and
vigour of the members and organs of the body." This
opinion Lucretius strenuously denies, by ob
serving, that the mind may be diseased, while the
body entirely escapes; and that the body, on the
contrary, may lose some of its own organs or mem
bers, and yet the mind, and even the general health
of the body itself, continue perfect.

Polignac, who, consistently with the Cartesian
system, makes a distinction between the mind or soul,
and the life, observes, that the term Harmony, as ex
plained by the disciples of Aristoxenus, may accurately
enough apply to the latter; though he also contends,
that it is incompetent to express the powers of the
former:

Sunt quibus hand allud nostrae mens incola molis
Visa fuit, nisi membriorum concensus, et ipsa
Corporis harmonie, fibris concordibus aps.
Vot. 1.

Sed modus est hac harmonie, qua vita profecto
Jure potest, at non hominis mens ipsa vocari.

ANTI-LUCR. v. 923.

This doctrine appears to have sustained a kind of
resonation among some modern philosophers, and
especially in the Treatise Du Droit Naturel, Civile, et
Politique of M. Luzac, who not only regards the
frame of man, and other animals, but the frame of
the universe at large, as a sort of musical organ or
instrument, the concordant and accumulated action
of whose different parts or agents, like Aristoxenus,
he denominates Harmony. "Concerts of music,"
says he, "afford a clear example: you perceive har
mony in music, when different tones, obtained by
the touch of various instruments, excite one general
sound, a compound of the whole." This observa
tion he applies to the operations of nature at large,
the irregularities of which, resulting from inundations,
earthquakes, volcanos, tempests, and similar evils,
M. Luzac considers as the dissonances occasionally
introduced into music to heighten the harmony of the
entire system. With respect to the harmony of the
human frame, individually contemplated, or the con
cordant action of different parts of the body, he ob
serves, "it may be said, that of this principle I have
merely a confused notion; and I admit it, if the as
sertion imply, that I have neither a perfect, nor a
distinct, nor an entire comprehension of what pro
duces this harmony, in what it consists, how it acts.
—1 know not what produces the harmony of various
musical instruments heard simultaneously; but I can
accurately distinguish the sounds which are occa
sioned when musicians are tunings, from those which
are produced when, being completely in tune, and
every one uniting in the piece, the separate parts are
executed with exactitude. When I hear an har
monious sound, whatever be its nature, I can dis
tinguish the harmony, though incapable of investi
gating its cause." Tom. i. 154.

3 E
Verum habitum quemdam vitalem corporis esse,
'Apollonius Graiei quam dicunt; qui faciat nos
Vivere cum sensu, nullâ quom in parte siet mens:
Ut bona sãpe valetudo quom dicitur esse
Corporis, et non est tamen hæc pars ulla valentis;
Sic animi sensum non certâ parte reponent:
Magno opere in quo mi divorsei errare videntur.
Sãpe itaque in promptu corpus, quod cernitur, ægrum;
Quom tamen ex alia lactamur parte latenti:
Et retro fit, ubei contra sit sãpe vicissim,
Quom, miser ex animo, lactatur corpore toto:
Non alio pacto, quam si, pes quom dolet ægri,
In nullo caput interea sit forte dolore.
Præterea, molli quom somno dedita membra,
Ecsusumque jacet sine sensu corpus onustum;
Est aliud tamen in nobis, quod tempore in illo
Multimodis agitatur, et omneis adципit in se
Lætitiae motus, ac curas cordis inaneis.

Nunc animam quoque ut in membris cognoscere possis
Esse, neque harmoniâ corpus retinere solere;
Principio, fit utei, detracto corpore multo,
Sãpe tamen nobis in membris vita moretur;
Atque eadem rursum, quom corpora pauca caloris
Diffugere, forasque per os est editus aër,
Deserit ex templo venas, atque ossa relinquit;
But springs the vital product of the whole.
This the Greek schools term harmony—a sense
Of living power while still th’ essential soul
No point appropriates—as corporeal health
Flows not from sections but the form entire.
Thus, deem they, springs the mind; a tenet fraught,
If right we judge, with error most absurd.
For oft th’ external frame disease sustains,
While all escapes within: and thus, revers’d,
The mind oft sickens while the body thrives:
As, when the gout the tortur’d foot inflames,
The distant head still boasts its wonted ease.
When, too, sweet sleep o’er all the wearied limbs
Spreads his soft mantle, and locks every sense,
Still something stirs within us—something urg’d,
E’en then to various motions, and alive
To joy’s glad impulse, or fictitious fears.

Yet more; to prove the soul a part exists
Constituent of the body—to subvert
This fancied harmony—mark oft how life
Mid the dread loss of many a limb endures;
While instant as the vital heat but ebbs,
The vital breath flies off—pulsation stops,
And heart, and limb all lifeless lie alike.
Noscere ut hinc possis, non æquas omnia parteis
Corpora habere, neque ex æquo fulcire salutem:
Sed magis hæc, venti quæ sunt calidique vaporis
Semina, curare in membris ut vita moretur.
Est igitur calor, ac ventus vitalis, in ipso
Corpore, qui nobis moribundos deserit artus.

Quapropter, quoniam est animi natura reperta,
Atque animæ, quasi pars hominis; redde harmonia
Nomen ad organicos saltu delatum Heliconis;
Sive aliunde ipsei porro traxere, et in illam
Transtulerunt, proprio quæ tum res nomine egebant:
Quidquid id est, habeant; tu cætera percipe dicta.

Nunc animum atque animam dico conjuncta teneri
Inter se, atque unam naturam confacere ex se;
Sed caput esse quasi, et dominari in corpore toto,
Consilium, quod nos animum, mentemque, vocamus:
Idque situm mediâ regione in pectoris hæret.

Ver. 135. As these exist, then, heat and vital air,
Health through the members sickness or abounds.]—Calor ac ventus vitalis—
In modern chemistry, caloríis and vital air. Drs.
Crawford and Lavoisier, if they were now alive, might have been, and Dr. Beddoes perhaps actually may be,
surprized to see their own hypothesis so strenuously and philosophically contended for by Lucretius. I reserve, however, all comparison of the Epicurean system with these modern theories, till the poet more fully explains the essential and compound substance of the soul, and, on this account, refer the reader to note on v. 240 of the present book.

Ver. 138. —let such sages still
Hold the term harmony,—deduc'd, perchance,
From the sweet chords of Helicon;—] Aris-
toxenus, the author of this system, I have already observed, was a musician of high repute. See note on v. 104.
Hence may'st thou judge that not in every part
Dwells the same portion of percipient power,
Nor health from each flows equal; but that those
Chief nurture life, and check its flight abrupt,
Rear'd from aerial seeds, or fluent heat.
As these exist, then, heat and vital air,
Health through the members sickens or abounds.

This prov'd precise—that soul, that mind exists
Part of the body—let such sages still
Hold the term harmony—deduc'd, perchance,
From the sweet chords of Helicon; let such
Still something mean whate'er that something be,
No name of theirs expresses: thou, meanwhile,
Quitting such contests, mark what yet remains.

The soul, the mind, then, one same substance forms
Minutely blended; but, in vulgar phrase,
That call we mind, or spirit, which pervades,
As chief, the heart's deep avenues, and rules
The total frame. Here grief, and terror spring,
Heic exsultat enim pavor, ac metus; haec loca circum,
Lætitiae mulcent: heic ergo mens, animusque, est.
Caetera pars animæ, per totum dissita corpus,
Paret; et ad numen mentis, momenque, movetur:
Idque sibi solum per se sapit, et sibi gaudet,
Quom neque res animam, neque corpus, conmovet unâ.
Et, quasi quam caput, aut oculus, tentante dolore,
Læditur in nobis, non omni concruciamur
Corpore; sic animus non numquam læditur ipse,
Lætitiaque viget, quem caetera pars animae
Per membra atque artus nullâ novitate cietur.
Verum, ubi vehementi magis est conmota metu mens,
Consentire animam totam per membra videmus:
Sudoresque ita, palloremque, existere toto

other philosophers of the same country contended,
that its residence was divided,—that the irascible
part of the mind alone occupied the heart, but that its
rational portion resided in the brain. Of this latter
sentiment were Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras, and
Hippocrates. The doctrine here delivered by Lu-
cretius is only a dilatation of the very words of Epic-
curus. Diogenes Laertius has thus preserved them:
x. 66. και το μεν αυτής (της Ἐφέσου) ἀλογον εναι, δ’ τη
λατυτη παρπαρπαρας συμπατα τοις λογισιν, δ’ εν τη Ἐφεσε
και τε της φοβου και της χαρας. The text itself is
a translation.

Ver. 153. Of its own powers, mind reasons and
exults,
While soul, like flesh, can never rest alone.] The terms mind, soul, and spirit, as I have already
observed, are generally used synonymously in the
Epicurean philosophy: but when in conformity
with popular language, it makes a difference; it then
applies the term, mind or spirit, to that more con-
centrated part of this etherial substance which it
imagined to reside in the heart and praecordia; and
the term soul, to its more dilute and distant radia-
tions, that give life and energy to the other organs,
and especially the limbs and extremities. The com-
mentator on Creech's translation appears to have
been totally unacquainted with the physiology of the
Epicurean soul; and is hence continually pointing
out errors and contradictions, which only existed in
his own misconception of the poem.

Ver. 161. —o'er all the frame
Spreads the cold sweat, the livid paleness
spreads.] Our poet was an accurate
observer of nature, and Hippocrates himself has
Book III.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.  399

Here pleasure plays; and here we hence conceive Dwells mind, or spirit; while the remnant soul, Through ev’ry limb diffus’d, the mind’s dread nod Obey’s, and yields submissive to its will. Of its own powers, mind reasons and exults, While soul, like flesh, can never rouse alone. As oft the head, or eye, some anguish keen Sustains, while yet the gen’ral frame escapes, So, in itself, the mind, full oft, endures Rapture or pain, while yet the soul at large, Spread through the members, nought of change perceives. But when the mind some shock severe subdues, The total soul then sympathizes: then, Should deadly horror sway o’er all the frame Spreads the cold sweat, the livid paleness spreads,

given us no better portraiture of a deliquium, or fainting fit, than is to be found in these, and the three following verses. Mason has obviously imitated them in the following description of the fate of Nerina, but I cannot avoid thinking that Lucretius still surpasses him:

So saying, her cold cheek, and parched brow Turned to a livid paleness; her dim eyes Sunk in their sockets; sharp contraction press’d Her temples, ears, and nostrils.

ENGLISH GARDEN, iv. 495.

Mr. Wakefield conjectures, however, and with some reason, that our poet’s eye, in the composition of these verses, was fully directed to the following exquisite stanzas, in an ode of Sappho, preserved by Longinus:

Ode εκ’ ιχθ, Αλλα καμιν γλυσα ταγι, λεπτο β’ Αυτικα χρω την υποθερμαν, Οταπατοσι δ’ ουδε ωρυμι, быσμιν -σι δ’ ακοι μοι’ Καδ’ εδρυς ψυχος κυπα, τρομο δι Παναν αγρει, χαροτηρα δι τοιας Εμμι——.

For the benefit of such of my readers as may not be acquainted with it, I shall insert the very elegant and justly celebrated translation of these verses by Phillips. Catullus and Boileau have given equally excellent versions in Latin and French.

’Twas this bereav’d my soul of rest, And rais’d such tumults in my breast; For while I gaz’d, in transport tost, My breath was gone, my voice was lost:
Corpore, et infringi linguam, vocemque aboriri,
Caligare oculos, sonere aureis, subcidere artus.

Denique, concidere ex animi terrore videmus
Saepe homines: facile ut qui vis hinc noscere possit,
Esse animam cum animo conjunctam; quae, quam animi vi

Percussa est, exin corpus propellit, et icit.

Hae eadem ratio naturam animi, atque animae,
Corpoream docet esse: ubi enim propellere membra,
Conripere ex somno corpus, mutareque voltum,
Atque hominem totum regere, ac vorsare, videtur;

Quorum nihil fieri sine tactu posse videmus,
Nec tactum porro sine corpore; nonne fatendum est,
Corporeae naturae animum constare, animamque?

Praterea, pariter fungi cum corpore, et una
Consentire animum nobis in corpore cernis.

Si minus obfendit vitam vis horrida teli,

---

My bosom glow'd—the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung,
My ears with hollow murmurs rung,
In dewy damps my limbs were chill'd,
My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd,
My feeble pulse forgot to play,
I fainted, sunk, and died away.

Ver. 173. Since bursts from sleep the body;] In the original, Conripere ex somno corpus—videtur. Creech has totally omitted to translate this part of the power of the mind over the whole frame; and, what is more extraordinary still, the accurate and elegant Marchetti has completely subverted our poet's meaning, and represented the mind as plunging the body into sleep, instead of rousing it out of it:

e ciò senz' alcun dubbio insegna
Che l'essenza dell' animo e dell' anima
Incorporea non è, ch' ove tu miri
Ch' ella perge alle membra impulso, e moto:
Che nel sonno le immerge.

The proposition itself is deduced from a passage of Epicurus, in Diogenes Laertius, x. 67, ἅ ἀν γέωτε
Clouds dim the sight, the palsied tongue is mute,
Tingles the ear, and every limb dissolves.
Oft, too, from mental terror faints the frame;
Whence mayst thou mark how close the bond that knits
The soul and spirit; this exciting that,
And that, when rous'd, deep-rousing every nerve.

Hence prove we, too, that both alike exist
Corporeal:—hence, since every member yields
With quick submission to the joint behest:
Since bursts from sleep the body, since the face
Obsequious varies, and the total man
Feels the full sway profound; for nought can act
Where touch subsists not, nor can touch subsist
Void of corporeal base:—can we, then, doubt
That soul, that spirit must corporeal spring?

In all, moreo'er, of ease or anguish keen
The body feels, th' assenting mind partakes.
Thus, when some deadly dart through many a nerve,
them either beauty or propriety. Mr. Wakefield,
and, in my opinion, with great justice, has retained
them. Virgil seems to refer to the picture they ex-
hibit, in his delineation of Dido after she had stabbed
herself:

Ver. 181. Thus, when some deadly dart through
many a nerve.] The whole of this beautiful
illustration, including the present, and three succeed-
ing verses, are totally omitted by Marchetti, who,
following the conjecture of Lambinus, has regarded
them as supposititious, and pretended not to behold in
Vol. I.

ILLA gravis occulos conata attollere, rursus
Deficit: inffixum stridet sub pectore vulnus.
Ter sese attollens cubitoque imixa levavit,
Ter revoluta toro est: oculisque errantibus alto
Quavisit oculo lucem, ingemuitque repertà.

Æs. iv. 688.
Ossibus ac nervis disclusis, intus adacta;
At tamen insequitur languor, terræque petitus
Suavis, et in terrâ mentis qui gignitur aestus;
Interdumque quasi exsurgendi incerta voluntas.
Ergo corpoream naturam animi esse, necesse est;
Corporeis quoniam telis, ictuque, laborat.
Is tibi nunc animus quali sit corpore, et unde
Constiterit, pergam rationem reddere dictis.
Principio, esse aio persubtilem, atque minutis
Perquam corporibus factum constare: id ita esse,
Hinc, licet advertas animum, ut pernoscere possis.
Nihil adeo fieri celeri ratione videtur,
Quam sibi mens fieri proponit, et inchoat ipsa.
Ocyus ergo animus, quam res se perciet ulla,

Thrice Dido tried to raise her drooping head,
And, fainting thrice, fell grov'ling on the bed:
Thrice op'd her heavy eyes, and sought the light,
And, having found it, sicken'd at the sight. 

Ver. 189. First, then, we firm maintain the mind results.

From seeds of matter, most minute and smooth, 
Polignac, as may naturally be supposed, is highly incensed against our poet for this position. It is impossible, in his judgment, as well as in that of many others, for matter, under any combination, to be ever converted into a reasoning principle; or for the same substance, which when applied directly to one part of the body, exhibits no power of sensation whatever, by its application to another, and a mere change in the arrangement of its elementary corpuscles, to evince the properties of perception and intelligence. But let the cardinal speak for himself:

En, Quinti, variis quae motibus atque figuris
Exequitur corpus. Mutatas sepe figuras,
Mutatos et sepe situs intelligo: verum
Non video mentes, effectaque mentis oriri.
Quinetiam indignor, cum sic in corpore mentem
Ut cerebrum fingis formari; ex agmine quodam
Particularum omni per se mente carentum:
In lignor; ratio mecum indignatur et ipsa.
Mens etenim tua si membrum est, ut extera membros,
Corporis humani, propriam quoque suscipit escam,
Qualem suscipiunt simul omnes corporis artus.
Haec fit nutritus subito pars intima mentis:
Nutriti pariter eeu fit pars intima membri.
Ergo particulae panis, quem forte voratum
Digestumque suo suscipit sanguis in alvo,
Mid many a bone, tremendous, winds its way,
Quick faints the spirit:—a fond wish to die
Now sways, and now the native love of life.
Material, hence, the mental frame must live,
Since by material arms so soon assail’d.

Now list attentive, while we next unfold
Its make mysterious, and to sight educe.

First, then, we firm maintain the mind results
From seeds of matter, most minute and smooth.

This hence we prove, that nought so swiftly speeds
As what the mind determines and completes;
The mind, whose keen rapidity o’erpowers

Si pedibus cessere tuis, ratione carebunt:
Pectoris at medium regionem si tectigere,
Qua nostræ placuit tibi mentis templâ locari,
Tunc discipabant de mundo, et origine rerum,
Ae de sorte sua: sint corpora dedita leto,
Necne; quid ad vitam possit conferre beatam:
Jus populis dicent, ornabant legibus orbem,
Invida quam natura negat, postitura dabit vim.

Anti-Lucr. Lib. V. v. 531.

See from new motions, new arrangements, see,
What matter sole can gender. Different sites,
Change as they may, or figures, I can sound;
But mind I trace not still, nor mind’s results.
And hence enrag’d, I mark thee, the pure mind
Strive from the body, like the brain t’educ e;
Strive from a mass to rear it, of themselves
Whose separate atoms ne’er to mind pretend:
Enrag’d, I mark, and reason rages too.
Yet, if organic be thy mind, it craves.

Like other organs, its appropriate food;
As through the frame each limb its food demands.
Hence thrives the mind through all its inmost make,
As through its inmost make each membrane thrives.
So crumbs of bread, once swallow’d and absorb’d,
And haply through the blood’s meand’ring tube
Wand’ring—if to the foot their course they bend
Know nought of reason; but if once they reach,
O’erjoy’d, the midmost bosom, where alone
The mind thon ownst its mystic temple builds.
Of fate they argue, and the world’s first rise
And birth of nature; whether death destroy
Or not for ever; what may best promote
The bliss of life; define the rights of man
And plan for nations harmonizing laws.
So problems prove what jealous nature shrowds.
Ante oculos quorum in promptu natura videtur.
At, quod mobile tanto opere est, constare rotundis
Perquam seminibus debet, perquamque minutis:
Momine utei parvo possint inpulsa moveri.
Namque movetur aqua, et tantillo momine flutat;
Quippe volubilibus, parvisque, creata figuris.
At contra mellis constantior est natura,
Et pigrei latices magis, et constantior actus:
Hæret enim inter se magis omnis materiai
Copia; nimirum, qui non tam laevibus exstat
Corporibus, neque tam subtilibus, atque rotundis:
Namque papaveris, aura potest subpensa levisque
Cogere, ut ab summo tibi difluat altus acervus;
At contra lapidum conjectum, spicarumque,
Nenu potest: igitur, parvissima corpora pro quam
Et laevissima sunt, ita mobilitate fruuntur.
At contra, quæquamque magis cum pondere magno
Asperaque inveniuntur, eo stabilita magis sunt.
Nunc igitur, quoniam est animi natura reperta
Mobilis egregie, perquam constare necesse est
All that the sight marks instantaneous most.
But what thus rapid moves, from seeds must spring
Most exquisitely subtile, and rotund,
Rous’d into action by minutest force.
Thus moves the fluent stream, urg’d on with ease,
Since rear’d from atoms polish’d, and exile,
While the tough honey, of compacter frame,
More tardy flows, and ampler force demands.
For more tenacious here the total mass,
From heavier seeds engender’d, tenuous less,
And less globose. Thus zephyr’s gentlest breath
Wide scatters, oft, the seeds the poppy rears,
Heap’d in the sun-beam,—while the grosser mass
Of congregated stones, or missile darts
Feels no impression. Hence material things
Move brisk or sluggish, as from atoms rear’d
Light and globose, or denser, and more rough.

Since then the mind, in every act, we trace
Most voluble, from seeds of subltest size,
Corporibus parvis, et laevibus, atque rotundis:
Quae tibi cognita res in multis, o bone! rebus
Utilis invenietur, et obportuna cluebit.

Haec quoque res etiam naturam dedicat ejus,
Quam tenui constet textura: quamque loco se
Contineat parvo, si possit conglomerari.
Quod simul atque hominem leti secura quies est
Indepta, atque animi natura, animaeque, recessit:
Nihil ita libatum de toto corpore cernas
Ad speciem, nihil ad pondus; mors omnia praestat,
Vitalem praeter ventum, calidumque vaporem.

Ergo animam totam perparvis esse necesse est
Seminibus, nexam per venas, viscera, nervos:
Qua tenus, omnis ubi e toto jam corpore cessit,
Extima membrorum circumcaesura tamen se
Incolomem praestat; nec defit ponderis hilum:
Quod genus est, Bacchi quom flos evanuit, aut quom
Spiritus unguenti suavis diffugit in auras;

Ver. 228. *So from the juice of Bacchus, when flies off
Its flow'r ethereal, from the light perfume
When mounts th' essential spirit,*—[This
description of Lucretius is highly beautiful, and in
the truest vein of poetry. Blackmore has copied the
idea, but the ethereal spirit has evaporated in its pas-
sage:

The fragrant vapours breath'd from rich per-
fumes,
From Indian spices, and Arabian gums,
Though many years they flow, will scarce abate
The odoriferous body's bulk or weight.
Creation, Book IV. v. 435.

Ver. 229. *Its flow'r ethereal,*—[Thus, Thomson:
Such its pure essence, its ethereal soul.
Spring, 509.

And hence, again, we are at no loss for the true
meaning of a passage in ode xxi. of Anacreon, which
has been differently rendered by the commentators:
Rotund and light, its mystic make must spring:
A fact, O friend to truth! thou oft shalt find
Of utmost moment in what yet remains.

Hence learn we, too, of what attenuate frame
The mind consists; and to what trivial space
Must shrink its texture if compacted close—
That, when in death the wearied body sleeps,
And soul and spirit wander from their post,
E’en then the sight no diminution marks
In weight or figure; death usurping sole
The warm-breath’d vapour, and the vital sense.

From seeds minutest, hence, the soul entire
Must flow,—through all the frame profusely pour’d;
And, e’en when fled, still leaving every limb
Its wonted weight, its figure most precise.
So, from the juice of Bacchus, when flies off
Its flow’r etherial, from the light perfume

\[\text{Δοτι σαβεν ουρανον.} \]
\[\text{Στριφονε των θυρακων.} \]
\[\text{Τα μυταμα μου στριφων.} \]

Give me the flower of Bacchus, give!
Without his balm I cannot live;
And o’er my burning temples shower
The leaves of many a humid flower.

For hence Faber introduces essenger, making it agree
with UILDER, and then regards it as merely a part of
the same image which is conveyed in the ensuing
verses. The whole spirit and flower of the passage
is hereby, however, totally destroyed. The Italian
translator, Regnier, is correct in his version:

\[\text{Deh porgetimi de flore} \]
\[\text{Di quel almo e buon liquore.} \]

It was, probably, on this account, from the vola-
tility of this etherial flower, that Bacchus is often re-
presented, in antique busts and medals, with wings:
and especially in the famous gem which is still in the
collection of baron Stosch, famous alike for its
Aut aliquo quom jam sucus de corpore cessit:
Nihil oculis tamen esse minor res ipsa videtur
Propterea, neque detractum de pondere quidquam.
Nimirum, quia multa minutaque semina sucos
Ecsciunt, et odorem, in toto corpore rerum.
Quâ re etiam atque etiam mentis naturam, animaeque,
Scire licet perquam pauxillis esse creatam
Seminibus; quoniam fugiens nihil ponderis auffert.

Nec tamen hae simplex nobis natura putanda est:
Tenuis enim quædam moribundos deserit aura,
Mixta vapore; vapos porro trahit aëra secum:
Nec calor est quisquam, quo non sit mixtus et aër.

rarity and its beauty. The stone is an amethyst, the purple colour of which is admirably characteristic of the subject engraved. Under this type, the jolly god is commonly denominated Acratus, from the name of a favourite and attendant genius upon him. The gem I have now referred to, is thus vivaciously described in a late publication: "Acratus is crowned with myrtle, ivy, and rose-buds, with wings on his shoulders, and his right arm wrapped in his dress. Pausanias, describing the representations of the gods which decorated the mansion of Polybion, dedicated in his time to Bacchus, mentions Acratus an attendant genius on the god of wine, and describes his countenance projecting from the wall. He informs us, that the Amicelae adored Bacchus under the name of Psila, which in the Doric signified wino. Wine, he adds, lightens and exalts the soul, as wings, birds."

Ver. 239. 'tis not unmist its nature, the light gass
Breath’d from the dying, in its texture blends
Heat, air, and vapour, each with each combin’d]

Chemistry is daily becoming so popular a pursuit, as well for entertainment as profit, in almost every art and science, and its own technical dialect is hence so perpetually and imperceptibly blending with colloquial language, that it is perhaps unnecessary to offer any apology for the introduction of the term gass, since every one is acquainted with its meaning, and there is no other term in modern speech that will so forcibly express the import of the Latin phrase here adopted by our poet—tenuis auro. We come now to the analysis of the Epicurean soul; in explaining which, if the student of Lavoisier should in some instances trace an erroneous chemistry, he will, nevertheless, be astonished at the general resemblance which it bears to this boasted theory of the present day; and will be truly surprized to find himself so much at home whilst in company with a poet and a philosopher who flourished nearly two thousand years ago.

The sentient principle then, upon the Epicurean hypothesis, is a system or combination of gasses
Book III. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

When mounts th' essential spirit, or from man
Th' excreted lymph exhales—the curious eye
Nought marks diminish'd,—the same weight survives,
The same fixt bulk, since from minutest seeds
Springs the light scent, th' ethereal spirit springs.

Hence doubly flows it why the mind's pure frame
Must, too, be rear'd from seeds of subtlest size,—
Hence, as its flight no visual change creates,
But bulk alike, and substance still endure.

Yet not unmixt its nature: the light gass
Breath'd from the dying, in its texture blends
Heat, air, and vapour, ever each with each

communicated to the lungs and heart from the air of
the atmosphere, in the act of respiration; and either
secerned or separated by the operation of these or-
gans. Of these various gasses, our poet enumerates
four:—"heat, air, and vapour," as specified in
v. 241 of the present book, and a substance so re-
condite in its nature, and fugitive in its action, as
totally to elude all power of visual detection, and
hence, to have had no specific name appropriated to
it; but whose existence, he tells us, is as certain,
from the effects it is traced to exhibit, as that of any
other gass or aura whatever; which consists of "the
lightest and most attenuate atoms;" and is, conse-
quently, excited into the fleetest motion with the ut-
most ease. See v. 248—252. Our poet afterwards
asserts, v. 283, that this nameless aura is of infinitely
more consequence than any of the rest, towards the
production of perception and the preservation of life:

Far from all vision this profoundly lurks,
Through the whole system's utmost depth diffus'd,
And lives, as soul of e'en the soul itself.

From the prime necessity of air to the existence of
man, that part of him which is alone capable of de-
termining whether he do, or do not exist, has, in all
ages, and among all people, derived one of its most
common names from this fluid, and is alternately de-
nominated breath, spirit, and air, terms in themselves
convertible, and etymologically the same. Thus, in
the creation of the first parent of the human race,
we are told, Gen. ii. 7, that God "breathed into his
nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living
soul." The term blood was often, indeed, in a man-
er somewhat similar, employed, as I have already
observed in the note on v. 45 of this book, to import
the life of sentient beings; but was always restrained
to the simple phenomenon of existence, or to the
signification of that part of the percipient principle
which immaterialists intend by the animal, in oppo-
sition to the intelligent soul; while the words air, breath,
spirit, have been uniformly applied as synonymous
denominations for the mind, or thinking principle,
the mens animi of our poet.
Rara quod ejus enim constat natura, necesse est
Aëris inter eum primordia multa moveri.

Such has been the language, and such the popular idea of all ages; but Epicurus is the first philosopher upon record who attempted to reconcile the general belief and language of mankind with natural phenomena, and to develop, with the penetrative ken of science, the constituent parts of that aerial substance from which the sentient principle was supposed to be derived; to trace their separation or secretion; and to apportion to each its relative power in the production or renovation of life, perception, and intelligence.

Such being a summary of the Epicurean doctrine upon this subject, I shall next, as briefly as possible, compare it with what has been advanced in more modern times, and since chemistry has been connected with physiological pursuits.

And here, the first thing I shall notice is the position of Lucretius, that the body derives the whole of its elementary heat, now denominated caloric, univocally with his own term calor, from respirable, or atmospheric air. The cause of animal heat was never fully or scientifically developed, till the celebrated treatise of the late Dr. Crawford appeared on this subject, about fifteen years ago. Prior to this era, it was attempted to be accounted for in various, and indeed contradictory ways: some attributing it to the reciprocal friction of the different particles of blood; others, to their friction against the sides of their vessels: some referring it to the action of the solids of the body against the solids; others, again, to fermentations, supposed to be perpetually occurring through the whole system. But none of these solutions were satisfactory, and every one in turn yielded to the rest. The experiments, however, of Dr. Crawford, but more especially those of Lavoisier, who has perfected this theory, while they confute the conjectures hazarded by every former philosopher from Hippocrates to Cullen, establish, upon the firmest basis, the hypothesis advanced by our poet; and resolve the phenomenon of animal heat into atmospheric air, inhaled in the act of respiration, and chemically decomposed in its passage through the lungs.

The atmosphere is a vast laboratory, in which innumerable processes of analysis, solution, precipitation, and combination, are incessantly taking place. The air itself is a confused mixture of particles ejected from animal, vegetable, and mineral substances, and more especially from water, either entire or decomposed, through which the fluids of light, heat, and electricity, as well as an infinitude of other gasses, are continually passing and repassing. Vapour, therefore, of some kind or another, must, at all times, constitute an essential part of atmospheric air, yet the portion it constitutes is but small, seldom, in general, exceeding a hundredth part of the whole: the rest consisting of elementary heat, or caloric, a most active and volatile substance, largely diffused through all nature, of azotic gass, or mephitis, and of a most recondite fluid, which it is the boast of modern chemistry to have discovered characteristically; which, when separated, is found to be three or four times purer than atmospheric air in the gross, and will hence preserve combustion and animal life three or four times as long. This mysterious gass, though suspected by modern chemists, from the era of Van Helmont, was by no means fully traced, or its properties fairly specified, till the experiments of Dr. Priestley gave it “a local habitation and a name”: for he obtained it from a variety of substances in a pure and uncombined state, and denominated it deplogistified air; advertising, in this appellation, to a system of his own founding, and known by the phrase of the phlogistic system. It soon, however, became a matter of great doubt, among contemporary chemists, whether there were any such thing as phlogiston in nature; and hence Lavoisier banished the name altogether from the French school of chemistry, and re-denominated the newly-discovered aura, vital air, or oxygen. Oxygen, in its state of purity, and freed from every other substance, is never volatile, but remains fixed to the body it inhabits; yet combined with the elementary heat or caloric of the atmosphere, it is volatized instantaneously, and exhibits itself by a thousand magnificent and stupendous properties. It is this, indeed, that gives
Compacted; vapour, in its ample pores,
Absorbing heat, and heat ethereal air.

life and spirit to the whole atmosphere; for, when
once abstracted, atmospheric air becomes totally un-
fit for the purposes of respiration, vegetation, or com-
bustion. It occupies about a fourth part of the com-
mon air of the atmosphere: the remainder of which,
as incapable of supporting the phenomena of animal
life, is denominated mephitis, or azotic gas: and
which, as filling nearly three quarters of the atmosphere,
may be well entitled to the appellation of air alone.

Respiration, then, is an action contributing to the
renovation of life by the communication of atmos-
pheric air to the precordia; the air so communic-
cated, in a manner, to the present moment undeter-
dined, becoming hereby decomposed or separated
into four, or perhaps a greater number of simpler
gasses, of which each contributes, in a greater or
less degree, to the preservation of life and sensation;
and especially the caloric, which seems to afford that
continual supply of heat that is absolutely necessary,
from the freedom with which every individual mem-
ber parts with its heat to circumjacent and external
substances; and more especially still, the oxygen,
which, by Spallanzeni and Girtanner, is supposed
to stimulate the heart itself into action, and to be
the immediate cause of all muscular irritability, and
consequently of vitality itself. A small portion,
however, of this important gass, we detect returning
from the lungs in the act of expiration, combined
with a substance generated in the blood; and which,
from its resemblance to various properties of charcoal,
the French chemists have named carbon; the fluid
produced from this union, and discharged in expira-
tion, is denominated carbonic acid gass.

I pretend not to affirm what was the immediate
aura understood by Lucretius as the fourth and most
important substance in the composition of the animal
spirit; and which, he tells us, was so recondite as to be
incapable of being traced otherwise than by its effects.
To the oxygenous and the galvanic gass it has an equal
and an astonishingly striking resemblance. If we
suppose our poet intended something like the former,
although he has not given it its modern name, he
has described the very thing itself, endowed it with
its characteristic properties, asserted its entire supre-
macy, and established it in its immediate seat of
empire, the heart and lungs. He has given us, in-
deed, whether we allow this to be a fact or not, as
complete a statement of the gasses of which the ani-
mal breath or spirit consists, as if he had lived in the
present day. And what is more extraordinary still,
though he enumerates the three substances of heat,
air, and vapour, as fluids ejected in the act of ex-
piration, he makes no mention of the return of this
fourth, and, in his era, unnamed substance; while,
nevertheless, as already observed, he deems it the
most powerful agent in the composite spirit inhaled;
and the sensorial faculty engendered. The follow-
ing table of the Epicurean and Lavoisierian analysis
of respirable air, will still more clearly point out the
resemblance between them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respirable air of Lucretius contains</th>
<th>Respirable air of Lavoisier contains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calor;</td>
<td>Caloric;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vapor;</td>
<td>Vapour,—exhalation from water, and other substances;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aër;</td>
<td>Azote, occupying three-fourths of the whole atmosphere, and hence, more properly than any other simple fluid, denominated air;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed; but which is of far more importance than all the rest to the renewal and prolongation of animal life, eluding all sensible investigation, and only traced from its effects.</td>
<td>Oxygen, without which it is impossible for life to subsist; the boast of modern chemistry, and which was totally devoid of name and generic character till the present era.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jam triplex animi est igitur natura reperta:
Nec tamen hæc sat sunt ad sensum cuncta creandum;

It must be confessed, however, that even oxygen itself, although generally supposed at one time, and even at the present moment by Humboldt, and several other chemists, to be the sole cause of fibrous irritability, was never conceived altogether competent to the production of muscular motion and sensation: it approximated the development of the vital spirit, but did not completely unfold it. Hence other gasses have alternately been glanced at, as affording the chief fomes of this recondite and attenuate power. Electricity has been principally studied with this express view; and the study has, at length, been crowned with a success, which, though by no means perfect, opens to us, perhaps, the way to perfection. In consequence of the experiments of Cotugno, Vassali—Endi, Galvani, Volta, and many other celebrated philosophers, it has ultimately been demonstrated, that animals are capable of generating or exciting an electric aura in their own bodies, as well as of receiving it from without; that this electric aura is possess of all, or nearly all, the properties of common or metallic electricity,—but that it acts in a manner somewhat different; whence, from M. Galvani, one of its most successful investigators, it has been denominated, by way of distinction, Galvanism, or galvanic gass: that it is a volatile and instantaneous fluid, apparently propagated through the nerves, and operating upon them exclusively; and that it is the immediate cause of all muscular motion and sensation. To recapitulate the experiments by which these results have been ascertained, would require a quarto volume instead of a limited note: many of them, however, have excited so much popular attention as to be already known to most of my readers, and the rest may be easily collected from Aldini's late "Account," and Wilkinson's "Elements."

The mode by which the body, or rather the nerves, become possess of this mysterious and truly spiritual aura, is still doubtful. That it is rather received from the surrounding atmosphere than communicated by our food, is, I believe, generally admitted; and hence, like caloric and oxygen, it commonly enters into the system in the act of respiration, and forms a constituent part of the calor ventutque vitalis referred to by our own poet. But it is uncertain, whether it thus enter in a state of pure galvanization, and is merely propagated through the blood to the brain, or whether it reach the brain in a more concrete form, and be secreted by this curious and enormous gland from the common mass of the blood that passes to it through the carotid arteries. The experiments and observations which have hitherto been made, are considerably more in favour of the latter, than of the former opinion. In consequence of this important discovery of a sensitive, or galvanic gass, the Lavosierian theory of respiration has itself been subject to some doubts, and various new hypotheses have been started in its stead, or rather, perhaps, various amendments have been attempted; among which last I shall briefly mention, that much of the power formerly attributed to the oxygenous, has been transferred to the galvanic aura; that the cells of the lungs are conceived to be galvanic organs, and that animal heat is rather hence derived and propagated, than from the absorption of caloric.

Into these differences I cannot enter: it is sufficient for me to have pointed out, that the vital spirit of our poet seems to have been established by the experiments of modern chemistry, and that it results from a peculiar system or combination of various infinitely volatile and attenuate auras obtained from the atmosphere in the act of respiration, and existing, like the grosser fluids and organs themselves, by a continuity and catenation of supply. It should, unquestionably, appear from analogous facts and experiments, that a soul, thus constituted, must necessarily perish with the body; and it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that our poet should have strenuously entertained such a belief. But, be the soul what it may, the Christian scriptures teach us the contrary: they unfold to us, that the soul is immortal from its birth; as they do also, that the body shall be im-
Book III. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Triple the substance, hence, the soul that builds;
Yet c'en the whole perception ne'er can form:

mortals from its resurrection. That the power of the Deity is able to support its existence in a separate and gaseous, or etherealized state, and to continue to it the property of personality, no one has a right to deny, till he can prove that the exercise of such a power implies a contradiction. That a possession of the common organs of the body is not absolutely necessary for the production and renovation of such a spiritualized system, we may form some conjecture from the fact, that many animals, well known to us at present, and whose powers of irritability and sensation proceed alone from the possession of oxygenous and galvanic auras, are totally destitute of those organs which, in other animals, appear absolutely requisite to their production, and derive them from other means. Thus, insects in general, even those which, like the fire-fly and glow-worm, are capable of secreting light, have neither lungs nor heart, and receive the vital gasses through the pores of their skin; while the polypus, and in fact all the zoophytic order, have neither heart, brain, stomach, nor viscera of any description, but an individual cavity, or tube alone, for the purpose of vital and sentient organs. There are, again, many other animals both aqueous and marine, which have no brain, although they have a heart and lungs; while the leech is not only destitute of brain, but of nerves of every kind: it has a muscular organization, it is true, but the keenest anatomist has not hitherto been able to trace any thing like a nervous fibril. It is, perhaps, more extraordinary still, to notice that the land tortoise, which is possessed of a brain, is well known to exist for six or seven months with the total abstraction of this important organ. Fishes, moreover, absorb atmospheric air in general, not by the lungs, for they have none, but by gills, which answer their purpose; and several of them, as the torpedo, gymnotus electricus, and silurus, seck the galvanic aura, of which it contains the basis, not by the brain, but by an organ, which enables them to seck it in a much larger quantity, and at will; an organ which is a natural voltaic pile; and, like the voltaic pile, enables them to communicate it, in an aggregate state, to other animals upon contact, in the mode of sensible and often very severe shocks. In many animals, the organs themselves change, and in some repeatedly, during the period of their existence. In the moth, the butterfly, and indeed almost all the lepidopterus class, the entire insect, in the course of its very brief duration, undergoes not less than three distinct metamorphoses. From an egg it becomes a worm, from a worm an aurelia, from an aurelia an active and aerial fly. Its organs experience an equal variation, and receive and separate the vital gasses in an equally different manner; yet the animal itself continues the same, and loses nothing of its personality. Other equally curious instances might be enumerated, if necessary; but these are sufficient to prove, that a system of sensorial power, and, consequently, of perception, volition, and action, resulting from a combination of vital auras, may exist without the possession of those organs which, at first sight, appear absolutely essential to such existence; and we may hence form some idea of the etherial texture of the soul, the "celestial body which God giveth it," to adopt the triumphant words of the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 38, 40, when, freed from the flesh, and dropping its accustomed organs, it defies the power of death, and enters upon a state of separate existence.

These observations I have thrown out, however, rather as hints towards a future theory, than as a theory actually formed and insisted upon; as I have, also, the preceding resemblance between the aerial gasses of the Epicureans and of modern chemists, as a matter of curiosity, rather than from any idea of derogating from the claims of later periods, or a pretension that Lucretius was acquainted with some of the most important discoveries of our own age. It is sufficient to have proved, that Epicurus and his followers contended for the existence of gasses most singularly similar to the caloric, the oxygen, the galvanic aura of the present day. We must not, however, indeed we cannot, suppose, that the Greeks were unacquainted with chemistry, though they had
Nihil horum quoniam recipit mens posse creare
Sensiferos motus, quaedam quei mente voluantur.
Quarta quoque hiis igitur quaedam natura necesse est
Adtribuatur: ea est omnino nominis expers:
Qua neque mobilius quidquam, neque tenuius, exstat,
Nec magis est parvis et laevibus ex elementis;
Sensiferos motus quae didit prima per artus:
Prima cietur enim, parvis perfecta figuris;
Inde calor motus, et venti caeca potestas,
Adcipit; inde aer: inde omnia mobilitantur:
Concutitur sanguis, tum viscera persentiscunt

no name by which to express such a science: it was, on the contrary, a subject they sedulously cultivated, both as a branch of philosophy, and an object of trade. In the advance of the present poem, the reader will meet with various proofs of the truth of this observation; see, especially, notes on Book IV. v. 327, and 1046; and many more might be easily adduced in the present note, if I had not already extended it to too great a length. Those, who are desirous of pursuing the subject, may advantageously consult an Italian work, printed at Parma in 1799, in seven volumes quarto, entitled "Dell'Origine, Progressi, e Stato attuale d'ogni Litteratura," by the abate D. Giovan. Andres, who has examined this topic with a large share of erudition, and, in his fifth volume, quotes from a very curious and valuable manuscript in St. Mark's library at Venice, which contains a list of the Greek chemists, and the characters they employed. The date of this MS., it appears, is uncertain, but it affords incontrovertible proofs of a high antiquity.

The conception, by Epicurus, of a gass similar to the oxygenous, or galvanic, is not more wonderful than that by Nicetus of Syracuse, and several Pythagorean philosophers, to whose conjectures I have already adverted, of many of the most important principles of the Copernican theory; such, for example, as that the sun is situated in the centre of the solar system, the rotation of the earth on her axis, and her annual revolution around the central fire: that her shape is spheroidal, and admits of antipodes; and that the moon, and other planets, are habitable. But what will the unlearned reader say, when he finds that even the meteoric stones, or those which are now traced to have fallen from the heavens, and are at this moment, for the first time, as is commonly supposed, exciting great attention in the philosophic world, are not a new discovery, and were known to mankind upwards of four hundred years before the birth of our Saviour; were as differently accounted for by the sages of that early era, as they are in our own day; and their fall capable of being foretold by some of them, and especially by Anaxagoras, who predicted the descent of a very large stone that fell accordingly on the banks of the Aegeos in Thrace. This fact and prediction are equally re-
Book III.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.

For nought in each subsists of pow'r t' excite
Those sensile motions whence perception flows.
Hence some fourth substance, doubtless, must we deem,
Conjoint existing; which, though void of name,
Springs from minutest atoms, lightest most
And most attenuate; deep-endow'd with power
Of fleetest speed, and hence, that first begets
Those sensile movements that the frame pervade.
This first begets, as form'd from subtlest seeds,
Next heat th' incipient action, vapour next
Partakes, and air posterior, till the soul
Rouses throughout: then flows the blood, then feels

corded by Pliny, ii. 68, and Diogenes Laertius, in
Vit. Anaxag. ii. 10.  Aristotle, in his first book of
Meteorics, supposes these stones to be carried up-
wards from the earth in the course of a violent tem-
pest: καὶ ὁ θύρωμα, says he, ἐν τοιχαῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνέρος ὑπὸ τοῦ πνέματος ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄμματος μεθ' ὀμηρίας εὐφώνειν ἀνεφέρει καὶ τοῦτο ὁμοίως ἐστίν: ἐπὶ τούτων τυχεῖν. In modern times, they are said, by many philosophers, to fall from the moon: Anaxagoras contended, that they fell from the sun; and hence, his disciple Euripides, in his Fable of Phaëton, denominates the sun, χρυσὸς ξύλος, "a golden glebe."

Ver. 248. Hence some fourth substance, doubtless, must
we deem,
Conjoint existing; which, though void of name.—]
That this was the opinion of Epicurus, we learn
from Plutarch, who tells us expressly that he admis-
ted the existence of these four fluids in the composite
spirit of man. Επίκοεις (τὸν ἄρχον πλῆθος) κρίμα ἐκ τισίας, ἐκ τούτων περικάλλως, ἐκ τούτων ἀρχαίως, ἐκ τούτων πνεύματως, ἐκ τούτων τῶν ακατορμαστῶν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἀνθρώπων. De Plac. Phil. iv. 3. Having thus given

a statement of the Epicurean soul or spirit, and its component parts, it may not be unentertaining to my readers to be informed of the opinions of the Grecian philosophers in general upon this subject, who have acquired the greatest share of celebrity, and whose doctrines were bowed to with superior deference. Cicero will save us the trouble of a deep investigation; for he has enumerated the tenets of thirteen Grecian sages on the point in question, in the first book of his Tusculan Questions. I. Some, says he, held the mind to be the heart itself. II. Others, not the heart, but that it is an undescrivable something seated in the heart. III. Others esteemed it a part of the brain. IV. Others, that it was not the brain, but a something seated in the brain. V. Empedocles taught, that it was a collection of blood resident in the heart. VI. Some, again, held it to be a breath, or aura. VII. Zeno maintained, that it consisted of particles of elementary fire. VIII. Aristothenes, that it resulted from a general harmony of the system. IX. Pythagoras and Xenocrates, that it was a number. X. Plato, that it was a compound of three passions, occupying three distinct seats: 1. Reason,
Omnia; postremis datur ossibus, atque medullis,
Sive voluptas est, sive est contrarius ardor.
Nec temere huc dolor usque potest penetrare, neque acre
Permanare malum, quin omnia perturbentur;
Utque adeo vitae desit locus, atque animaí
Diffugiant partes per caulas corporis omnes.
Sed plerumque fit, in summo quasi corpore, finis
Motibus: hanc ob rem vitam retinere valemus.

Nunc, ea quo pacto inter sese mixta, quibusque
Compta modis, vigeant; rationem reddere aventem
Abstrahit invitum patrii sermonis egéstas:
Sed tamen, ut potero summatim adtingere, tangam.

Inter enim cursant primordia, principiorum
Motibus inter se, nihil ut secernier unum
Possit, nec spatio fieri divisa potestas;
Sed quasi multæ vis unius corporis exstant.
Quod genus, in quo vis animantium visere volgo,
Est odor, et quidam calor, et sapor; et tamen ex hiis
Omnibus est unum perfectum corporis augmen.
Sic calor atque aër et venti cæca potestas

residing in the head; 2. Anger, in the heart; 3. Cupidity in the lower part of the diaphragm. XI. Dicæarchus, that it was nothing more than a mere name—a perfect non-entity. XII. Aristotle, that it was
Each vital organ,—till, through every bone;
E'en to its central marrow, winds, in turn,
The sinuous rapture, or the sense of pain.
Yet pain, thus deep within, can never pierce
With keen corrosion, but the total man
Shakes from his basis—life no more subsists,
And the light soul through every pore flies off.
Hence less profound descends, in general ills,
Th' excited action, and man still survives.

And here, in phrase appropriate, would we prove
In what firm bonds, what various modes, the make
Of each with each connixes, but the dearth
Of terms select restrains us; yet attend
While thus our utmost efforts we essay.

Each primal substance, then, with each coheres
In every act so firm that nought conceiv'd
Can sever; nought can central space admit;
But as the powers they live of one joint frame.

As the fresh victim blends in every limb
Heat, taste, and odour, while the total builds
But one compacted mass, so here, alike,
But one same nature flows from heat and air,

Ver. 258. —through every bone,
E'en to its central marrow, winds, in turn,
The sinuous rapture, or the sense of pain.] Virgil has imitated a part of this, in the following verse:
Vol. I.

—duris dolor ossibus ardet.
Æn. ix. 66.
—grief the hard bones corrodes.
Mixta creant unam naturam, et mobilis illa 
Vis, initum motus ab se quæ dividit ollis; 
Sensifer unde oritur primum per viscera motus. 
Nam penitus prorsum latet hæc natura, subestque; 
Nec magis hæc infra quidquam est in corpore nostro; 
Atque anima est animæ proporro totius ipsa:
Quod genus, in nostris membris et corpore toto 
Mixta latens animi vis est, animæque potestas; 
Corporibus quia de parvis, paucisque, creatæ est. 
Sic tibi nominis hæc expers vis, facta minutis 
Corporibus, latet; atque animæ quasi totius ipsa 
Proporro est anima, et dominatur corpore toto.
Consimili ratione necesse est, ventus et aër 
Et calor inter se vigant conmixta per artus;

Ver. 285. And lives as soul of the soul itself.]
Thus, again, ver. 290:
This form ineffable, this mystic power
Soul of the soul, and lord of mortal man.
In the delineation of absolute supremacy, or where
the superlative degree is meant to be emphatically expressed, such a phraseology has been common in every age and nation.
It is almost impossible to open the Hebrew scriptures, in their poetic parts, without meeting with instances of this figure. I now, incidentally, unfold the book of Isaiah, and in chap. xiii. ver. 6, I read,

Howl ye! for at hand is the day of Jehovah;
As a destruction of the destroyer shall it come.
So, again: chap. xxviii. 15.

The flood of floods, when it poureth along, will not touch us.

In the Alcoran, the same duplication of term occurs as frequently. Thus, to select a single instance, we read in the twenty-fourth chapter:

والذين كفروا أعمالهم كفازات ني
بحر لمر موج من فوقه موج من
وقد سحاب طالات بعض فوت
بعض

"But the works of the infidel are like the darkness of a deep sea, which is covered by wave upon wave, clouds upon clouds, darkness upon darkness."

So St. Paul, Phil. iii. 5. denominates himself "an Hebrew of the Hebrews;" and again, 1 Tim. vi. 15. he describes the Almighty as "king of kings,
And mystic vapour, and the power unnam'd
That rears th' incipient stimulus, and first
Darts sentient motion through the quiv'ring frame.
Far from all vision this profoundly lurks,
Through the whole system's utmost depth diffus'd,
And lives as soul of e'en the soul itself.
As with each limb the general spirit blends,
Though ne'er discern'd, so subtle and so few
Its primal seeds—so, through the spirit, spreads
This form ineffable, this mystic power,
Soul of the soul, and lord of mortal man.
Thus, too, commixt must vapour, heat, and air,
Live through each limb united; and, though oft
Each rise o'er each triumphant, still uprear

and lord of lords." In like manner, Pope has rendered the phrase, Sta corpore ascosta, "god of gods."

Ac simplex: ideo non constat partibus ullis.—
Quo pars imperio sic nata videbitur una?
Quo pars regina tandem regina futura est?
Quo pars mens est verce mens?

ANTI-LUC. Lib. V. v. 874.

For what, thus anxious, can such movements bear,
Can hope and fear, can sorrow and rejoice,
Can feel and judge of feelings, must be one ;
One in itself, nor can of parts consist.—
Thus, one by birth, what part shall rule the rest?
Parts of one lord, what part be lord itself?
What part of mind to real mind pretend?

But Lucretius is no where better illustrated than in the following passage of the well-known speech of Hamlet to his friend Horatio:

Give me that man
That is not Passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core; ay, in my heart of heart.
Atque alis aliud subsit magis, emineatque;
Ut quiddam fieri videatur ab omnibus unum:
Ne calor, ac ventus seorsum, seorsumque potestas
Aëris, interimant sensum, diductaque solvant.

Est etiam calor ille animo, quem sumit in irà,
Quom fervescit; et ex oculis nicat acribus ardor.
Est et frigida multa, comes Formidinis, aura;
Qua ciet horrorem membris, et concutit artus.
Est etiam quoque pacati status aëris ille,
Pectore tranquillo fit qui, voltuque sereno.
Sed calidi plus est illis, quibus acria corda,
Iracundaque mens facile ecfervescit in irà:
Quo genere in primis vis est violenta leonum,
Pectora quei fremitu rumpunt plerumque gementes;

Ver. 297. Heat springs superior in the mind enraged,
When burns the total system, and the eye, &c.]
Lucretius now proceeds to the doctrine of Temperaments, or Idiosyncracies; and endeavours to prove,
that the moral habit of man depends upon the relative quantity of the different component parts of atmospheric air that are separated and absorbed by different systems: that those which separate and absorb a larger proportion of caloric or elemental heat are naturally disposed to irascibility, and the more violent passions, and so of the rest. The doctrine of Temperaments was admitted into the system of all the Greek philosophers. Omnes antiqui, says Galen, in hoc videntur concordati, corporis complexionem animæ sequi virtutem. Tom. vi. De Incantatione,
"They all appear to have coincided in this fact, that the virtues of the soul are derived from the peculiar constitution of the body," Galen, however, attributes the origin of this hypothesis to Aristotle and Theophrastus. But the doctrine of Temperaments, inculcated by these latter philosophers, and strenuously supported by Galen himself, differed essentially from that of Epicurus, as being derived from the greater or less relative proportion of some one of the four elements over the rest, in the formation of the animal machine:—substances which were asserted, by the Epicureans, to be no more elemental than any other substances, and to be alike produced from the common primordial corpuscles of matter united in a peculiar arrangement. The doctrine of Aristotle, nevertheless, took the lead in the Arabian schools of physic, as it did also in those of philosophy; and, with the resurrection of science in Europe, mankind were universally affirmed to be of a hot, or cold, a moist, or dry temperament, according to the preponderance in their constitutions, of fire, air, water, or earth. But Galen had long before contended, that in some constitutions, there was not merely a
One frame harmonious, lest the power of air,
Of heat, or vapour, each from each disjoin’d,
Mar all sensation, and fly off dissolv’d.

Heat springs superior in the mind enrag’d,
When burns the total system, and the eye
Darts forth its lurid lightnings: vapour chill
Th’ ascendance gains when fear the frame pervades,
And ruthless Horror, shiv’ring every limb;
While the pure air, of tranquillizing power,
Smoothes all the visage, and the soul serenes.
Heat sways, as urg’d already, in the form
With acrid breast, that rouses soon to ire;
Chief in the rampant lion, whose proud heart
Bursts with impetuous roaring, nor can bound

As the doctrine of Aristotle and Galen, concerning Temperaments, has been sinking into oblivion, that of Epicurus has had various efforts made for its revival. One of the most strenuous attempts I have ever witnessed, though apparently without any direct reference to the passage before us, is in a volume written a few years ago, by Dr. Oakley of Northampton, and entitled, Pyrology. In this singular and fanciful dissertation, the author boldly undertakes to prove, that all the varieties of moral and physical idiosyncracies, or constitutions we meet with, result alone from the different proportions of elementary heat, or calorics, (calor is the term employed by our own poets) that insinuates itself into the frames of different persons; and that, merely upon this difference of proportion, it depends, whether a man will be possessed of ino...
Nec capere irarum fluctus in pectore possunt.
At ventosa magis cervorum frigida mens est,
Et gelidas citius per viscera concitat auras;
Quæ tremulum faciunt membris existere motum.
At natura boum placido magis ære vivit;
Nec minus, irâ fax numquam subdita percit
Fumida, subfundens caææ calignis umbram;
Nec gelidis torpet telis perfixa vaporis:
Inter utrasque sita est, cervos sævosque leones.

Sic hominum genus est; quam vis doctrina politos
Constituat pariter quosdam, tamen illa relinquit
Naturâ quouisque animi vestigia prima:
Nec radicitus evelli mala posse putandum est,
Quin proclivius hicc' iras decurrat ad acreis;
Ille metu citius paullo tentetur; at ille
Tertius adcipiat quædam clementius æquo:
Inque aliis rebus multis differre necesse est
Naturas hominum varias, moresque sequaceis;
Quorum ego nunc nequeo caæcas exponere caussas,
Th' enfuriate tide that ceaseless raves within.
For ampler vapour mark the timid deer:
Quick spreads its chilling dew through every limb
In many a tremour quivering; while the ox
Proves, through his placid life, a temper form'd
From air supreme. Him ne'er the torch of ire
Maddens abrupt in clouds and smoke involv'd,
Nor shudd'ring fear transfixes; but, remote,
'Twixt both he stands, and lifts his honest front,
The trembling deer, the lion gaunt and grim.

Thus varies man: though education trim
"Add its bland polish, frequent still we trace
The first deep print of nature on the soul,
Nor aught can all—erase it: ever, whence,
This yields to sudden rage, to terror that,
While oft a third beyond all right betrays
A heart of mercy. Thus, in various modes,
The moral temper, and symphomeous life
Must differ; thus from many a cause occult
The sage can ne'er resolve, nor human speech

—— Thus, Akenside, and in nearly the same words:
—— with wise intent
The hand of Nature on peculiar minds
Imprints a different bias, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil.

Ver. 319. | frequent still we trace
The first deep print of nature on the soul,]
Nec reperire figurarum tot nomina, quot sunt Principiis, unde hæc oritur variantia rerum.

Illud in hiis rebus videor formare potesse;
Usque adeo naturarum vestigia linqui
Parvola, quæ nequeat ratio depellere dictis;
Ut nihil impedit dignam diis degere vitam.

Hæc igitur natura tenetur corpore ab omni;
Ipsaque corporis est custos, et caussa salutis:
Nam communibus inter se radicibus hærent,
Nec sine pernicie divelli posse videntur.

Quod genus, e turis glebis evellere odorem
Haud facile est, quin intereat natura quoque ejus:
Sic animi atque animæ naturam corpore toto

Extrahere haud facile est, quin omnia dissoluantur;
Inplexis ita principiis ab origine primâ
Inter se fiunt consorti prædita vitâ:
Nec sibi quæque, sine alterius vi, posse videtur
Corporis, atque animi, seorsum constare potestas:
Sed communibus inter eos conflatur utrimque

Motibus, ad census nobis per viscera, sensus.

Præterea, corpus per se nec gignitur umquam,
Nec crescit, neque post mortem durare videtur.
Non enim, ut humor aquæ, dimittit sæpe vaporem
Qui datus est, neque eâ caussâ convellitur ipse,
Sed manet incolomis: non, inquam, sic animaï
Find phrase t’ explain; so boundless, so complex,
The primal sources whence the variance flows!
Yet this the muse may dictate that so few
The native traces wisdom ne’er can rase,
Man still may emulate the gods in bliss.

Thus through each limb th’ impressive spirit spreads,
Lord of the body, the prime fount of health,
Thus with each limb in league so close combines
Nought void of death can sever them in twain.
As the clear frankincense its fond perfume
Can ne’er desert till both together die,
So, from the flesh, the spirit and the soul
Part not till each one common fate dissolve.
So live they mutual, so, from earliest birth,
In interwin’d existence, that apart,
Nor this nor that perception can possess,
The joint result of each, by effort joint
First kindled, and through all the frame diffus’d.

This frame, moreo’er, alone can never spring,
Can never thrive, the dread attack of death
Can never conquer. For, with aim sublime,
Though the light vapour from the tepid lymph
Fly off profuse, while yet the lymph itself
Discidium possunt artus perferre relictæ; 
Sed penitus pereunt convolseï, conque putrescunt. 
Ex ineunte ævo sic corporis atque animaî 
Mutua vitæleis discunt contagia motus, 
Maternis etiam membris, alvoque repostos; 
Discidium igitur fieri sine peste, maloque:
Ut video, quoniam conjuncta est causa salutis,
Conjunctam quoque naturam consistere eorum.

Quod super est, si quis corpus sentire refutat,
Atque animam credit, permixtam corpore toto,
Subcepere hunc motum, quem sensum nominitamus;
Vel manifestas res contra, verasque, repugnat.
Quid sit enim corpus sentire quis adferet umquam,
Si non ipsa palam quod res dedit, ac docuit nos?
At, dimissa anima, corpus caret undique sensu;
Perdit enim, quod non proprium fuit ejus in ævo;
Multaque præterea perdit, quom expellitur ævo.

Ver. 361.  
Hence those who hold the body never feels, 
But sole the spirit through the body pour'd, &c.] 
Such was the opinion of Epicurus, who appears to have regarded the body as a mere cage, or machine, in which the soul was included. The answer is drawn from Epicurus himself, who thus asserts: 

Ver. 365.  
Dioc. Laert. x. 
Cicero was of precisely the same opinion. See the first book of his Tusculan Questions: Nos enim, says he, ne nunc quidem cernimus ea quae videmus; neque enim nullus sensus est in corpore; sed, ut non solum physicorum, etiam medicorum, qui ista aperta et patefacta viderunt, vis quasi quasi sunt ad oculos, ad aures, ad nares, a sede animi perforata. " For neither do we discern those things which we behold, nor is there any sensation in the body: but there are, as it
Exists uninjur'd—the deserted limbs
Not harmless, thus, can bear the soul's escape,
Doom'd to one ruin, and one common grave.
So, from their first crude birth, the vital acts
Of soul and body each solicit each
With fond contagion, from the earliest hour
The new-form'd fetus quickens in the womb,
No power can sever them devoid of death.—
Since life but flows, then, from the two combin'd,
Combin'd alone their natures must subsist.

Hence those who hold the body never feels,
But sole the spirit through the body pour'd,
Each vital fact oppose: for how, resolve,
Could man e'er deem the body crown'd with sense
But from such facts instructed and confirm'd?
True—body feels not when the spirit flies,
For sense from each springs mutual, and, in death,
Not sense alone is lost, but much besides.

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were, apertures perforated to the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, from the seat of the soul: apertures not merely maintained by philosophers, but which have been actually traced out and exhibited by anatomists." It is more particularly in answer to so false a theory that Lucretius advances his next argument:

To deem the eyes, then, of themselves survey
Nought in existence, while th' interior mind
Looks at all nature through them as alone
Through portals, is to trifle; sight itself

The creed absurd opposing ev'ry hour:
For oft the eye-ball, &c.
And it is, probably, to this opinion that Butler alludes in the following verses:

He knock'd his breast as if't had been
To rouse the spirits lodg'd within.
They, waken'd with the noise, did fly
From inward room to window-eye,
And gently opening lid, the casement,
Look'd out, but yet with some amazement.

HUDIBR. I. ii. 975.
Dicere porro oculos nullam rem cernere posse,
Sed per cos animum ut foribus spectare reclusis,
Difficile est, contra quom sensus ducat eorum;
Sensus enim trahit, atque acies detrudit ad ipsas:
Fulgida præsærim quom cernere sæpe nequimus,
Lumina luminibus quia nobis præpediuntur;
Quod foribus non fit: neque enim, quâ cernimus ipsei,
Ostia subscipiunt ullum reclusa laborem.
Præterea, si pro foribus sunt lumina nostra,
Jam magis exemptis oculis debere videtur
Cernere res animus, sublatis postibus ipsis.

Illud in hiis rebus nequaquam sumere possis,
Democriti quod sancta viri sententia ponit;
Corporis atque animi primordia singula, privis
Adposita, alternis variare, ac nectere, membra.
To deem the eyes, then, of themselves survey
Nought in existence, while th’ interior mind
Looks at all nature through them as alone
Through loop-holes, is to trifle—sight itself
The creed absurd opposing every hour.
For oft the eye-ball dares not meet the day,
The flood of light o’erpow’ring: but were eyes
The mind’s mere loop-holes, toil were never theirs.
Then too, each portal the reflected beam
Must more obstruct than usher;—and, remov’d,
Th’ exulting mind must drink a double day.
Nor be the sacred doctrine here advanc’d
Urg’d by Democritus, that soul extends
Atom for atom, through the total frame,
With grosser body: for as less of size

his life till her religious rites, which occupied three
days, were completed; when, tired out by the slow
approach of death, and exhausted by the pains he
endured, to adopt an expression of our own poet, v.
1080 of the present book,

Quick he uprose, and mid-way met his fate:
thus having recourse to suicide, a custom which,
however repugnant to the laws of nature and revela-
tion, was by no means unfrequent among the most
virtuous of the Greeks and Romans; and which,
even in the present day, is regarded as a kind of re-
ligious duty by some of the Hindu casts; with this
difference, however, that, among the latter, the fa-
tal blow is given, not by the act of the worn-out
patriarch himself, but by the more nervous and
steady hand of one of his own children.

Ver. 381. — soul extends
Atom for atom, through the total frame,
With grosser body; — From the account here
given us of the hypothesis of Democritus, it is obvi-
ous, that St. Augustin, and even Bayle, who quotes
his words, were both mistaken in conceiving that
this philosopher regarded all primary atoms as equally
animated and intelligent. Democritus, says St. Au-
gustin, “hoc distare in naturalibus questionibus ab
Epicuro dicitur, quod iste sentit inesse concursioni
atomorum vim quandam animalem et spiritualem.”
Hence, says Bayle, in support of his own opinion,
St. Augustin “ni nous permet pas de douter que De-
ocritus n’ai cru que tous les atomes etoient animés.”
This might have been the opinion of Hobbs, but
could not be so of Democritus; for Lucretius tells
us, in this very passage, that while some atoms were
Nam, quom multo sunt animaë elementa minora, 375
Quam quibus et corpus nobis, et viscera constant;
Tum numero quoque concedunt, et rara per artus
Dissita sunt; dum taxat ut hoc promittere possis,
Quantula prima queant, nobis injecta, ciere
Corpora sensiferos motus in corpore, tanta
Intervalla tenere exordia prima animaë.
Nam neque polveris interdum sentimus adhaesum
Corpore, nec membris incussam sidere cretam;
Nec nebulam noctu, neque aranei tenuia fila
Obvia, sentimus, quando obretimur euntes;
Nec supera caput ejusdem cecidisse vietam
Vestem; nec plumas avium, papposque volanteis,
Quei nimiä levitate cadunt plerumque gravatim:
Nec repentis itum quoius vis quomque animantis
Sentimus; nec priva pedum vestigia quæque,
Corpore quæ in nostro culices, et cætera, ponunt.
Usque adeo prius est in nobis multa ciendum,
The soul's primordial seeds than those that rear
Th' organic structure, so in number too
Yield they,—less freely through the limbs diffus'd.
Hence mayst thou rather deem the soul's pure seeds
Plac'd at such intervals as just suffice
To rouse alone when needful, through the frame,
Percipient motions. For full oft the dust
Blown by the breeze,—or fine fugacious chalk
Lights on the limbs unheeded: so, at eve,
The dews we feel not, nor the silky threads
By dextrous spider spun from spray to spray
That twine around us,—nor the tatter'd web
From some old roof that on the hair descends,
Nor the soft down of feathers, nor the goss
Sportive and light, that scarcely falls at last.
Nor live we conscious, frequent, of the tread
Of animalcules, or the secret path,
O'er all our frame, the busy gnat pursues.
For many a primal seed, that rears at large
Quam primordia sentiscant concussa animai,
Semina, corporibus nostris inmixta per artus;
Et quam, intervallis tantis tuditantia, possint
Concursare, coire, et dissultare vicissim.

Et magis est animus vita\-i\- claustra coërcens,
Et dominantior ad vitam, quam vis animai.
Nam sine mente, animoque, nequit residere per artus
Temporis exiguam partem pars uUa animai;
Sed comes insequitur facul, et discedit in auras,
Et gelidos artus in leti frigore linquit.
At manet in vita, quoï mens, animusque, remansit,
Quam vis est, curtum ca\-sis, lacer undique membris:
Truncus, adempt\-a anima, circum, membrisque remotus,
Vivit, et ætherias vitaleis subscipit auras;
Si non omnimodis, ut magn\-a parte, animai

Ver. 405. — through every sew'ring space
Blending, rebounding, and reblending still.—]
Our poet alludes to the hypothesis that universally prevailed respecting the flow of the blood, prior to the discovery of its circulation, and which taught that the blood, when ejected from the heart, was first conveyed by an infinitude of radiating vessels to the different organs of the body, and then meandered through them in distinct particles, affording nutri-
ment by their perpetual motion; a motion which was continued by the re-action of particle against particle, and occasionally by their mutual attraction; in the language of our poet, by their “blending, rebounding, and reblending still.” According to the Epicurean philosophy, the supply of sensation was conducted in the same manner: and hence the corpuscles of the percipient principle were separately
diffused through every organ of the body, in propor-
tion to the quantity it required for the discharge of its peculiar function; the prescordia being the fountain whence such corpuscles issued, and consequently endowd in a pre-eminent degree with animation and intelligence.

Ver. 413. — the ice of death:] In the original:
Et gelidos artus in leti frigore linquit.
In like manner, Mason, in his English Garden:
— the frore severity of death.
So, in an ancient poem by Shirley, noticed in Percy's Reliques:
Death lays his icy hands on kings.
Each member, must be stimulated first
Ere the keen atoms of the soul, hence rous'd,
Engender sense, through every sev'ring space
Blending, rebounding, and reblending still.

But 'tis the mind guards chief the gates of life,
And than the soul with ampler vigour sways.
For, without mind or spirit, soul itself
In no one portion through the man can live
E'en for a moment: as companion fond
With speed it follows, dissipated wide,
And leaves the limbs beneath the ice of death:
While he whose mind, whose spirit safe subsists,
Still holds existence, though th' exterior form
Throughout be mangled; e'en though much of soul,
Though every limb be lost, he still survives

Ver. 416. —e'en though much of soul
Though every limb be lost, he still survives
Deep in the remnant trunk,—] The perfection which the art of surgery has acquired in modern days, renders this description a fact, by no means unfrequent: but Lucretius particularly adverts to the dreadful spectacles which were often exhibited by the Roman gladiators; the whole, or nearly the whole, of whose limbs were at times lopped off during the obstinacy of their inhuman games, and who, nevertheless, frequently survived for a considerable time. Nardius relates, that the plundering Arabs in the vicinity of Grand Cairo, when taken prisoners, and sentenced to the dreadful punishment of being cut through the middle, lived for some hours afterwards in the superior portion of the body, by being put upon a heap of unslaked lime, which proved a powerful styptic to a great number of the divided vessels; and that, in this deplorable state, they occasionally even entered into conversation with the spectators. Virgil appears to have had this passage of Lucretius in view, in his description of the wounds and losses of limb sustained by Deiphobus, although he does not represent this hero as surviving the bloody combat:

Atque hic Priamidem, laniatum corpore toto,
Deiphobum vidit, lacerum crudeliter ora;
Ora, manusque ambas, populataque tempora raptis
Auribus, et truncas in honesto vulnere naves.

Æneid, vi. 494.
Here Priam's son, Deiphobus he found,
Whose face and limbs were one continued wound;
Dishonest, with lopp'd arms, the youth appears,
Spoil'd of his nose, and shorten'd of his ears.

Dryden.
Privatus, tamen in vitâ contatur, et hæret.
Ut, lacerato oculo circum, si pupula mansit
Incolomis, stat cernundi vivata potestas;
Dum modo ne totum contrumpas luminis orbem,
Et circumcædas aciem, solamque relinquas;
Id quoque enim sine pernicie non fiet eorum:
At, si tantula pars oculi media illa peresa est,
Obcidit ex templo lumen, tenebræque sequuntur;
Incolomis quam vis alioquin splendidus orbis.
Hoc anima atque animus junctei sunt fœdere semper.

Nunc age, nativos animantibus et mortaleis
Esse animos, animasque leveis, ut noscere possis;
Conquisita diu, dulciique reperta labore,
Digna tuâ pergam disponere carmina vitā.
Tu face utrumque uno subjungas nomine eorum;
Atque animam, verbi causâ, quam dicere pergam,

---the vital air
Still breathe,—] Vital is an epithet frequently, and most appropriately applied by Lucretius to the respirable air of the atmosphere: upon the constituent parts of which I have already remarked in the note on v. 239, of the present book. Virgil and Juvencus have both copied the expression in the following lines:
---hand (credō) invisus caelestibus auras
Vitales carpis.  ÆNEID, i. 391.
Not spurn'd by heaven, thou draw'st the vital air.
Et regina noti vitales surget in auras.
HIST. EVANG. ii. 715.

And through the vital ether shall ascend
The southern princess.

Ver. 428. Now mark profound: to teach thee how
this soul,
This subtle spirit, with the external frame
Begot, alike must perish,—next the muse, &c.] Having established the materiality of the human soul, our poet now proceeds to prove its consequent mortality, and incapability of surviving the ruins of the body: nor do I remember an individual argument adduced by the materialists of any modern school, which is not here brought forwards, and
Deep in the remnant trunk; the vital air
Still breathes, and lingers out his joyless hours.
Thus, though the visual orb be wounded, still,
If safe the central pupil, sight remains:
Where'er descends the blow, should this alone
Elude its vengeance, ruin ne'er ensues.
But, if of this the least existent point
Once suffer, though the total else escape,
Light fails immediate, and dread darkness reigns.
Such the connexion 'twixt the soul and mind.

Now mark profound: to teach thee how this soul,
This subtle spirit, with th' external frame
Begot, alike must perish,—next the muse
Shall pour forth numbers thine illustrious birth
Well-worthy, and with sweetest labour cull'd.
This chief observe, that either phrase assumes
Here a like import; and that when we urge

Our songs shall smooth the tiresome road we tread.
And Horace, with more resemblance still:
Mollier austerum studio fallente laborem.

Smoothing the toil severe by magic skill.
Marchetti has well translated the passage:

Ver. 432. —with sweetest labour cull'd.] Thus
Virgil, to the same effect:
Cantantes licet usque, minus via letet, eamus.
Ecc. ix. 66.

Ver.——da me cerchi
Lungo spazio di tempo e ritrovati
Con soave fatica.
Mortalem esse docens, animum quoque dicere credas; 
Quà tenus est unum inter se, conjunctaque res est. 425
  Principio, quoniam tenuem constare minutis
Corporibus docui, multoque minoribus esse 
Principiis factam, quam liquidus humor aquaèi, 
Aut nebula, aut fumus : nam longe mobilitate 
Præstat, et a tenui causâ magis, icta, movetur; 
(Quippe ubi imaginibus fumi, nebulaæque, moventur)
Quod genus, in somnis sopitei, ubi cernimus alta 
Exhalare vapore altaria, ferreque fumum : 
Nam procul hæc dubio nobis simulacra genuntur : 
Nunc igitur, quoniam, quassatis undique vasis, 
Diffluere humorem, et laticem discedere, cernis; 
Et nebula, ac fumus, quoniam discedit in auras; 
Crede animam quoque diffundi, multoque perire 
Ocyus, ac citius dissolvi in corpora prima, 
Quom semel ex hominis membris, ablata, recessit. 435
Quippe et enim, corpus, quod vas quasi constitit ejus,

Ver 445. — A sense, no doubt, induced
From the light phantasms of substantial forms
Floating around us——] On the mode in which
external objects are capable of producing internal impressions, see note on Book IV. v. 46, where this
doctrine of Lucretius is fully illustrated, and com-
pared with modern theories.

Ver. 454. — This flesh, the vase the soul that bounds,

Thus Xenocrates, in Antioch. denominates the body
ψυχη νησιον, “the tabernacle of the soul:”
It is the very expression of St. Peter in several places;
especially Ep. II. i. 14. Ειδως ου ταχυς εστιν ο αποστολος των Σχηνοματων ρους, καθως και ο Κυριος υμων Παπας
Κριστους εδικνον μου. “Knowing, that shortly I must
put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus
Christ hath showed me.” To the same effect, Cicero,
Tuscul. I. “Nosce animum tuum, nam corpus qui-
The soul is mortal, this the mind includes:

Such their joint bond, their close connexion such.

First, having prov'd, then, this attenuate power
From subtestest atoms rear'd, minuter far
Than those of water, smoke, or buoyant mist,
Since much in speed it conquers, and, by force
Far less, is rous'd to action—for full oft
E'en the faint phantasms of such forms alone
The soul excites, as when, in deep repose,
The fragrant altar smokes, and vapours rich
Rise to the view—a sense, no doubt, induc'd
From the light phantasms of substantial forms
Floating around us—this already prov'd,
Judge next, since lymph when bursts th' inclosing vase,
Flows at each fracture, since fugacious smoke,
Since vapours vanish into viewless air,
Judge how the soul must dissipate amain,
How sooner perish, and its primal seeds
Speedier dissolve, when once the flesh they quit.
For since this flesh, the vase the soul that bounds,

dem est quasi vas, aut aliquod animi receptaculum." "Study then thy mind, for the body is but, as it were, a vessel, or receptacle of the mind." Blair, in his "Grave," a poem that, amidst much low and coarse imagery, as well as much negligence of style, is frequently invigorated with bold, and enlivened by novel conceptions, has a passage to the same effect:

—body and soul must part.
Fond couple! link'd more close than wedded pair.

This wings its way to its almighty source,
The witness of its actions, now its judge:
That drops into the dark, and noisome grave,
Like a disabled pitcher of no use.
Quam cohibere nequit, conquassatum ex aliquâ re,
Ac rarefactum, detracto sanguine venis,
Aëre quî credis posse hanc cohibierer ullo?
Corpore quî nostro rarus magis incohibessit?

Præterea, gigni pariter cum corpore, ut unâ
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere, mentem.
Nam, velut infirmo puerei, teneroque, vagantur
Corpore, sic animi sequitur sententia tenuis:
Inde, ubi robustis adolevit viribus ætas,

Yet how much more elegant the sweet lyrist of Shiraz, in one of his most sublime and admirable gazels, which thus opens:

حجاب يبر جهان مي شون غبار
تنم
خوش آندي مي كدانز جهر
يردد بر ذنم
جنيه نفس ندزا كي جومن
خوش اكلكان اشن
دوم تنذم دضو ان كه مر غ
آن جهنم

Mysterious soul! this veil of clay
Hides thee from my keen survey:
When the moment shall I see
That tears the veil, and sets thee free?
Earth’s gross cage should never confine
A frame so musical as thine;
Like the nightingale, that sighs
To sing amid his native skies.
Book III.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Bounds it no more when bruis'd by foreign force,
Or of its life-blood robb'd,—how canst thou deem
Th' unsolid ether, or that aught more rare
Than flesh itself, the soul can e'er confine?

The mind, moreo'er, as every hour confirms,
Springs with the body, with the body grows,
And yields alike to years. The tottering babe,
Weakly of limb, betrays a mind as weak:
But, as his strength matures, his vigorous soul

The description is in every one's recollection, and is far more detailed than either that of Lucretius, or his imitator:

At first the infant
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning-face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover, &c.

—Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.

Polignac, in copying and enlarging upon Lucretius, has given us this last age of Shakspeare as correctly as though he had had it in his recollection at the time:

Densior it sanguis, concrexit vapidus humor,
Durescunt fibre, flaccescunt denique nervi,
Cor titubat, nec jam radiat vitalibus auris
Thesaurus capiti concrecitus; ossa rigescunt,
Fit pedibus manibusque tremor, grave pectus anhelat,
Caligant oculi, sonitus male suscipit auris,
Deficient vires, vox sere faucibus exit,
Albescunt crines, rugatur marcia pellis.
Tunc vitio prime cecu debilitatis hebenicit
Machina; fitque senex iterum fuer.

Anti-Lucr. v. 944.

Slow flows the blood, more spiritless, and dense;
The fibres harden o'er the flaggy limbs;
Close palpitates the heart; the reservoir,
Rear'd in the brain its vital ether now
Ejects no longer; rigid every bone:
Tremble the feet: the hands, the bosom heaves
Heavy;—to dimness yields the flickering sight:
Strength fails, and ear and voice misgave alike,
And the hair whitens, and the pale skin shrinks;
Till the machine sinks gradual, and the man
Relapses into childhood.

The reader, I am sure, will excuse me for adding to these parallel passages of different poets, the following, that yields in merit to none of them, from the elegant and classical Mason:

Pride of the year, purpureal spring! attend,
And, in the cheek of these sweet innocents,
Behold thy beauties pictur'd. As the cloud
That weeps its moment from thy sapphire heaven,
They frown with causeless sorrow; as the beam
Gilding that cloud, with causeless mirth they smile.

Stay, pitying Time! prolong their vernal bliss.—
Alas! ere we can note it in our song
Came manhood's feverish summer, chill'd full soon
By cold autumnal care, till wintry age
Sink in the frore severity of death.

Engl. Garden, ii. 448.
Consilium quoque majus, et auctor est animi vis:
Post, ubi jam validis quassatum est viribus ævi
Corpus, et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus;
Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque, mensque:
Omnia deficiunt, atque uno tempore desunt.
Ergo dissolvi quoque convenit omnem animam
Naturam, ceu fumus in altas æris auras:
Quandoquidem gigni pariter, pariterque videmus
Crescere; et, ut docui, simul, ævo fessa, fatisci.
Huc adcedit, utei videamus, corpus ut ipsum
Subscipere inmaneis morbos, durumque laborem;
Sic animum curas acreis, luctumque, metumque:
Quâ re participem leti quoque convenit esse.
Quin etiam, morbis in corporis avius errat
Sæpe animus; dementit enim, deliraque fatur:
Interdumque gravi lethargo fertur in altum
Æternumque soporem, oculis, nutuque cadenti:
Unde neque exaudit voces, nec noscere voltus

Ver. 470. *Muss all dissolve, as smoke in ambient air.*
Thus Virgil, describing the retrocession of Eurydice:

Dixit, et ex oculis subito, ceu fumus in auras
Commixtus tenues, fugit diversa.

GEORG. iv. 499.

And in the same manner, Homer, delineating the flight of the ghost of Patroclus from his friend Achilles, with whom he had just had an interview:

*Like a thin smoke he sees the spirit fly,*
*And hears a feeble, lamentable cry.*
*In like manner, the royal Hebrew lyrist:
Let but God arise, dispersed are his enemies,*
*And they who hate him flee before his face:* *Like a drift of smoke are they driven away.*

Psalm lxviii. 1.

The original is peculiarly forcible:
Ripens in reason, till in equal hour,
As age o’ercomes, and every organ fails,
Fail too his mental powers: then raves the tongue,
The judgment raves, the total man declines,
And, in a moment, all alike expires.
Hence the whole nature of this reasoning frame
Must all dissolve, as smoke in ambient air,
Hence since, as urg’d above, all springs alike,
All ripens gradual, and together droops.

As, too, the body feels full oft the force
Of bitter pains, and many a huge disease—
So strives the mind with grief, and cruel care,
Hence prov’d partaker of one common fate.

In many an ill, moreo’er, the flesh sustains,
The judgment suffers: the distracted wretch
Now raving wild, and sinking, now profound
In stupid slumber; his fixt eye-balls stare,
His head hangs heavy, sound no more is heard,

Ver. 480. — *his fixt eye-balls stare,*
*His head hangs heavy, sound no more is heard.*]
Marchetti has well translated this passage:
Sommerso in alto e grave sonno eterno
Cade il volto su’l petto; e fissi in terra
Stan gli occhj, ond’ egli o le parole udire
O conosc’ i volti omai non pote
Di chi standog’ intorno e procurando
Di riscuotarlo in vita, afflitto e mesto
Bagna d’ amaro lagrime le gote.

To the same effect, a poet of our own country:
Vol. 1.

A sleep dull as the last—
On all the magazines of life did seize,
No more the blood its circling course did run;
But, in the veins, like icicles it hung.
No more the heart, now void of quick’ning heat,
The tuneful march of vital motion beat;
Stiffness did into all the sinews climb,
And a short death crept cold through every limb.

Oldham.

Ver. 481. — *sound no more is heard,*
*Nor the fond visage notic’d en of those,—*] The
Illorum potis est, ad vitam quei revocantes
Circumstant, lacrumis rorantes ora, genasque.
Qua re animum quoque dissolvi fateare, necesse est;
Quandoquidem penetrant in eum contagia morbi.
Nam, dolor ac morbus, leti fabricator uterque est:
Multorum exitio perdoctei quod sumus ante.

Denique, cor hominum quam vini vis penetravit
Acris, et in venas discessit diditus ardor;
Consequitur gravitas membrorum, præpediuntur
Crura vacillanti, tardescit lingua, madet mens,
Nant oculei; clamor, singultus, jurgia, gliscunt;
Et jam cætera de genere hoc, quæquamque sequuntur:
Quur ea sunt, nisi quod vehemens violentia viri
Conturbare animam consuevit corpore in ipso?
At, quæquamque queunt conturbari, inque pediri,

whole of this very accurate and pathetic picture is beautifully copied by Klopstock, but particularly this latter part of it.

---dem Sterbenden brechen die angen, und starren,
Seden nicht mehr. Ihm schwandet das antik der erd' und des himmels
Tief in die nacht. Er höret nicht mehr die stimme des menchen,
Noch die zärtliche klage der freundschaft.

Mess. b. v.

His loosening eyes no more behold the light;
Heaven, earth, and all things vanish into night.
The voice of man he hears not—nor the tongue,
Dear to his heart, with friendship once that rung,

Ver. 489. —*the pungent power of wine*

_Flits through the system, and the blood inflames._

Thus Homer:

---_κυκλάτα τις ἐν γας ἀποθεωσι._

_Odyssey, ix. 362._

Free flowed the circling wine through all the breast.

Ver. 491. _Why torpid grows each organ? reelseach limb?*

_Faulters the tongue? rebels the madd'ning mind? Why swim the eyes? and hiccough, noise and strife?_ Creche, for some unaccountable reason or another, has translated the term singultus by _sobs_, instead of _hiccough_, hereby equally deviating
Nor the fond visage notic’d e’en of those,
Who yet, yet calling back to life, bedew
With many a tear his mouth and checks suffus’d.
Hence must the mind too, with the body cease,
Since by diseases thus alike transfixt:
For grief, for sickness, equal, the dread work
Of death accomplish, as each hour confirms.

Why, too, when once the pungent power of wine
Flies through the system, and the blood inflames,
Why torpid grows each organ? reels each limb?
Faulters the tongue? rebels the madd’ning mind?
Why swim the eyes? and hiccough, noise and strife,
And each consociate ill their force combine?
Why but that deep the frantic bowl disturbs,
Ev’n in the body, the secluded mind?
But what can once be thus disturb’d—what once

from nature, and from his author. The drunken stupor alluded to in the first verse, is well delineated by Ovid, in the following:

Et stupeant multo corda sepulta mero.

Dead grows the bosom buried deep in wine.

The phrase “swimming eyes” is immediately imported into our own language from the Latin, and happily describes that undulatory motion which every one is sensible of in the commencement of fainting, or wherever there is an abrupt cessation, or even irregular influx of nervous power from the brain throughout the system. Thus Virgil, in painting the death of Eurydice:

Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.

Georg. iv. 496.
Fate calls, and sleep o’erpowers her swimming eyes.

In like manner, Homer:

Tell me, my soul, can this be Death?

Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be Death?

3 L 2
Significant, paullo si durior insinuarit
Causa, fore ut pereant, ævo privata futuro.

Quin etiam, subito, vi morbi sæpe coactus,
Ante oculos aliquis nostros, ut fulminis ictu,
Concidit, et spumas agit; ingemit, et tremit artus;
Desipit, extentat nervos, torquetur, anhelat
Inconstantem, et in jactando membra fatigat.

Nimirum, quà vis morbi, distracta per artus,
Turba agens animam, spumantis in æquore salso
Ventorum validis fervescunt viribus unde.

Exprimitur porro gemitus, quia membra dolore
Adficiuntur; et omnino quod semina vocis
Eliciuntur, et ore foras glomerata feruntur,
Quà quasi consuerunt, et sunt munita viai.

Desipientia fit, quà vis animi, atque animali,
Conturbatur, et, ut docui, divisa, seorsum
Disjectatur, eodem illo distracta veneno.

Inde, ubi jam morbi reflexit caussa, reditque
In latebras acer corrupti corporis humor;
Tum, quasi vacillans, primum consurgit, et omneis

Ver. 515. — the morbid cause declines,
And the fermenting humours from the heart
Flow back—] Till the late introduction
into medicine of the theories of vascular spasm, sthene-
nia and asthenia, and spirit of animation, the two
grand hypotheses into which the medical world was
divided, were the solid and humoral pathologies: the
former referring all diseases to some defect in the
solids, or vascular parts of the machine, whence the
fluids become only secondarily affected; and the
latter regarding a vitiation of the fluids themselves
as the original source of disorder; and conversely
contending, that whatever injury the vascular part
of the system might sustain, it was a consequential
or proegumenal, and not a procatalectic affection.
The act of secretion, under the latter system, was
Impeded—should the hostile power augment,
Must perish, doubtless, void of future days.

Oft, too, some wretch, before our startled sight,
Struck, as with lightning, by some keen disease,
Drops sudden:—by the dread attack o’erpower’d,
He foams, he groans, he trembles, and he faints;
Now rigid, now convuls’d, his labouring lungs
Heave quick, and quivers each exhausted limb.

Spread through the frame, so deep the dire disease
Perturbs his spirit; as the briny main
Foams through each wave beneath the tempest’s ire.
He groans since every member smarts with pain,
And from his inmost breast, with wontless toil,
Confus’d, and harsh, articulation springs.
He raves, since soul and spirit are alike
Disturb’d throughout, and sever’d each from each,
As urg’d above; distracted by the bane.

But when, at length, the morbid cause declines,
And the fermenting humours from the heart
Flow back—with stagg’ring foot the man first treads,

compared to that of fermentation; and the whole system was conceived to be a grand reservoir, in which a thousand different kinds of fermentation were taking place at the same time. Fevers, therefore, of every class, as well as most other diseases, were supposed to proceed from some vitiated fermentation, by which the whole mass of blood became tainted; and their cure consisted in an endeavour to expel such preternatural humours from the heart, and central parts of the animal machine, through some external opening; generally through the emunctories of the skin by profuse perspiration. It is to this humoral pathology that Lucretius refers in the passage before us. It is by far the oldest hypothesis, but has long been relinquished for others; yet with respect to many diseases, and especially of
Paullatim redit in sensus, animamque receptat.

Hæc igitur tantis ubi morbis corpore in ipso
Jactentur, miserisque modis, distracta, laborent;
Quur eadem credis, sine corpore, in aère aperto,
Cum validis ventis ætatem degere posse?

Et, quoniam mentem sanari, corpus ut áegrum,
Cernimus, et flecti, medicinâ posse videmus;
Id quoque præsagit mortalem vivere mentem.
Addere enim parteis, aut ordine trajicere, æquum est,
Aut aliquid prorsum de summâ detrahere hilum,
Conmutare animum quiquomque adoritur, et infit;
Aut aliam quam vis naturam flectere quærît.
At neque transferri sibi parteis, nec tribui, volt,
Inmortâle quod est, quidquam; neque defluere hilum.
Nam, quodquomque suis mutatum finibus exit,
Continuo hoc mors est illius, quod fuit ante.

Ergo animus, sive áegrescit, mortalia signa
Mittit, ut edocui; seu flectitur a medicinâ:
Usque adeo falsae rationis vera videtur
Res obcurrere, et ecfugium præcludere eunti;

the eruptive or exanthematic class, as small-pox, cow-pox, cancer, and siphylis, notwithstanding all the systems that have since been started, of different, and even contradictory tendencies, there are few which will be found to account for them more satisfactorily than the theory of fermentation.

Ver. 532. For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.] This is a position of which Lucretius makes a liberal and a happy use. It occurs twice in the first book, to wit, at verses 738, and 875, and once in book the
Led gradual on to intellect and strength.

Since, then, the soul such various ills endures,
E'en in this solid frame,—such various modes
Feels of severe distraction—canst thou deem,
In the wide air unshelter'd and forlorn,
Mid boistrous winds, it ever could exist?

And as the mind, like body, when diseas'd
Heals oft, and owns the genial pow'r of drugs,
Hence springs a proof that mind is mortal too.
For he the secret soul, or aught besides,
Who fain would change, must lessen or augment
Its primal atoms, or combine anew:
But things immortal ne'er can be transpos'd,
Ne'er take addition, or encounter loss.
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.

Sick'ning, or heal'd, then, by balsamic herbs,
The seeds of death alike the soul betrays.
So triumph facts o'er all the sophist's art
Ancipitique refutatu convincere falsum.

Denique, saepe hominem paullatim cernimus ire,
Et membratim vitalem deperdere sensum.
In pedibus primum digitos livescere, et ungueis;
Inde pedes, et crura, mori: post inde per artus
Ire alios tractim gelidi vestigia leti.
Scinditur atque animo hæc quoniam natura, nec uno
Tempore sincera exsistit, mortalis habenda est.
Quod, si forte putas ipsam se posse per artus
Introrsum trahere, et parteis conducere in unum,
Atque ideo cunctis sensum deducere membris;
At locus ille tamen, quo copia tanta animaï
Cogitur, in sensu debet majore videri:
Qui quoniam nusquam est, nimirum, ut diximus ante,
Dilaniata, foras dispargitur. Interit ergo.

Quin etiam, si jam lubeat concedere falsum,
Et dare, posse animam glomerari in corpore eorum,
Lumina quei linquunt moribundeï particulatim;
Mortalem tamen esse animam fateare, necesse est;
Nec refert, utrum percat dispersa per auras,
An, contracta suis e partibus, obbrutescat;
Quando hominem totum magis, ac magis, undique sensus
Deficit; et vitæ minus, et minus, undique restat.

Et, quoniam mens est hominis pars una, locoque
Fixa manet certo; velut aures atque oculeï sunt,
Precluding answer, doubly silenc’d here.

Oft man, moreo’er, by slow degrees, we mark,
Limb after limb consume: first the pale toes,
The nails grow livid; in succession next
The feet, and legs; till gradual, o’er the frame,
Creeps the chill track of death.—Since, then, the soul
Thus suffers, nor one moment can resist
Sound, and entire, its make must mortal prove.
But shouldst thou deem, when thus assail’d, it shrinks
Back through each member, to one point condens’d—
Then must that point, tow’rds which the soul retreats,
Throng with increas’d sensation: but as this
Time ne’er evinces, it must still disperse
Like tatter’d shreds by every wind destroy’d.

Yet grant the converse, and the soul allow
In those concentrates, gradual who decline;—
Say what imports it whether wide it waste
From limb to limb, or perish from one point?
Still more and more sensation fails, and life
Less and still less its dwindled power sustains.

Since, too, the mind forms part of man, and dwells
In one fixt spot, as dwells the eye or ear,
Atque alieis sensus, quae vitam quemque gubernant: 
Et, velutiei manus, atque oculus, naresve, seorsum, 
Secreta ab nobis, nequeunt sentire, neque esse: 
Secta etenim in parvo liquuntur tempore tabi: 
Sic animus per se non quit sine corpore, et ipso 
Esse homine, illius quasi quod vas esse videtur, 
Sive aliud quid vis potius connexius ei 
Fingere; quandoquidem connexu corpus adhæret. 

Denique, corporis, atque animi, vivata potestas, 
Inter se conjuncta, valent, vitâque fruuntur: 
Nec sine corpore enim vitaleis edere motus 
Sola potest animi per se natura; nec autem, 
Cassum animâ, corpus durare, et sensibus uti. 
Scilicet, avolsus radicibus ut nequit ullam 
Dispicere ipse oculus rem seorsum corpore toto; 
Sic anima, atque animus, per se nihil posse videtur: 
Nimirum, quia per venas et viscera mixtim, 
Per nervos atque ossa, tenentur corpore ab omni: 
Nec magnis intervallis primordia possunt 
Libera dissultare; ideo conclusa moventur

Ver. 557. Since, too, the mind forms part of man, 
and dwells 
In one spot, — That purer, and more 
concentrated collection of the soul, the fountain of 
al all the rest, that resides in the heart or praecordia, or, 
according to the moderns, in the brain, Lucretius 
denominates the mind, by way of pre-eminence; bestowing 
the name of soul more generally on the radi-
Or aught besides of sense that governs life;
And since, moreo’er, the sight, the hand, the nose,
Once sever’d from us feel not, nor exist,
Dissolving instant—so the mind alike
Lives not alone without th’ exterior frame,
Which like a vessel holds it, or aught else,
If aught there be, of bond compacter still.
So to the body cleaves th’ adhesive mind.

The vital pow’r, moreo’er, of each subsists
Alone conjoint, for mutual is their life.
Nor without body can the soul fulfil
Its destin’d functions, nor the body live
Of soul devoid, participant of sense.
As the bare eye, when rooted from its orb,
Sees nought around it, spirit thus and soul
Nought can accomplish singly;—hence diffus’d
Through every vessel, organ, bone, and nerve,
Of all that breathes. Nor part their primal seeds
With long interstice, fatal to the pow’r
Of resiliion; rather so confin’d,

Ver. 576. —Nor part their primal seeds
With long interstice, fatal to the pow’r
Of resiliion ——] To the doctrine main-
tained, relative to the flow of the blood through the
system, prior to the discovery of its circulation, I
have already briefly adverted in the note on ver.
406, of the present book. At the error of the
Greek physicians and philosophers, upon this subject,
we cannot be much surprised, when we regard the im-
pediments that they had to encounter, in the study and
pursuit of anatomy, upon which the whole depended.
Alexander, indeed, at Alexandria, at his own ex-
Sensiferos motus; quos, extra corpus, in auras
Aëris, haud possunt post mortem, ejecta, movere:
Propterea, quia non simili ratione tenentur.
Corpus enim atque animam serit aër, si cohibere
Sese anima, atque in eos poterit concludere motus,
Quos ante in nervis, et in ipso corpore, agebat.
Quâ re, etiam atque etiam, resoluto corporis omn
Tegmine, et ejectis extra vitalibus auris,
Dissolvi sensus animi fateare, necesse est,
Atque animam; quoniam conjuncta est caussa duobus.

Denique, quom corpus nequeat perferre animâ
Discidium, quin in tetro tabescat odore;
Quid dubitas, quin, ex imo penitusque coorta,
Emanarit, utei fumus, diffusa animæ vis?
Atque ideo tantâ mutatum putre ruinâ
Conciderit corpus penitus, quia mota loco sunt
Fundamenta; foras animâ emanante per artus,
Perque viarum omneis flexus, in corpore quei sunt,
Atque foramina? multimodis ut noscere possis
Dispartitam animæ naturam exisse per artus;

pence, accommodated Aristotle with dead subjects
for private experiments, and enforced the exhibition of
human skeletons in the public schools of the same city;
yet dissection was still generally conducted by stealth:
the simple touch of a dead body among the Greeks,
as among all other ancient nations, was regarded as a
defilement, and their cemeteries were always on the
outside of their city walls. The boldest artists and
experimentalists, and almost the only ones entitled
to notice at the period I am now speaking of, were
Hermophilus and Erasistratus, physicians who, upon
the death of Alexander, were warmly patronised by
Seleucus Nicanor. These iron-nerved anatomists,
indeed, were not contented with the contemplation of
the dry and imperfect study of a corpse: and hence,
with a curiosity that has been condemned as barba-
As sensile motions fits them best t’ excite:
Such as, at death, when mixt with vacant air,
’Twere vain t’ expect, of all restraint devoid.
For air itself must body first become
Compact and vital, ere the secret soul
Its pores can tenant, or those motions urge,
Urg’d, during life, through all the sentient frame.
Hence doubly flows it why the soul and mind,
One in themselves, of body when disrob’d,
And scatter’d boundless, instant should dissolve.

Since, too, the body the departed soul
Endures not, but with putrid smell decays,
Canst thou, then, doubt the soul, when thus effus’d,
Like smoke flies total, every seed disperst?
And that th’ external frame thus sinks desil’d
In putrid death, since from their wonted posts
Urg’d off, through every passage, every pore,
Press the percipient seeds, from every limb,
From every membrane o’er the system spread?
And seest thou not, from many a fact hence prov’d,

...
Et prius esse sibi distractam corpore in ipso,
Quam, prolabsa foras, enaret in aëris auras?

Quin etiam, fineis dum vitae vortitur intra,
Sæpe aliquâ tamen e causâ labefacta videtur
Ire anima, ac toto membratim corpore solvi;
Et quasi supremo languescere tempore voltus,
Molliaque exsangui cadere omnia corpore membra.

Quod genus est, animo male factum quom perhibetur,
Aut animam liquisse; ubi jam trepidatur, et omnes
Extremum cupiunt vitæ reprehendere vinclum.
Conquassatur enim tum mens, animæque potestas
Omnis; et hæc ipso cum corpore conlabefiunt:

Ut gravior paullo possit dissolvere caussa.

Quid dubitas tandem, quin, extra prodita corpus,
Inbecilla, foras, in aperto, tegmine dempto,
Non modo non omnem possit durare per ævom,
Sed minumum quod vis nequeat consistere tempus?

Nec sibi enim quisquam moriens sentire videtur
Ire foras animam incolomem de corpore toto;
Nec prius ad jugulum, et superas subcedere fauces;
Verum deficere in certâ regione locatam,
Ut sensus alios in partì quemque suâ scit
Dissolvi: quod, si inmortalis nostra foret mens,
That through the total body lives the soul,
And e’en in body severs, seed from seed,
Ere thence expell’d, and scatter’d into air?
E’en during life the fractur’d soul seems oft
From force abrupt half-hurried from her home;
Each vital function failing, and the face,
As though in death, all pallid, chang’d, and wan.
Such the deep swoon evinces, when within
Sinks the faint spirit, and each prostrate power
Pants for its final doom. Such then the force
That mind and body oft alike unnerves
That, but the least augmented, death ensues.

Can, then, the soul, thus impotent of frame,
When once disrob’d, abandon’d, and expos’d,
Through the wide air, to every boist’rous breeze,
Can it then triumph, dost thou firmly deem,
Not o’er all time, but e’en one moment live?

Nor do the dying e’er the soul perceive
Rush out entire, when exil’d from the heart,
The bronchial tube first filling, then the throat,
And mouth successive; but at once it fails
In its own region, as each sense alike
Fails in its destin’d theatre of power.
Non tam se moriens dissolvit conqueretur;
Sed magis ire foras, vestemque relinquere, ut anguis
[Gauderet, prælonga senex aut cornua cervus.]

Denique, quur animi numquam mens, consiliumque,
Gignitur in capite, aut pedibus, manibusve; sed unis
Sedibus, ac certis regionibus, omnibus hæret;

Ver. 624. Charm'd to throw off his vesture, like the
snake.] This phenomenon of the exfoliation of
the squamæ, or external cuticle of the snake, on
the return of Spring, is noticed by most natural
historians. Virgil alludes to it in the following lines:
Qualis ubi in lucem coluber, mala gramina pastus,
Frigida sub terrâ tumidum quem bruma tegebat;
Nunc positis novus exuvias, nitidusque juventâ,
Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga
Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trisulcis.
Aeneid ii. 471.

So shines, renew'd in youth, the crested snake,
Who slept the winter in a thorny brake;
And casting off his slough, when spring returns,
Now looks aloft, and with new glory burns.
Restor'd with poisonous herbs, his ardent sides
Reflect the sun, and rais'd on spires he rides:
High o'er the grass he hissing rolls along,
And brandishes, by fits, his fork'd tongue.
Dryden.

With this the reader may compare the description
of Avitus, which, if I be not much mistaken, is pos-
sessed of equal beauty:
Qualis vere novo, primis cum mensibus æstas
Promittit latos post frigora pigra tepores,
Evadens veterem reparatis motibus annum,
Et siccum nitido discingens corpore tegmen,
Procedit coluber; terrarumque abedita lingues
Præfert terribilis metuendum formæ decorum—
II. 126.

As when, in spring, returning heat prevails,
And leads o'er brumal snows, the tepid gales,
Fostering the face of Nature;—from the brake
When, with new vigour, bursts the polish'd
snake,
Clear'd of his spoils, and eager to display
His fearful beauties in the eye of day—

Pliny seems to have conceived, that this exfolia-
tion of the exuvia, or squammoso tunic of the snake
did not occur annually, but only upon the advance
of age; and that the serpent hereby, as though dis-
encumbered of a burden, acquired, even then, a con-
siderable re-possession of alacrity and vigour. Hist.
Nat. cap. viii. But later naturalists have noticed
the same fact as regularly recurring every spring, and in
some species of the coluber or viper, every spring
and autumn; and so complete is the cuticle exfoli-
ated, that even the external tunic of the eye is thrown
off at the same time. Snakes, however, are not the
only animals that suffer an annual loss and renovation
of some part of their organic structure. Our poet
alludes, in the adjoining verse, to the yearly exfoli-
ation and renewal of the antlers of the stag: and it
is now well known, that the lobster, and indeed, al-
mot all the cancer genus, as well as the common
spider, and many other insects of the Linnean class,
Aptera, part with their external crustaceous coat-
ing every year, generally between the months of May
and August; and are capable of regenerating a limb
or claw with great ease, upon losing it by acci-
dent.
Book III.  THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Were, too, its date immortal, man no more,
At his last hour, would mourn the sev'ring blow:
Charm'd to throw off his vesture, like the snake,
Or, like the stag his antlers, and be free.

Why, too, are wisdom, and the mind restrain'd
To one sole organ, while the feet, the hands,
These never gender? why but that each spot

This crustaceous coating is decided by Mr. Hatchett, to consist of a strong cartilage, hardened by a mixture of carbonat, and phosphat of lime, in consequence of which, it occupies a middle place between shell and bone, although principally inclining to the nature of shell; the distinguishing chemical character of which is carbonat of lime; while that of bone, as well as of the enamel of the teeth, is phosphat of lime. Philos. Trans. for 1800. See note on Book VI. 1101; as also, note on v. 668 of the present book.

Ver. 625. Or, like the stag his antlers,—] Pliny confirms this phenomenon of our poet, by observing, that "the males have horns, and are the only animals that lose them every year, at a certain period of the spring," Hist. Nat. cap. xxxii. And our own poet Waller alludes to the same fact, in the following verses:

So we some antique hero's strength
Learn by his lance's weight, and length;
As these vast beams express the beast
Whose shady brows alive they dress'd.
O fertile head! which, ev'ry year,
Could such a crop of wonders bear!
Which, might it never have been cast,
Each year's growth added to the last,
These lofty branches had supplied
The earth's bold sons' prodigious pride;
Heav'n with these engines had been scal'd
When mountains heap'd on mountains fail'd.

See, upon the same subject, the preceding note.

Ver. 626. Why, too, are wisdom, and the mind restrain'd
To one sole organ, while the feet, the hands
These never gender?——] The commentator upon Creech's translation, affirms the argument hence deduced, to be both false and irrelevant. The soul, contends Lucretius, is produced in one individual organ, and is never found in any other situation. "But birds," says the commentator, "are hatched in a nest, and yet live out of the nest; and a nut is produced upon a tree, and a grain of corn in the car, and yet they are kept in granaries." Yet what is there in all this to falsify our poet's position? Is it hence demonstrated, that "the mind is generated in the hands or the feet," or that, in opposition to what our poet urges in the succeeding verse, "each spot does not exist for some fixt purpose?" The whole that the commentator has advanced, can only be advanced by way of analogy,—and the most distant analogy too; for the resemblance, if minutely entered into, would fail in a variety of important particulars. "But the poet," adds he, "contradicts his own doctrine:" and, for the proof of this contradiction, we are referred to Book II. v. 1028 of this translation, where he asserts,

Thus all things rise, thus all again return,
Earth takes what earth bestow'd, and, back to heav'n,
Remount th' ethereal dews from heav'n that fell.

By some inexplicable error, this annotator appears to conceive, that Lucretius, in the last verse, refers to the mind or spirit, and that this would be
Si non certa loca ad nascundum reddita quoique
Sunt, et ubei quidquid possit durare creatum;
Atque ita, multimodis, pro totis artubus, esse;
Membrorum ut nusquam existat præposterus ordo?
Usque adeo sequitur res rem, neque flamma creari
Fluminibus solita est, neque in igni gignier algor.

Præterea, si inmortalis natura animaë est,

Et sentire potest, secreta a corpore nostro;
Quinque, ut opinor, eam faciundum est sensibus auctam:
Nec ratione alia nosmet proponere nobis
Possimus infernas animas Acherunte vagare.
Pictores itaque, et scriptorum secla priora,
Sic animas introduxerunt sensibus auctas.
Exists for some fixt function,—nor can e’er
Pervert its destin’d view? while, through the whole,
Nice order reigns by nought preposterous marr’d.
So flows the tide of things, nor water fire,
Through time, creates, nor fire the sparry frost.

Were, too, the soul immortal, and possesst
Of sentient powers when sever’d from the flesh,
Then with new organs must it, or we err,
Be instant re-endow’d; for thus alone
Th’ infernal shades can tread the shores of hell.
Thus painters feign them, and the bards renown’d
Of ancient times—thoughtless that eyes, and nose,

ouvertement la doctrine de l’immortalité de l’ame,
confessa, neanmoins, que si elle se dissipoit après la
morte, c’est, que ce qu’elle avoit de grossier, se
perdoit dans la terre, et, que ce qu’elle avoit de plus
subtil et de celeste, remontoit dans la troisième re-
gion de l’air ou dans le ciel. Le sentiment des sçava-
sans de la Chine sur ce point, ressemble tout-à-fait à
celui de Lucrece : ils s’expliquent à peu pres comme
lui.

Ver. 632. So flows the tide of things, nor water
fire,] It is on this, and several following
verses, that Polignac observes with exultation :
Ergo particule panis, quem fortè voratum,
Digestumque suo suscepit sanguis in alveo,
Si pedibus cessere tuis, ratione carebunt ;
Pectoris et medium regionem si tetigere,
Quà nostræ placuit tibi mentis templo locari,
Tune disceptabunt de mundo et origine rerum,
Ac de sorte suâ: sint corpora dedita leto,
Necne; quíd ad vitam possit conferre beatam :

Jus populis dicent, ornabunt legibus orbem :
Invidia quam natura negat, positura dabit vim.
Res peregræ adveniens id, quo caret ipsa, pro-
pinquæ
Tradet; et accipiet quod non habet ille, vicissim
Pro pudor! hæc tandem est doctæ sapientia sectæ.

Ver. 634. Were, too, the soul immortal, and possesst,
&c.] This passage is consonant with
the following of equal beauty in Catullus :
Sed quid ego ignaris nequidquam conqueror auris
Externata nalo? quæ, nullis sensibus auctæ,
Nec missas audire quenunt, nec reddere voces.

Ver. 639. Thus painters feign them, and the bards
renown’d
Of ancient times—] And what was thus the
opinion and usage of bards and painters of ancient
At neque seorsum oculi, neque nares, nec manus ipsa
Esse potest animâ, neque seorsum lingua; neque aures
Auditum per se possunt sentire, neque esse.

Et, quoniam toto sentimus corpore inesse
Vitalem sensum, et totum esse animale videmus;
Si subito medium celeri præciderit ictu
Vis aliqua, ut seorsum partem secernat utramque,
Dispartita procul dubio quoque vis animai,
Et discissa simul cum corpore, disicietur.
At, quod scinditur, et parteis discedit in ullahs,
Scilicet æternam sibi naturam abnuit esse.

Falciferos memorant currus abscidere membra
Sæpe ita de subito, permixtâ caede calenteis,
And hands, and mouth, to the divided soul
Can ne’er pertain, nor e’en the sense of sound.

And since the total system soul pervades,
And vital action—when some blow severe
Midway divides it, part from part, abrupt,
Then must the soul alike be cleft in twain,
Driv’n with the mangled body. But what thus
Admits partition, and to foreign force
Yields e’en but once, immortal ne’er can be.

Oft, arm’d with scythes, the warlike car, we read,
Hot with repeated slautthers, so abrupt

stance with the body; spiritualized, etherialized or
attenuated, but material still.

Ver. 642. ——nor e’en the sense of sound.] The
indefatigable vigilance of Mr. Wakefield has restored
the true reading of the original of this verse, which
the unblushing boldness of some early editor, who
has been idly followed by others, contorted to his
own fancy, in opposition to all the books of best and
surest authority. In the common editions, we meet
with it thus:

Alsque animal per se possunt sentire nec esse.

In Mr. Wakefield’s edition, corrected from copies
of undoubted accuracy:

Auditum per se possunt sentire neque esse.

Ver. 650. Oft, arm’d with scythes, the warlike car,
we read,
Hot with repeated slaughters, &c.—] This powerful
instrument, which was in use amongst almost all
the ancient nations, is found too unwieldy for mo-
dern tactics, and has been relinquished for ages. Of
the form of those employed by Cyrus, Xenophon
gives us the following description. Instit. 1. vi.

Ver. 645. 645
Pole ματηρία κατεσκευαζον αιματα τριχων, τι αιχθων, με
με ραδιον συντρεπται, αυξη τι μεγαλων, κτων γαρ αικ-
τριται ποιαν τα πλαταν, τοι δε δειξε τους κινησι ετε-
σω, άσπερ πυρην, ιερουργων ξυλων, &c. “He provided
himself with warlike chariots, with strong wheels,
to prevent their being easily broken, and large ax-
le-trees, to prevent their being overthrown. The dri-
er’s seat was formed of the toughest timber, and of
the height of the elbow, that he might govern his
horses with freedom from the box on which he sat.
The charioteers themselves were armed from head to
foot. To the axle-trees on either side of the wheels
he fastened scythes of steel, two cubits in length;
while others were placed beneath the axle, inclining
towards the ground, as if he meant to drive over, and
trample his enemies to dust with this kind of cha-
riot.” In the wars between the Hebrews and their
Ut tremere in terrâ videatur ab artubus id quod
Decidit abscisum; quom mens tamen, atque hominis vis, 645
Mobilitate mali non quit sentire dolorem:
Et, simul in pugnâ studio qui dedita mens est,
Corpore cum reliquo pugnam, cædeisque, petessit:
Nec tenet, amissam lævam cum tegmine sâpe
Inter equos abstraxe rotas, falcesque rapaceis:
Nec ceclidisse alius dextram, quom scandit, et instat.
Inde alius conatur adempto surgere crure,
Quom digitos agitat propter moribundus humi pes:

enemies, but more particularly the Canaanites, the
same sort of warlike car was continually made use of:
and Cowley has given us no inaccurate description of
it in his Davidis:

Here, with worse noise, three thousand chariots
pass,
With plates of iron bound, or louder brass.
About it axes, forks, and scythes and spears,
Whole magazines of death, each chariot bears.
Where it breaks in, there a whole troop it mows,
And with loft-painting limbs the field bestrews.
Alike the valiant, and the coward die:
Nor that can e'er resist, nor this can fly. B. iv.

It is said, however, that Cowley is, in this passage,
guilty of an anachronism; and the paragraph I have
now quoted from Xenophon, is appealed to as a proof
that Cyrus was the inventor of falcated chariots: yet
it is difficult to understand in any other sense the
"flaming" or "glittering war-chariots,
so often made mention of, and so confidently relied
upon in the books of Joshua and Judges; and which,
although commonly translated by the doubtful phrase,
"chariots of iron," are rendered by the vulgate
"carrus falcati," "chariots falcated," or "armed with
scythe." The war-chariots employed in the time
of Nahum, at which period it is certain that the Jews
were acquainted with the use of scythe-chariots, are
described by the same sublime figure of flaming or
radiant: thus, Neh. ii. 3.

"His chariots are flaming scythes in the day of his
preparation."

Ver. 657. Whirl'd in the strife of coursers, and of
cars.] This dreadful confusion of combatants, horses, and chariots, is well represented by
Virgil:

Tum vero et gemitus morientum, et sanguine in alto
Armaque, corporaque, et permisi cæde virorum
Semianimes volvuntur equi: pugna aspera surgit.

Æn. 11. 653.

Now dying groans are heard; the fields are strew'd
With falling horses, and are drunk with blood:
Arms, horses, men, on heaps together lie;
Confus'd the sight, but more confus'd the cry.

Dryden.

It is still more powerfully delineated by the He-
bew prophet, Nahum:
The clamour of the rattling wheels,
And of the prancing horses,
And of the rebounding chariots!—
His bright sword, and his radiant spear
Severs a limb, that o’er the field it lies
With life long quiv’ring, while the hero still
Fights on of pain unconscious: his high soul
Absorb’d so total, he nor heeds the loss
Of his broad shield, or shield-supporting hand,
Whirl’d in the strife of coursers, and of cars.
From this the sword-arm drops, while still the rock
He climbs impetuous; that, perchance, to earth
Fell’d, on one leg yet vainly strives to rise;
While, at his side, his amputated foot

The horseman lifteth up alike.
Numerous the slain! innumerable the dead bodies!
Yea, no end of the carcases!
Over their carcases they stumble.

Ver. 654. From this the sword-arm drops,—[]
Thus, Homer:

The trembling fingers yet the faulchion strain,
And threaten still th’ intended stroke in vain.

In the following passage of Ercilla, which describes the wretched remains of the Spanish army on entering the city of Conception, after its total defeat and rout by the brave Lautaro, there is a force and spirit which will amply justify its insertion:

Puedese imaginair qual llegarian
Del trabajo y heridas maltratados,
Algunos casi rostros no traian,
Otros los traen de golpes levantados.
Del infierno parece que salian,
No hablan, ni responden elevados,
A todos con los ojos rodeavan,
Y mas callando el dano declaravan.

Araucan. Cant. vii.

Their entrance in these walls let fancy paint,
O’erwhelm’d with anguish, and with labour faint:
These, gash’d with ghastly wounds, those, writh’d
With pain,
And some their human semblance scarce retain;
They seem’d unhappy spirits ‘scap’d from hell,
Yet wanting voice their misery to tell.
Their pangs, to all, their rolling eyes express,
And silence most declares their deep distress.

Hayley.
Et caput, abscisum calido viventeque trunco,
Servat humi vol tum vitalem, oculosque patenteis;
Donec reliquias animai reddidit omnes.

Quin etiam, tibi si, linguae vibrante, minanti
Serpentis caudâ, et procero corpore, utrumque
Sit lubitum in multas parteis discidere ferro;
Omnia jam seorsum cernes, amcisa recenti
Volnere, tortari, et terram conspargere tabo;
Ipsam seque retro partem petere ore priorem,
Volneris ardentí, ut morsu premat, icta dolore.

Omnibus esse igitur totas dicemus in illis
Particulis animas? at eâ ratione sequetur
Unam animantem animas habuisse in corpore multas.
Ergo divisa est ea, quae fuit una simul cum...

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Ver. 662. — Thus, too, the head,
Whene'er discover'd from the vital trunk,
Still keeps its look of life, with open eye
Still stares,—[Mr. Wakefield, and not without reason, thinks he again beholds Virgil turning his eye towards this passage of Lucretius, in the following verses:

Tum caput orantis nequicquam, et multa parantis
Dicere, deturbat terræ:

The trunkless head he hurl'd along the shore,
Beseeching still, and still prepar'd to implore.

Whether Virgil, however, copied from Lucertius, or not, there can be no doubt that Camoens did so in the following passage:

Cabeças pelo campo vam saltando
Brávos, pernas, sem dono, e sem sentido,

E doutros as entranhas palpitando,
Palida a cor, e gesto amorticido.

Lusíad, Cant. iii.

Arms sever'd from the trunks still grasp the steel,
Heads glistening roll, the fighting squadrons reel;
Faintly and weak with languid arms they close,
And staggering grapple with the staggering foes.

Mickle.

Yet the idea of the severed parts of the body, retaining for some time sensation and muscular action, is, perhaps, no where more boldly exhibited than in the following stanza of Dr. Grainger's ballad of Bryan and Pyreene. Returning from England to his native isle, and perceiving the fond fair one on the shore which the ship was slowly approaching, the impetuous lover leaps into the sea to accelerate his embraces:
Its trembling toes still moves. Thus, too, the head, Whene'er dissever'd from the vital trunk, Still keeps its look of life, with open eye Still stares, till all the gradual soul expire.

So should thy blade some serpent's length of tail Divide, quick-brandishing its furious tongue, The sever'd parts writhe, agoniz'd, and broad Scatter the purple fluid; while himself Looks round revengeful, and, from pain severe, Gnashes the segments of his mangled frame.

Shall we then say that each divided part A perfect soul contains? then with such souls The total form, ere injur'd, must have throng'd. Hence severs, then, the soul, though close combin'd,

When ah! a shark bit through his waist, His heart's blood dy'd the shore. He shriek'd!—his half sprang from the main, Streaming with purple gore.

Ver. 666. So should thy blade some serpent's length of tail Divide, quick-brandishing its furious tongue, The sever'd parts writhe, agoniz'd,—] Our poet's description of the wounded snake, as of every other natural fact, is accurate and unimpeachable, for he at all times draws from Nature herself. The pertinacious adherence of life to many animals, is truly wonderful. I have already observed, that in worms, polypi, and several other reptiles of the same simplicity of frame, a division of the body, instead of destroying life, augments it, as every section becomes a distinct and perfect animal. Lobsters, crabs, spiders, and various others, again, although not capable of propagating life by sections, have an astonishing power of reproducing their mangled or amputated members. I have noticed, in a former place, that the land-tortoise will live six months after being deprived of its brain; and Redi informs us, that in several instances he has known it survive for three or four and twenty days after the separation of its head from its body. The pertinacity to life in the snake is not equal to this, but it approximates it by the length of time every segment will retain, not merely irritability, but animation. There is a kind of fury and vivacity which naturalists have noticed in every fragment of this reptile, that is scarcely paralleled by any other animal. Its heart will continue to beat for thirty hours after its death.
Corpore: quapropter mortale utrumque putandum est;
In multas quioniam parteis disciditur æque.

Præterea, si inmortalis natura animaï
Constat, et in corpus nascentibus insinuatur;
Quur super ante actam ætatem meminisse nequimus,
Nec vestigia gestarum rerum ulla tenemus?
Nam, si tanto opere est animi mutata potestas,
Omnium ut actarum exciderit retinentia rerum;
Non, ut opinor, id ab leto jam longiter errat.
Quapropter fateare necesse est, quæ fuit ante,
Interiisse; et, quæ nunc est, nunc esse creatam.

Ver. 679. Grant, too, the soul immortal, and infus'd,
At earliest birth, within us,—whence, resolve,
This full oblivion of all past events,—] Our poet
now proceeds, with much dexterity, to attack the op-
inions of all those philosophers, who contended either
for a state of pre-existing, or a metempsychosis; doc-
trines which were peculiarly espoused by Pythagoras
and Plato, who conceived that human souls, which
consisted of a divine idea, united to a portion of the
soul of the world, were created long anterior to the
generation of the corporeal frame, and, residing in
some other sphere than the earth, stood prepared to
enter, at a moment's warning, into the microscopic
body of the human embryo, at the first instant of
conception. The difficulty of admitting the imme-
diate presence of the Creator, in every act of copu-
tation, however unhallowed and impure, for the pur-
pose of providing an immaterial spirit for the occa-
sion, has driven many immaterialists of modern times
into a similar belief. But if the soul, the thinking
principle, did pre-exist, how then, as Lucretius justly
inquires, can it have lost its total knowledge of all
prior transactions? and how again, if it have done so,
can it be otherwise than a new, and altogether differ-
et being in the body, from what it was in its state
of anterior existence? since consciousness is the sole
foundation of all personal identity. From the per-
plexity introduced by these queries among ancient
philosophers, there was but one mode of clear escape;
and that was by cutting the Gordian knot that en-
tangled them, and boldly contending, that all con-
sciousness of such pre-existence was not lost; and
that many of the transactions which had occurred in
it, may be recalled to recollection by any man who
will enter deeply into the study of the whole of his
anterior being. This was denominated by Plato the
doctrine of reminiscence, and was one of the most im-
portant tenets of the Academic philosophy. Em-
pedocles and Pythagoras advanced still farther; and
hardly declared, not only that they had existed an-
tecedently, and had a general idea of such existence,
and the facts with which it was accompanied, but
that they recollected, most perfectly, the very names
of the persons whose bodies they had at distinct pe-
riods inhabited. The former, indeed, for every purpose
of general information, had been particularly fortunate;
Book III. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Anterior, with the body; and hence, too,
Both must alike be mortal, since alike
To parts divisible with equal ease.

Grant, too, the soul immortal, and infus’d,
At earliest birth, within us—whence, resolve,
This full oblivion of all past events,
All former life?—for if the soul so change,
That nought remains of mem’ry in its make,
A change so total differs scarce from death.
Thus, what before existed, must have ceas’d,
And on its ruins sprung what now exists.

for he had been in both sexes of the human race, as
well as in the bodies of birds and fishes. While the
latter maintained, that he had been present at, and
had partaken in the toils of the Trojan war, occupying
at that period the body of Euphorbus, who was
slain by Menelaus; that he was afterwards infused
into the body of another hero, of the name of Aetha-
lides: that he then possessed the corporeal tabernacle
of a fisherman; that he afterwards resided, for more
than two centuries, in the lower regions without any
body at all; and that, at the expiration of this pe-
riod, he was transmitted to the body of Pythagoras
himself. Ridiculous as such a belief may appear at
the present day, the metempsychosis was a doctrine
accredited very generally in earlier periods: it was a
tenet in the creed of the aborigines of our own coun-
try, and still continues to form a part of the belief
of the worshippers, both of Brahma and Budha;
and, of course, to form an article of the established
religions of Hindu, Thibet, Ava, and Ceylon.

In the second volume of Dalrymple’s Oriental
Repertory, is a most curious and entertaining paper
on “Transmigration and Final Beatitude,” as taught
by the Bramins. This paper composes a part of
the Institutes of Menu, which were translated from
the Sanskrit by Sir William Jones, and printed at
Bengal, at the East-India Company’s expense. It
is a compendium of the different states and bodies
mankind are to occupy hereafter, agreeably to a re-
gulation dependent upon the moral conduct they
exhibit in the present life. “For sinful acts,” says
Bhrigu, whose heart was the pure essence of virtue,
“for sinful acts, that are mostly corporeal, a man
shall assume, after death, a vegetable or mineral
form: for such acts, mostly verbal, the form of a
bird or a beast; and for sinful acts, mostly mental,
the lowest of human conditions,” &c.

Ver. 684. A change so total differs scarce from death.
Thus, what before existed, must have ceas’d,
And on its ruins sprung what now exists.—"]
A similar position is advanced in ver. 534, of the
present book; to the notes on which I refer the
reader.
Præterea, si, jam perfecto corpore, nobis
Inferri solita est animi vivata potestas,
Tum, quom gignimur, et vitæ quom limen inimus;
Haud ita conveniebat, utei cum corpore, et unâ
Cum membris, videatur in ipso sanguine cresse:
Sed, velut in caveâ, per se sibi vivere solam
Convenit, ut sensu corpus tamen adfluat omne.
Quâ re, etiam atque etiam neque originis esse putandum est
Experteis animas, nec leti lege solutas:
Nam neque tanto opere adnecti potuisse putandum est
Corporibus nostris, extrinsecus insinuatas;
(Quod fieri totum contra manifesta docet res:
Namque ita connexa est per venas, viscera, nervos,
Ossaque, utei dentes quoque sensu participentur;
Morbus ut indicat, et gelidaì stringor aquaì,
Et lapis obpressus subitis e frugibus asper)
Nec, tam contextæ quom sint, exire videntur
Incolomes posse, et salvas exsolvere sese
Omnibus e nervis, atque ossibus, articulisque.

Quod, si forte putas, extrinsecus insinuatam,
If the light soul, moreo'er, then only join
The full-form'd body, when that body first
Springs into birth, and treads the porch of life,
Ne'er can it then, as though diffus'd at large,
E'en with the vital blood, through all the frame,
Grow with each growing member: but confin'd,
As in a den, in solitude must dwell,
From the first hour exciting equal sense.
Hence doubly flows it, souls can ne'er exist
Of birth devoid, nor free from final fate.
Nor could they, as each daily fact confirms,
If from without infus'd, the total frame
Fit with such nice precision: for so close
Blend they with every organ, bone, and nerve,
That e'en th' enamel'd tooth sensation shares;
As oft its ache evinces, or th' approach
Of ice abrupt; or when, beneath its gripe,
Grates some harsh pebble mid the subject food.
Nor thus connected could they e'er retreat
Safe, and uninjur'd through the sinuous paths
Of organs, membranes, vessels, bones, and nerves.

But, from without, th' insinuating soul,

The young disease, that must subdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength;
So cast, and mingled with his very frame
The mind's disease, its ruling passion came.

Permanere animam nobis per membra solere:
Tanto quoique magis, cum corpore fusa, perbit.
Quod permanat enim, dissolvitur: interit ergo.
Dispartita ergo per caulas corporis omnes,
(Ut cibus, in membra atque artus quam ducitur omnes,
Disperit, atque aliam naturam subficit ex se)
Sic anima atque animus, quam vis integra recens in
Corpus eunt, tamen in manando dissoluuntur,
Dum, quasi per caulas, omnes diduntur in artus
Particulæ, quibus hæc animi natura creatur:
Quæ nunc in nostro dominatur corpore, nata
Ex illà, quæ tunc perirat, partita per artus.

Quapropter, neque natali privata videtur
Esse die natura animae, nec funeris expers.

Semina præterea linquentur, necne, animaï
Corpore in examino? Quod, si linquentur, et insunt,

Ver. 711. For what thus flows diffusive, must dissolve,
And perish, doubtless, fore'd through every pore.] Such, as I have already observed, was the actual opinion of our poet respecting the soul, or sensorial power which he conceived to be generally diffused over the whole system, enlivening every individual point with the animating aura derived from the central fountain of the bosom. This, he supposed, to be exhausted by fatigue, whether external or internal, to be renewed by the inspiration of the vital gasses of atmospheric air, and to be accumulated by relaxation, or rest. Those who are acquainted with the physiology of Dr. Darwin, will trace a strong resemblance between this wasting and accumulating sensorial power of Epicurus, and his own spirit of animation; of both, it may be equally said:

—in nostris membris et corpore toto
Mixta latens animi vis est, animaque potestas.

Lib. iii. 277.

Virgil appears to have imitated the passage now under consideration, in the following:
If still thou deem through all this frame diffus’d,
Then, since diffus’d, much surer must it fail;
For what thus flows diffusive, must dissolve,
And perish, doubtless, forc’d through every pore.
As vanish foods, through every mazy gland,
Through every limb when urg’d, to different forms
Converting gradual, so the mind, the soul
Howe’er entire, when first the flesh it meets
Dissolves by junction; for through every sluice,
Through every organ intricate and fine,
Must percolate its atoms, sever’d hence,
And decompos’d,—and hence the base alone
Of that which after sways th’ external frame.
Thus must the soul a natal day possess,
And final grave, an origin and end.
Fly, too, at death, the soul’s pure seeds entire,
Or with the body are there still that rest?

—abditaque intus
Spiramenta animæ lethali vulnere rupit.
Æn. ix. 579.
The forceful spear with mortal wound sinks deep,
And drives the soul through all its latent pores.

Ver. 724. Fly, too, at death, the soul’s pure seeds entire,
Or with the body are there still that rest?] Doctor Priestley, and some other materialists, seem to have conceived, in order to account the better for personal identity and responsibility, in a future state, that the few elementary atoms that compose the embryon and incipient frame of every man, adhere to him through life, continue undissipated in his grave, and will again constitute an essential part of him at the resurrection. This idea, however, is so repugnant to all the known and admitted laws of animal being, that it cannot be supported for a moment. It is allowed by all physiologists, that every atom of the human body is perpetually, though imperceptibly, wearing away, and its place supplied by fresh atoms introduced in the form of food; and that hence, in process of time, every man is, as to his physical frame, a being altogether different from what he was formerly, having no one corpuscle...
Haud erit, ut merito inmortalis possit haberi:
Partibus amissis quoniam libata recessit.
Sin ita, sinceris membris ablata, profugit,
Et nullas parteis in corpore liquerit ex se;
Unde cadavera rancenti jam viscere vermeis
Exspirant? atque unde animantum copia tanta,
Exos et exsanguis, tumidos perfluctuat artus?
Quod, si forte animas extrinsecus insinuari
Vermibus, et privo si corpore posse venire,
Credis; nec reputas, quor milia multa animarum
Conveniant, unde una recesserit: hoc tamen est, ut
If aught remain, then idly must thou deem
The soul immortal, since diminish'd thus,
And shorn of substance; but if all escape,
If not an atom loiter—whence, I ask,
Rears the putrescent carcase, in its womb,
The race of worms? or sport o'er every limb
The boneless, bloodless crowds of things unnam'd?
If from without thou deem their souls they draw,
To each a soul entire, unheeding here
What throngs must flock where dwelt but one before,

can a plea of this kind be expected to be admitted in
exculpation of prior guilt before the tremendous
bar of the Almighty, whatever be the theory of ma-
terialism or immaterialism adopted upon this sub-
ject.

Ver. 732. The boneless, bloodless crowds of things
unnam'd?] Thus Bope:

Those half-learn'd witlings, numerous in our isle,
As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;
Unfinish'd things one knows not what to call,
Their generation's so equivocal.

Essay on Criticism.

So, Virgil, in describing the production of swarms
of bees from the putrid carcase of a bullock slaugh-
tered and properly prepared for the purpose:

Sie positum in clauso linquent; et ramea
costis
Subjiciunt fragmenta, thymum, casiasque recentes.
Hoc geriur, zephyris primum impellentibus
undas,
Ante novis rubeant quam prata coloribus, ante
Garnula quam tignis nidam suspendat hirundo.
Interess teneris tepfectus in ossibus humor
Æstuat: et visenda modis animalia miris,
Vol. I.

Trunca pedum primo, mox et stridentia pennis
Miscentur, tenuenique magis, magis æra carpunt.

GEORG. IV. 302

There leave immur'd, and o'er the carcase spread
Boughs and fresh sweets that thyme and cassia shed.
Thus, all prepar'd, when first young zephyr
laves
His sportive pinions in the vernal waves,
Ere flowrets blush on earth's enamell'd breast,
Or swallows twitter in their rafter'd nest.
Meanwhile the moisture, with fermenting strife,
Boils in the tender bones, and teems with life;
First on the sight, all-wondrous to behold,
Forms without feet, a shapeless growth unfold;
Anon the mingled swarms for flight prepare,
Buzz on the wing, and feel the buoyant air.

Sotheby.

Upon the subject of equivocal generation and
spontaneous vitality, its general belief in former pe-
riods, and the observations of modern natural histo-
rions, which have tended to revive the doctrine,
and to give it additional plausibility, see note on Book
11. 873. The argument of our poet, however, will
here also, as well as on a former occasion, hold
equally good, whether the system espoused be that
of spontaneous vitality, or sexual generation alone.

? P
Quærundum videatur, et in discrimen agundum;
Utrum tandem animæ venentur semina quæque
Vermiculorum, ipsæque sibi fabricentur, ubei sunt:
An quasi corporibus perfectis insinuentur.

At neque, quur faciant ipsæ, quâ reve laborent,
Dicere subpeditat; neque enim, sine corpore quom sunt,
Solicitæ volunt morbis, aliquque, fameque:
Corpus enim magis hiis viis, et fine, laborat;
Et mala cuncta animus contagi fungitur ejus.
Sed tamen hiis esto quam vis facere utile corpus,
Quod subeant; at, quâ possint, via nulla videtur:
Haud igitur faciunt animæ sibi corpora, et artus.
Nec tamen est, quâ cum perfectis insinuentur
Corporibus: neque enim poterunt subtiliter esse
Connexæ; neque consensu contagia fient.

Denique, quur acris violentia triste leonum
Seminium sequitur, volpeis dolus; et fuga cervis
A patribus datur, et patrius pavor incitat artus?
Et jam cætera de genere hoc, quur omnia membris
Ex ineunte ævo generascunt, ingenioque;
Si non, certa suo quia semine, seminioque,
Vis animi pariter crescit cum corpore quoque?
Quod, si inmortalis foret, et mutare soleret
Pause yet one moment ere thou thus resolve:  
Such souls must, then, the vermin seeds themselves  
Have wise-selected, and their fabrics rear’d,  
Or into bodies enter’d ready form’d.  
But nor can reason, if themselves have rais’d  
The wretched buildings, for the toil account,  
Nor tell why thus for hunger, and disease,  
And shivering cold they thirst, or aught besides  
Of ill the body to the soul supplies.  
Yet grant them anxious for such vile abodes,  
Still must the structure far exceed their powers,  
Hence rear’d not by themselves. Nor from without  
Could they insinuate into bodies form’d;  
Since nor adapted to their sinuous pores,  
Nor fram’d for intercourse, and mutual act.  

Whence springs the fury that pervades throughout  
The ruthless breed of lions? whence the craft  
The fox evinces, or the stag’s wild fear,  
From sire to son through every race propell’d?  
Whence these and equal passions trac’d at large,  
From life’s first dawn, generic, through each class?  
Whence but that some fixt power of mind descends,  
E’en with the lineal seed, through all begot,  
Evolving gradual with the gradual growth?  
For were the soul immortal, changing oft
Corpora, permixtis animantes moribus essent:
Ecfugeret canis Hyrcano de semine sæpe
Cornigeri incursum cervi; tremeretque, per auras
Aëris, adcipiter, fugiens, veniente columbâ:
Desiperent homines, saperent fera secla ferarum.

Illud enim falsâ fertur ratione, quod aiunt
Inmortalem animam mutato corpore flecti;
Quod mutatur enim, dissolvitur: interit ergo:
Trajiciuntur enim partes, atque ordine migrant;
Quà re dissolvi quoque debent posse per artus,
Denique ut intereant, unà cum corpore, cunctæ.

Sin animas hominum dicent in corpora semper
Ire humana, tamen quæram, quur e sapienti
Stulta queat fieri, nec prudens sit puer ullus;
Nec tam doctus equæ pullus, quam fortis equi vis?
Si non, certa suo quia semine, seminioque,
Vis animi pariter crescit cum corpore quoque.
Scilicet in tenero tenerascere corpore mentem

Ver. 751. Whence springs the fury that pervades
throughout
The ruthless breed of lions?—[This, also,
is an argument, and by no means an unsuccessful one,
advanced against the disciples of Pythagoras, Em-
pedocles, and Plato. See, on this subject, the note
on verse 681 of the present book.

Ver. 762. —the Hyrcanian dog]
Hyrcania is a country in Asia on the borders of
the Caspian sea. It is covered, in many places,
with immense and untravelled woods, which are
filled with tigers, and other beasts of prey. Gra-
tius (Cyneag. 161) reports, that the domestic
bitch of the country often copulates with the
To diff'rent bodies, diff'rent tempers, then,
Must mark each order: the Hyrcanian dog
Oft, then, must dread the high-horn'd stag's approach;
Hawks fly from doves, e'en man himself turn brute,
And the brute tribes, prepost'rous, rule the world.

Nor heed the sophistry which here contends
That souls oft change the body's change to meet:
For that which changes must dissolve, and die,
Sever'd its parts, its order all destroy'd.
Hence souls must, too, dissolve through ev'ry limb,
And with the body share one common fate.

But shouldst thou urge that human souls their flight
To human forms restrain—then, since once wise,
To folly why relapse? why spring not boys
Replete with wisdom? nor displays the colt
The skilful paces of the steed mature?
Why but that some fixt power of mind descends
E'en with the lineal seed through all begot,
Evolving gradual with the gradual growth?
Nor think the soul, too, weakens in a weak,

male tiger, and that the breed is peculiarly ferocious. Pliny and Cicero both make mention
of this Hyrcanian dog, and speak of it as a most noble animal. Nat. Hist. viii. 61. Tusc. Quest.
i. 46.
To the tiger of the same country, Shakspeare also refers in that well-known address of Macbeth to the
ghost of Banquo:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or Hyrcanian tyger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble.
Confugient: quod si jam fit, fateare necesse est
Mortalem esse animam; quoniam, mutata per artus
Tanto opere, amittit vitam, sensumque priorem.

Quove modo poterit, pariter cum corpore quoque
Confirmata, cupitum ætatis tangere florem
Vis animi, nisi erit consors in origine primâ?
Quidve foras sibi volt membris exire senectis?
An metuit conclusa manere in corpore putri?
An, domus ætatis spatio ne fessa vetusto
Obruat? at non sunt jam inmortali ulla pericla.

Denique, connubia ad Veneris, partusque ferarum,
Esse animas præsto, deridiculum esse videtur;
Exspectare inmortaleis mortalia membra
Innumero numero, certareque præpropteranter
Inter se, quæ prima, potissimaque, insinuetur:
Si non forte ita sunt animarum foedera pacta,
Ut, quæ prima volans advenerit, insinuetur
Prima, neque inter se contendant viribus hilum.

Denique, in æthere non arbor, non æquore in alto
Nubes esse queunt, nec pisces vivere in arvis,

Ver. 792. What, too, so idle, as that souls should
strive
Round each vile intercourse, or beast that bears.
I have already glanced at this argument in the note
on ver. 691, of the present book; and observed that
the soul, if immaterial, must either pre-exist in some
other state than the present world, in some magazine
prepared for the purpose, ready to take its
flight, and unite itself with the incipient body at a
moment’s warning, which was the opinion of Py-
thagoras and Plato; or, that the Creator must be es-
sentially present and occupied during every intercourse
And puny system, since most surely then
Doom’d to destruction; by the change sustain’d
Shorn of its vigour, and interior sense.

Why, if endear’d not by one common birth,
Thus should it pant in equal hour to reach
Perfection with the body? or, revers’d,
Why long for freedom when the frame decays?
Fears, then, the soul confinement after death
Mid the soul members? or the dang’rous fall
Of its own tott’ring mansion? But, reflect,
What lives immortal, danger ne’er can know.

What, too, so idle, as that souls should throng
Round each vile intercourse, or beast that bears:
Immortal souls! contesting who shall first
Enter the feeble fetus; if, perchance,
This not decides them, and all strife precludes,
That who first gains it, claims a prior right.

Trees not in ether, not in ocean clouds,
Nor in the fields can fishes e’er exist;

---

of the sexes, of whatever kind it may be, in forming
a soul for the occasion. The commentator upon
Creech’s translation, finding himself driven to the
dilemma of assenting to the one or the other of these
hypotheses, has chosen the latter. Upon a proposal
of the same argument by Dr. Priestley to Dr. Price,
in their printed discussion of this subject, Price pre-
ferred to evade the question altogether. In the case
of the souls of brutes, however, the commentator
upon Creech contends for their being immaterial, but
not immortal. See note in Creech’s translation,
Book III. ver. 797.
Nec cruor in lignis, neque saxis sucus, inesse:
Certum ac dispositum est, ubi quidquid crescat, et insit:
Sic animi natura nequit sine corpore oriri
Sola, neque a nervis et sanguine longius esse.
Quod si posset enim, multo prius ipsa animi vis
In capite, aut humeris, aut imis calcibus, esse
Posset, et innasci quâ vis in parte soleret;
Quamde in eodem homine atque in eodem vase manere.
Quod quoniam nostro quoque constat corpore certum;
Dispositumque videtur, ubi esse, et crescere, possit
Seorsum anima, atque animus; tanto magis inficiandum
Totum posse extra corpus durare, genique.
Quâ re corpus ubi interiit, perisse, necesse est,
Confitare animam, distractam in corpore toto.
Quippe et enim mortalem æterno jungere, et unâ
Consentire putare, et fungi mutua, posse,
Desipere est: quid enim divorsius esse putandum est,
Aut magis inter se disjunctum, discrepitanque,
Quam, mortale quod est, inmortali atque perenni
Junctum, in concilio sævas tolerare procellas?

Præterea, quæquamque manent æterna, necesse est,
Aut, quia sunt solido cum corpore, respuere ictus,
Nec penetrare pati sibi quidquam quod quest artas
Dissociare intus parteis; ut materiaî
Nor blood in planks, nor vital juice in stones:
But all springs definite in scenes defin'd.
So in the bosom lives, and there alone,
Mixt with its blood, and nerves, the secret mind:
There only lives,—for could it roam at all,
Then rather should we through the body's self,
The heel, or shoulder, or where else it chose,
Oft trace it wand'ring, than forlorn abroad.
Since e'en in body, then, the soul and mind
Are fixt thus definite—we amply prove
That out of body these can ne'er exist:
That when the flesh its certain doom sustains,
The soul must, too, through ev'ry limb dissolve.

To deem, moreo'er, that mortal can combine
With aught immortal,—can together live
Concordant, and in mutual duties blend,
Is full delirium. Can there be conceiv'd
Aught more unmeet, incongruous, or absurd,
Than with a mortal that a frame should mix
Immortal, doom'd to all its weight of woe?

What lives immortal, too, must so exist,
Or from its own solidity, empower'd
Each blow to conquer, undivided still,
As primal atoms, long anterior sung:
Corpora sunt, quorum naturam obtendimus ante;
Aut ideo durare ætatem posse per omnem,
Plagarum quia sunt expertia, sic ut inane est;
Quod manet intactum, neque ab ictu fungitur hilum:
Aut etiam quia nulla loci sit copia circum,
Quo quasi res possint discedere, dissoluique;
Sic uti summarum summa est æterna, neque extra
Quis locus est, quo diffugiant; neque corpora sunt, quæ
Possint incidere, et validâ dissolvere plagâ:
At neque, utei docui, solido cum corpore mentis
Natura est, quoniam admixtum est in rebus inane:
Nec tamen est ut inane; neque autem corpora desunt,
Ex infinito quæ possint forte coorta
Proruer e hanc mentis violento turbine molem,
Aut aliam quam vis cladem importare pericli:
Nec porro natura loci, spatiumque profundi,
Deficit, exspargi quo possit vis animai,
Aut alià quà vis possit vi pulsa perire:
Haud igitur leti praëclusa est janua menti.
Quod, si forte ideo magis inmortalis habenda est,
Quod vitalibus ab rebus, munita, ãnetur;

Ver. 862. So in the bosom lives, and there alone.]  
Mist with its blood, and nerves, the secret mind:] For the motives which induced Epicurus and Lucretius to place the existence of the mind in the bosom, see note on verse 100 of this book.

Ver. 840. — gates of death.] Our poet is much attached to this figure, which is strictly of Hebrew origin, and to which the Hebrew bards are as much attached as himself. I have given one instance of this parallelism from Job, in closing the notes.
Or since, like vacuum, of all friction void,
Free from all touch, by impulse unimpeir’d;
Or from the want of circling space, in which
The sev’ring atoms may dissolve and fall;
Such want the boundless whole of nature proves,
And hence eternal—for no place beyond
Spreads, where its seeds could waste; nor, from without,
Can foreign force e’er enter to destroy.
But nor, as urg’d above, exists the mind
All solid, since in all things void combines,
Nor yet all vacuum; nor, from the profound,
Are wanting powers adverse that, into act
Once rous’d tempestuous, the whole mind derange,
Or sever total;—nor deficient space
Spread widely round, through which, in countless modes,
The mental frame may crumble, and dissolve;
Hence not precluded from the gates of death.

But shouldst thou still the soul immortal deem,
Since guarded deep from many a mortal wound,

And the doors of the heavens he opened.

Ver. 834. But shouldst thou still the soul immortal deem, Since guarded deep from many a mortal wound,] This is the last argument advanced by our poet, in fa-
Aut quia non veniunt omnino aliena salutis;
Aut quia, quæ veniunt, aliquà ratione recedunt
Pulsa prius, quam, quid noceant, sentire queamus;
[Scilicet a verâ longe ratione remotum est.]
Præter enim, quam quod morbis tum corporis ægrit,
Advenit id, quod eam de rebus sæpe futuris
Maceret, inque metu male habet, curisque fatigat;
Præteritisque male admissis peccata remordent,
Adde furorem animi proprium, atque oblivia rerum;
Adde quod in nigras lethargi mergitur undas.

vour of the materiality, and consequent mortality of
the soul; its affection by external circumstances,
and its possession of even a larger share of evils than
those to which the body itself is exposed.

Ver. 854. Creeps the dull pool of lethargy profound.]
From this verse, in all probability, Martial:

Pigra per hunc fugies ingratæ flamina Letheis.
X. ii. 7.

Hence the dull pool of Lethe shalt thou fly.

With this argument, our poet, as just observed, con-
cludes his observations in favour of the materiality of
the soul, or sentient principle; and it may now, per-
haps, be expected that, in the present commentary, I
should briefly enumerate the chief arguments which
have been urged on the opposite side of the question, by
different philosophers of different ages. This, however,
is a task altogether inadmissible; yet, as the counter-po-
sitions advanced by the Cardinal Polignae are more im-
mediately directed against the poem before us, and to a
certainty, constitute the most concentrated and the most
popular system of opposition of any which has hitherto
been urged; and as nothing of material moment has been
advanced since its publication, I cannot avoid offering
a brief statement of their contents. They are to be found
in the fifth and sixth books of the Anti-Lucrétius.

In the note on ver. 101 of the book before us, I
have given the opinion of our own countryman, Mr.
Locke, respecting the capability of matter to exhibit
the phenomenon of intelligence, together with the
severe attack of the Cardinal upon him for such a
cred. It is in conjoint repugnance to this celebrated
philosopher, as well as to our own poet, that the
Cardinal commences his attack, by contending that
the human soul cannot be material from the very na-
ture of matter itself; since there is nothing in any of the
modifications of matter, as the position, magnitude,
figure or motion of its particles, whence intelligence can
result; modifications which are mere alternating forms
of material things, and can press to nothing beyond.
He next attempts to demonstrate, that spirit has no-
thing in common with matter; that it must have
existed antecedently to it, and have first of all stimu-
lated it into motion. In reply to the objection, that
the soul is, and must be acted upon by matter, and
Safe from full many an insult that assails
The health exterior, and since many a blow,
Aim'd at its powers, discomfited recoils
Ere scarce ourselves the dread approach perceive,
Still far thou wand'rest; for the common woes
Excluding that from body draw their birth,
Yet pines she anxious for to-morrow's fate,
Yet shakes with dread, with carking care consumes,
Or smarts from conscience of committed crimes.
Add, too, that madness is her own—that oft
All mem'ry fails, and o'er each torpid pow'r
Creeps the dull pool of lethargy profound.

He first observes, ver. 344, that the vulgar belief of
the existence of a soul in brutes, is extremely
doubtful. "Perhaps," says he, "it is true: I will
not deny it; for reason forbids me to deny whatever
is not obviously false. Yet, perhaps, it is not so. I
see certain actions performed, but I do not see the
cause of those actions. To trace this cause, is the
office of reason, and not of the sight; for the sight,
in a thousand instances, deceives us: and reason
ought, hence, to be the judge, and not the slave of
our senses. You conjecture," continues he, ver.
393, "that brutes possess the passions of desire and
fear, because they evince the signs of those passions:
but man, when actuated by desire or fear, not only
exhibits their external signs, which are often falla-
cious, but you are conscious that these passions are
actually existing within him."

In reply to this, however, it is obvious that no
man can be logically conscious of any thing that oc-
curs exterior to himself. It is from external signs
alone that he supposes the multitude by whom he is surrounded to be his fellows, and possessed of sensations and passions like his own: and whenever he beholds such signs of passion or sensation exhibited by a brute, he has the same reason for supposing him the subject of such emotions, as for supposing the same of any of his own species. And if a strict and perfect consciousness of the internal emotions of other men be necessary to constitute the belief, that they are possessed of an intelligent principle as well as ourselves; if a doubt be, in this manner, to be perpetually thrown upon the evidence of the external senses,—no man can be conscious of the existence of any intelligent being, excepting his own individual person; and the scepticism of Pyrrho, or the idealism of Berkley or Hume, is immediately introduced, which is the very reverse of what Polignac designed.

The Cardinal, secondly, proceeds to assert, that we have as much reason for absurdly admitting the existence of a percipient soul in vegetables and minerals, as in brutes, since many classes of both these kingdoms give evident external signs of internal passion or commotion; and particularly the mimosa (berba manum fugiens, a sensu nonem adepta) and the magnet. But this is evidently affirming too much for his own purpose. For we have no more reason to conclude, à priori, that matter in any state of combination could exhibit the properties of the magnet, the mimosa, or the brute creation, than that it could produce the phenomena of intelligence. And it is principally from careful and repeated observation of the former, that Lucretius, Locke, and every modern materialist, deduces his belief of the possibility of the latter. In reply to the question, therefore, which seems naturally to ensue, why may not the substance that is capable of producing fossil attraction, vegetable irritability, and brutal instinct and sensation, be competent to the production of human intelligence? The Cardinal,

Thirdly, advances a step farther, and hardly asserts, ver. 608, that there is no such thing as attraction, irritability, instinct, or sensation, in any combination of matter whatsoever: and that brutes, plants, and fossils, are all equally automatons, beings alike devoid of voluntary action, and alone impelled by foreign stimulus. And that, as the arrow which flies from the bow does not quit it from a sense of hatred or fear, nor strike and wound the object, against which it is directed, from the possession of anger: so, without any passion of his own, the dog pursues the wolf, or engages in the act of concupiscence. As to the doctrine of physical attraction, Descartes imagined he avoided its necessity, by embracing that of an absolute plenum; upon which I have already observed, in various notes on book the first of this poem. As to sensation, he contended that it could only be the property of an intelligent being; while, with regard to instinct, the Cardinal, pursuing the dictates of his master, observes, ver. 1145, that the ocean, which renew its tide at definite and alternate periods, has just as much of it as any brute whatever. "What," inquires he, "is meant by this vulgar and empty term instinct? Is it mind, or is it not? If not, then is there nothing existing but a mere machine? If it be mind, is it a mind residing within the body of the brute, or exterior to it? If the latter, it is the universal Mind, or great First Cause of all things, acting by impulse, and the brute is a mere machine still: if the former, yet must this instinctive principle differ widely from the principle of human intelligence, since it endows its possessor with a fixed degree of instantaneous knowledge, neither capable of increase, nor acquired by a long course of habit and education. To support such a theory," he tells us, "is not to establish the creed of material intelligence, but to recall to our aid the metaphysiology of Pythagoras and the Gymnosophists, and to believe that every existent brute is inhabited by a genius or spirit, immortal in its nature, and which is perpetually transmigrating from body to body. A belief," concludes the Cardinal, ver. 1214—1254, "which, however extraordinary and unauthorized, is certainly much more consistent and tolerable than the creed, which maintains the production of percep-
Hence, death is nought, and justly claims our scorn,
Since with the body thus the soul decays.
and volition of whom neither gravitation, magnetism, irritability, muscular motion, sensation, could display itself, or even exist.

Ver. 855. _Hence, death is nought, and justly claims our scorn,
Since with the body thus the soul decays._] The poet having established, as far as he was able, the mortality of the human soul, proceeds, by a variety of forcible and well-selected arguments, to destroy that unreasonable dread of death which, in his own age more especially, was perpetually harrying mankind into a commission of the most flagrant crimes, of which he has already enumerated many in the opening of the present book. The dread he here refers to, still attaches to multitudes in our own age; and to multitudes, moreover, who, by the rectitude of their lives, and the superior knowledge imparted to them by the glorious dispensation of the gospel, should be released from its influence. Among Christians of this character, the terror which so perpetually haunts them, proceeds, as it did amongst the greater part of the philosophers of our poet's own era, from an oscillation or equal balance of hope and fear: not, indeed, with respect to the existence of a future state, but as to their own condition when they have entered upon it. Upon both these subjects, the heathen world, from the moment they admitted the possibility of a posterior being, could not be otherwise than a prey to anxiety. The admission of the possibility did not prove the fact: they were doubtful as to the existence of such a state; and they were equally doubtful as to their own felicity or misery, whenever the subjects of it: upon neither point, after all their researches, were they capable of obtaining any satisfactory or certain information. They believed, and they disbelieved; they hoped, and they feared; and the arguments on each side appeared equally indecisive. Grotius has a passage to the same effect: _Apud Graecos, observes he, ad quos eruditio usque a Chaldeis et Egyptis perlata est, qui de vita post hujus conquirens vita interitum spem habebant aliquam, valde de ea re hesitanter loquebantur, &c._

"The Greek philosophers, who derived their learning from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, though they had some idea of a future life, spoke with extreme hesitation concerning it; as is evident from the dialogues of Socrates, the writings of Cicero, Seneca, and others: and though they searched diligently for arguments in proof of what they desired, they could obtain nothing of certainty." _De Verit. Relig. Christ. lib. ii._

It was on this account that Socrates, in his defense before the Athenians, observed: "_No man knows what death is, or whether it may not be the greatest felicity which can arrive to us; yet every one fears, and flies from it, as though it were sure to prove his greatest misfortune._" Plut. in Phaed. But this, as I have formerly noticed, was not all: for anxious, even to the abjuration of every temporal pleasure, to obtain the favour of the mysterious divinity in a future state, if such were to be their portion, and unacquainted with the precise means of acquiring it, the trembling philosopher united in the popular superstitions of the day; paid the homage of adoration to the unworthy deities of the multi-
And as we now, through long anterior time,  
Look back indifferent on the Punic hosts  
That threaten'd Rome, when, with the din of war,  
All shook tremendous heaven's high cope beneath,  
And doubtful hung the scale which pow'r should rule  
Earth, main, and mortals, with unrivall'd sway;

Ver. 859. — with the din of war,  
All shook tremendous heaven's high cope beneath,  
Mr. Wakefield conjectures that the verse, of which  
this passage is a translation, has some reference to  
the following line of Ennius preserved by Cicero, iOrat. iii. 42.

Africa terribili tremuit horrida terra tumultu.  
With the tremendous tumult shook the shores  
Of shuddering Afric.

Ver. 861. And doubtful hung the scale which pow'r  
should rule] Thus, Milton:

Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray,  
Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen  
Betwixt Astraea and the Scorpion sign,  
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,  
The pendulous round earth with balance'd air  
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,  
Battles and realms.

Par. Lost, iv. 996.
Sic, ubi non erimus, quam corporis atque animaì
Discidium fuerit, quibus e sumus uniter aptei;
Scilicet haud nobis quidquam, quei non erimus tum,
Adcidere omnino poterit, sensumque movere:
Non, si terra mari miscibitur, et mare coelo.

Et, si jam nostro sentit de corpore, post quam
Detracta est animi natura, animæque potestas;
Nihil tamen est ad nos, quei comptu conjugioque
Corporis atque animœ consistimus uniter aptei.

Nec, si materiam nostram conlegerit ætas
Post obitum, rursumque redegerit, ut sita nunc est;
Atque iterum nobis fuerint data lumina vitæ;
Pertineat quidquam tamen ad nos id quoque factum,
Interrupta semel quam sit repetentia nostris;
Et nunc nihil ad nos de nobis adtinet, ante
Quæ fuimus: nec jam de illis non adfit, angor,
Quos de materiâ nostra nova proferet ætas.

Nam, quom respicias insensi temporis omne

Ver. 867. Though earth with main, or main commix
with skies.] With this powerful verse may
be compared the following couplet of Virgil, com-
prising the same imagery:
Jam calum terramque, meo sine numine, Venti,
Miscere, et tantas audetis tollere moles?
Æn. i. 137.

Dare ye, ye Winds! without my mandate given,
Such tempests raise, and mingle earth with
heav'n?

Ver. 868. E'en could the soul, the spirit still survive
The wreck corporeal, and perception boast, &c.]
The whole of this passage is well translated by Dry-
den, excepting, indeed, that it has too much paraphrase:
Nay, e’en suppose, when we have suffer’d fate,
The soul could feel in her divided state;
What’s that to us? for we are only we
While soul and body in one frame agree.
Nay, though our atoms should revolve by chance,
And matter leap into the former dance;
So when we cease, and soul and body once
Meet their joint doom whose union form'd our lives,
No ill shall then molest us,—nought alarm
Our scatter'd senses, and dissembler'd frame
Though earth with main, or main commix with skies.

E'en could the soul, the spirit still survive
The wreck corporeal, and perception boast,
To us what boots it, who exist alone
The joint result of soul and body mixt?
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 mem'ry of ourselves is fled?

We heed not now what erst, in time elaps'd,
We have been, nor with anxious heart explore
What from our dust hereafter may arise:
For if thou weigh th' eternal tract of time
Evolv'd already, and the countless modes

Though time our life and motion could restore,
And make our bodies what they were before,—
What gain to us would all this bustle bring?
The new-made man would be another thing.
When once an interrupting pause is made,
That individual being is decay'd;
We who are dead and gone shall bear no part
In all the pleasures, nor shall feel the smart
Which to that other mortal shall accrue,
Whom, of our matter, time would mould anew.
For backward if you look on that long space
Of ages past, and view the changing face

Of matter toss, and variously combin'd
In sundry shapes; 'tis easy for the mind
From hence 't infer that seeds of things have been
In the same order as they now are seen;
Which yet our dark remembrance cannot trace;
Because a pause of life, a gaping space
Has come betwixt, where memory lies dead,
And all the wand'ring motions from the sense are fled.
Præteritum spatium; tum motus materiaë
Multimodei quam sint; facile hocc' adcredere possis,
Semina sæpe in eodem, ut nunc sunt, ordine posta:
Nec memori tamen id quimus reprehendere mente;
Inter enim jacta est vitaï pausa, vageque
Deerrarunt passim motus ab sensibus omnes.
Debet enim, misere est quoi forte ægreque futurum,
Ipse quoque esse in eo tum tempore, quoi male possit
Adcidere: id quoniam mors eximit, esseque prohibet
Illum, quoi possint inconmoda conciliari
Hæc eadem, quibus e nunc nos sumus, ante fissse;
Scire licet nobis nihil esse in morte timendum:
Nic miserum fieri, qui non est, posse; neque hilum
Differre, a nullo fuerit jam tempore natus;
Mortalem vitam mors quom inmortalis ademit.

Ver. 894. —the man
To be who ceases, ceases from all woe;] To the same effect, Solomon, who, as I have already had occasion to observe, was a Sadducean Hebrew, and, consequently, a disbeliever in the immortality of the soul. "The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not any thing; neither have they any more reward, for even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, too, and their hatred, and their envy, are, at this time, perished; neither have they any more, for ever, a portion in any thing that is done under the sun." Ecl. ix. 5, 6.

Ver. 896. Nor aught imports it that he e'er was born,
When death immortal claims his mortal life.] If the soul perish with the body, the man who is dead has no more connection with any kind of feeling or animation, than if he had never been born. The original text is as true to this interpretation as words can be:

neque hilum
Differre, a nullo fuerit jam tempore natus;
Mortalem vitam mors quom inmortalis ademit;
and yet, neither Dryden, Marchetti, nor Guernier, appears to have had any clear conception of the poet's
In which all matter moves, thou canst not doubt
That oft its atoms have the form assum'd
We bear ourselves this moment—though the mind
Recalls not now those scenes of being past;
For many a pause the discontinuous chain
Of life has sever'd, and full many a mode
Of motion sprung to every sense adverse.
He to whom pain hereafter is decreed
Must then exist whene'er that pain arrives.
But as the man, whose atoms erst have liv'd,
Lives now unconscious of ills then sustain'd,
By death since decompos'd, and ev'ry pow'r
Of sense and mem'ry scatter'd—hence we prove
Death holds no sting t' alarm us; that the man
To be who ceases, ceases from all woe;
Nor aught imports it that he e'er was born,
When death immortal claims his mortal life.

meaning; while Creech has given him a rendering
equally foreign from the subject, and opposite to
what he intended. His version is as follows:
— the dead, though they should all return

To life again, would grieve no more, nor mourn
For evils past, than if they'd ne'er been born.
The alliteration, here introduced by Lucretius, is
ii. epig. 219, has recorded the following verses:

Mortales immortales flere si foret fas,
Ferent divae Camææ Nævium poctam.
Might but th' immortals mortals weep, the train
Of heavenly muses Nævius would bemoan.

And Stobæus has retained the ensuing distich in
a fragment of Linus:

Ψήνοι γὰρ αἰθάνως Ἰακώς τὰ τῶν καλλιτείων,
Θυσίες εὐνα καὶ τῶν ἀθραυστῶν ἀκουστῶν.

Thus, death immortal, mortal things subverts,
For all is finite, and as finite fails.

In the same manner, Milton:

—and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men.

Nor has Marchetti been inattentive to the same
figure:

Pu da morte immortal vita mortale.
Proinde, ubi se videas hominem indignarier ipsum,
Post mortem fore, ut aut putescat corpore posto,
Aut flammis interfiat, malisve ferarum;
Scire licet, non sincerum sonere, atque subesse
Cæcum aliquem cordi stimulum; quam vis neget ipse
Credere se quemquam sibi sensum in morte futurum.
Non, ut opinor, enim dat, quod promittit et unde,
Nec radicitus e vitâ se tollit, et eicit;
Sed facit esse sui quiddam super inscius ipse.
Unus enim sibi quem proponit quisque, futurum
Corpus utei volucres lacerent in morte, feraeque;
Ipse sui misercet: neque enim se dividit hilum,

Ver. 893. Shou'dst thou, then, mark some fool, in
dignant, burn] The common editions of
the original uniformly offer the following verse:
Proinde, ubi se videas hominem misericarier ipsum,
which Mr. Wakefield, with commendable sagacity,
hast thus corrected from better authorities:
Proinde, ubi se videas hominem indignarier ipsum.
Democritus, though he denied the existence of an
immortal soul, yet as a great part of the human sys-
tem is composed of intelligent atoms according to
his hypothesis, was doubtful whether these atoms
might not retain some feeling after death. The
Pythagorean disciple, however, appears, from the
following lines of Ovid, spoken in the character of
Pythagoras himself, to have been as frequently sub-
tected to the same cowardly apprehensions as the dis-
ciples of Democritus:
O genus attonitum gelidæ formidine mortis.
Quid Stygæ, quid tenebras, quid nomena vana ti-
metis,
Materiem ratum, falsique piacula mundi?
Corpora sive rogos flammæ, seu tabâ vetustas
Abstulerit, mala posse pati non ulla putetis.
Morte carent animæ; semperque, priore relicta
Sede, novis domibus habitant, vivuntque receptæ.

L. xv. 153.

O race, that start at Death's funereal gloom!
Why fear ye Styx, or stories of the tomb?
The vain conceits by priests, and poets told,
Lies that the world in pious bondage hold?
No pain ye feel, discover how ye may,
By blazing pyres, or Time's remote decay.
Souls never die; one mansion left behind,
They seek another, and another find.

It is astonishing to remark the dread that pre-
vailed amongst the multitude of former times, and
even as just noticed, the followers of many ancient
philosophers, lest the corpse itself should continue to
suffer during its consumption. Our poet expressly
adverts to the alarm so generally excited by the mere
idea of being devoured, after death, by a beast or
Should'st thou, then, mark some fool indignant burn
At this alone, that, when existence fails,
His corse may moulder, or in flames consume,
Or sate, perchance, the jaws of savage beasts,—
Believe him not:—some secret dread still lurks
Of future pain, though e'en his lips deny
That sense, or thought can after death exist.
Thus, if I err not, he conceals his creed,
Believes not life all-ceases, but that still
Some future self his present will survive.
For he who, living, shudders at the thought
That birds or beasts his frame may soon devour,
That frame divides not, but his self confounds

bird of prey; and intimates, that something of the
same terror was attached to the contemplation of
every mode in which the deceased body could be dis-
pensed of. Of these different modes, the two most
common, as I have already observed, were those of burying and burning, by which the corpse becomes a
prey to the worm, or to the flame: and it is to these
two general modes of bestowing the body after death,
and the torment attached to them by the multitude,
that Isaiah refers, in the following declaration of Jeho-
vah, ch. lxvi. 24:

 그것을 학발한 으로
그들의 공형을 때리고,
소과 렇과 하여
그들의 린과 사라.

And they shall go forth, and behold the carcases
Of the men who transgressed against me:
For their worm shall not die,
Neither shall their fire be quenched:
And they shall be an abhorrence unto all flesh.

It is to this passage, and this common feeling of the
day, that our Saviour, who ever employed sensible
images, adverts, in thus delineating the torments re-
served for the wicked in the future world, "where
their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched."
Mark ix. 44. The Greek is a precise version of the
Hebrew: ἢπειρ οἰκοδομή αὐτῶν ἐν πέτρας, καὶ τὸν σώμ
σαίνων.

Ver. 910. That frame divides not,—] There
is an obscurity in the original, which appears to
have arisen from a loss of the true reading of this
verse. In the common editions, we meet with it
thus:

Ipse sui miseric; neque enim se vindicat hilum;

In Mr. Wakefield's impression, corrected from a
careful comparison of the best copies:

Ipse sui miseric, neque enim se dividit hilum:

but, still dissatisfied with the verse, he proposes the
following reading of his own:

I
Nec removet satis, a projecto corpore; et illud 895
Se fingit, sensuque suo contaminat adstans.
Hinc indignatur se mortalem esse creatum; 900
Nec videt, in verâ nullum fore morte alium se,
Qui possit vivus sibi se lugere peremptum,
Stansque jacentem se lacerari, urive, dolere.
Nam, si in morte malum est, malis morsuque ferarum
Tractari; non invenio, quí non sit acerbum,
Ignibus inpositum, calidis torrescere flammis;
Aut in melle situm subfocari, atque rigere
Frigore, quom summo gelidi cubat æquore saxi;

ipse sui miscet; neque enim se dividit ipsum,
Nec removet, satis a projecto corpore; at illum
Se fingit._—

The meaning of our poet, however, is obvious, and
the translators do not differ greatly in their interpreta-
tions. The man, who trembles at the thought that his
body may be hereafter exposed to the ravages of birds
or beasts, or to any other similar destruction of its
component parts, does not divide or distinguish be-
tween the dead and the living machine; but secretly
apprehends, that the same consciousness and percep-
tion must appertain to each of them. Socrates, in
his conversation with Crito, after having drank the
fatal cup, is well known to have made a similar ob-
servation: “I can never,” said he, “persuade Crito,
that that alone is Socrates, which has the power of
arranging his arguments, and of conversing with
you; for he perpetually conceives, that what he
will presently behold dead is myself. He confounds
me with my carcass.” Plut. in Phaed.

Ver. 917. If, too, the tiger's task, the vulture's
beak
Be deem'd an ill—what minor ill results
From the red fury, &c.——] The poet al-
ludes to the different modes of sepulture adopted by
ancient nations. The poorer classes were interred in
public cemeteries beyond the walls, or immediate
boundary of the town in which they died, in a sunk,
unnoticeable grave, without the more modern appen-
dage of hillocks or tomb-stones. Of the richer
classes, the bodies of great numbers were burnt to
ashes on a magnificent pyre, and the ashes carefully col-
ceted, and deposited in an ornamented urn; while others
were embalmed after the Egyptian manner, with an
anti-putrescent preparation composed of honey and
spices, and then removed to some stone or marble
tomb provided for the express purpose. Heracleides
of Pontus advised the former mode of sepulture; De-
moctitus, the latter; Lucretius attacks them both
with much severity for expressing any anxiety upon
the subject.

That honey was the principal ingredient in the
preparation of the embalmer, we learn from the fol-
lowing statement of Xenophon, which relates to the
body of Agesipolis king of Sparta, lib. v. 3. 19,
Helen. Καὶ εἰκόνι Μετ, εἷς ἐξελήσσεν, χρυσωτὴν ὁμοιόν, εἰς τὰς βασιλικὰς τοῦχα. "Upon his death, his
corae was immersed in honey, and being thus con-
veyed home, was interred in the royal sepulchre."
With his own future corse, whose dread decay
This self, he deems, must witness and partake.
Hence heaves his heart indignant at the doom
Of mortal man: heedless that, after death,
No other self shall then himself bemoan,
Nor feel the tooth that tears his mangled limbs.
If too, the tiger's tusk, the vulture's beak,
Be deem'd an ill—what lighter ill results
From the red fury of the fun'ral pyre?
The fulsome tide of honey, o'er the frame
Pour'd, cold and stiff'ning in the marble tomb?

The body of Alexander the Great is well known to
have been preserved in the same manner: and it is
unquestionable, that the following couplet of Statius
refers to this circumstance:
   Duc et ad Æmathios manes, ubi belliger urbis
   Conditor, Hyblaæo perfusus nectaræ, durat.
   Silv. III. ii. 117.

Go, search the tombs; th' Æmathian victor's there,
Steep'd in the nectar Hybla's blossoms bear.
It is a curious coincidence of circumstances, that,
while the British conquests in Asia are rapidly ap-
proaching on the west, or rather perhaps have al-
ready reached the limits of the conquests of this bold
and successful warrior, the costly tomb to which his
remains were committed, and to which our poet, in
all probability, alludes, should be at this moment in
the possession of the same country. For that the
large and beautiful sarcophagus, surrendered, among
many other curious antiquities, by Gen. Menou to
lord Hutchinson, upon the capture of Alexandria, and
now in the British Museum, was the identical tomb
in which the corse of Alexander was deposited after
his death and embalming, has been of late incon-
teresting proved by the conjoint and very erudite, as
well as entertaining, researches of Dr. Clarke, and my
learned friend the Rev. S. Henley.

The custom of embalming is supposed to have ori-
ginated in Egypt: whence the Hebrews, and espe-
cially after the residence of Joseph in that country,
introduced it very generally among themselves. The
body of Jacob was therefore prepared in this man-
ner, the process occupying forty days before its
completion; some time after which, it was con-
veyed, with much funeral pomp, to the sepulchre
he had excavated in Canaan. See Gen. cap. I.
2, 3. The body of our Saviour was intended, by
Joseph of Arimatha, to whom Pilate had granted
it, to have been preserved in the same way: it
was accordingly enveloped in clean linen, and de-
posited in its appropriate tomb; and the materials were
actually prepared, when, by his resurrection, he re-
dered the friendly interposition of Joseph and his
female disciples unnecessary. Luke, ch. xxiii. v. 50
—56. xxiv. 1—3.

Arimathia, on the contrary, so widely celebrated
for her conjugal affection and grief, preferred, as we
learn from Gellius, the funeral pyre for the dead body
of Mausolus, to the antiputrescent preparation of the
embalmer. She erected a magnificent monument to
his memory, on which his virtues were recorded in a
prize epitaph. But, instead of committing the ashes
of the corse to an urn, and enclozing this urn in the
Urguerive, superne obtritum, pondere terræ.

"Nam jam non domus adcipiet te lata, nequè uxor
Optuma, nec dulces obcurrent oscula natei
Præripere, et taciti pectus dulcedine tangent.

monument consistently with general practice, the
violence of her affliction induced her to swallow some
portion of the ashes every day with her common beve-
rage, till she had consumed the whole, and had thus
constituted, of her own person, the tomb of her be-
loved husband. For a farther account of the ceremony
of Grecian sculpture, see note on Book VI. v. 1330.

Ver. 918. —what lighter ill results
From the red fury of the fun'rel pyr'e
The fulsome tide of honey o'er the frame
Pour'd, cold and stiff'nin in the marble tomb?
Or the sunk groves, by earth's vast pressure
crush'd? This passage is obviously
imitated, in the following verses of Dr. Glynns
"Day of Judgment;"

—What, though the great,
With costly pomp and aromatic sweets,
Embal'm'd his poor remains; or through the dome
A thou and tapers shed their gloomy light,
While solemn organs to his parting soul
Chaunted slow orisons?—Say, by what mark
Dost thou discern him from that lowly swain
Whose mouldering bones, beneath the thorn-bound surf
Lon lay neglected?

Ver. 923. "But thy dear home shall never greet thee
more!" This address is imitatively beautiful,
and requires no critical finger to point out, either the
delicacy of its pathos, or the strength of its argument.
It is a perfect copy of the Athenian
dirge; in the composition of which, the poet appears
to have had a reference to that part of Plato's
Aristeaus which commences, ἔρχεται δ' ἐπί την Πενελοπην ἀνάθεται, &c. The passage is too long for
transcription: the learned reader may consult it at
his leisure.

The Athenians were peculiarly celebrated for their
dirges, or funeral orations; and Nardus, in an elabo-
rate dissertation on this subject, has judiciously in-
stanced the present address, as a proof of the ele-
gance and feeling which they introduced into com-
positions of this sort. No nation, indeed, how-
ever barbarous and uncultivated, is without a dirge,
or lamentation of some sort, in which the virtues of
the deceased, and the irreparable loss sustained by
his friends, are rudely and clamorously, but at the
same time feelingly and forcibly, insisted upon. As
mankind acquire a greater degree of taste and polish,
this inharmonious howl is exchanged for the graces
of pathetic poetry, and the metrical dirge and elegy
are sure to succeed. Among the Greeks, however,
the dirge acquired an excellence, and was rewarded
with a liberality unknown to modern nations. The
verses of which it consisted were uniformly adapted
to music, and repeated, not only over the grave, or
funeral pyre, according to the mode in which the re-
 mains of the deceased were disposed of, but were
afterwards recited, in a full band, during the exhibition
of funeral games and exercises, performed shortly af-
 terwards at the place of sepulture. This extrava-
gant pageantry, which was bestowed on all whose
pecuniary circumstances were equal to it, was, never-
theless, quadrupled upon the death of a favourite pa-
triot or warrior: on which occasions, the expence
incurred was enormous, and always discharged out of
the public purse. The death of Evagoras affords us
an instance of this extem profligacy; for his fune-
ral was celebrated with games of almost every descrip-
tion; with poetry, music, gymnastic exercises, horse-
races, galley-prizes, and public feasting without li-
mits. In like manner, on the arrival, in the harbour
at Corinth, of the ashes of Demetrius, which were
conveyed in a golden urn, covered with a magnificent
canopy, and surmounted with a regal crown, a troop
of young noblemen were deputed to receive the
splendid present on its landing; and Xenophon, the
most celebrated musician of his age, was com-
mended to exert himself to the utmost in rehearsing
Or the sunk grave, by earth's vast pressure crush'd?

"But thy dear home shall never greet thee more!

"No more the best of wives!—thy babes belov'd,

"Whose haste half-met thee, emulous to snatch the funeral dirge which was composed on the occasion. The rowers had been previously instructed to perform a part in the solemn service, and they responded to the elegy with mournful ejaculations, while their oars struck in pathetic cadence to the measure of the sacred music. The history is related at large in Plutarch's life of this prince.

From the universality of this custom of funeral dirges in all ages, but particularly in the earlier, Gessner has, with great propriety, introduced it into the burial service of Abel—the first mortal who ever felt the stroke of death. The address, on this occasion, is as beautiful as it is pathetic; and I eagerly insert it in the present place, with a view of proving how superior are the consolations of revealed religion to the most forcible supports of ancient philosophy:

"O wie erbärmlich liegt seine hülle da! du unser tröst, du unser entzücken, Abel! ach du hast uns verlassen; und unser stüsse geschäfte wird seyn, um dich zu weinen, bis in die stunde unsers todes um dich zu weinen. Ja, du bist hinübergegangen in die seligkeit, deren erwartung dir so manche heilige thrán'entlockt; deren erwartung mir so manche thran' entlockt. O wir weinen dir nach, aus diesem schatten des todens dir nach! du hast uns verlassen, und unser stüsse geschäfte wird seyn, bis in die gewünschte stunde des todes um dich zu weinen. Death of Abel, Book V. "O how woeful is the sight of his extended corse! thou, our consolation, thou, our delight! Abel! ah, thou hast left us, and our sweetest employment shall be to weep over thee; to the hour of death to weep over thee. Yes, thou art now in possession of that felicity, the contemplation of which has drawn from thee so many holy tears; the contemplation of which has drawn so many tears from myself. But O! we still weep for thee—still weep for thee in these shadows of death! Thou hast left us, and, till the wished-for hour of death, we will weep over thee."

With these two elegant specimens of funeral oration, the reader may compare that inimitable dirge, the first of which we have any account, contained in the lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 19. The whole compass of Grecian poetry has nothing equal to it:

"O roe of Israel! slain art thou in thine own fastnesses!

How are the mighty fallen!—
Save not in Gath; keep silence in the streets of Askalon:

Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

Mountains of Gilboa! and ye lofty fields!

Let neither dew nor rain fall upon you:

For there the useless shield of the mighty was thrown away;

The shield of Saul no longer anointed with unction.

From the blood of the brave, from the strength of the valiant,

The bow of Jonathan recoiled not,
Nor the sword of Saul returned empty.

Worthy of love were Saul and Jonathan,
Dear to each other in their lives,

And in their deaths not divided.

More swift were they than eagles,

More courageous than lions.

Lament, ye daughters of Israel! over Saul,

Who clothed you in delightful scarlet;

Who adorned your apparel with golden trinkets.

How are the mighty fallen

In the midst of the battle!

O Jonathan! slain hast thou been upon thine own fastnesses!

Agonized am I for thee, my brother Jonathan!

Delicious hast thou been unto me;

Wonderful was thy love for me, beyond the love of women.
DE RERUM NATURA. Lib. III.

"Non poteris factis florentibus esse; tuisque
Præsidium: misero misere," aiunt, "omnia ademit
Una dies infesta tibi tot præmia vitæ."

Il]lud in his rebus non addunt: "Nec tibi earum
Jam desiderium rerum insidet insuper unâ."

Quod bene si videant animo, dictisque sequantur,

How are the mighty fallen!
And the weapons of war perished!

Ver. 924. — Tho' babes below'd,
"Whose haste half met the slow, emulous to snatch
The dulce kiss —] I must not here forbear to quote a beautiful passage of Homer, towards which, as Lambinus has justly observed, Lucretius appears to have thrown his eye in this exquisite delineation, and whence, perhaps, he drew the rudiments of one of his most pathetic traits:

Omi μακάεν διανασ, ος αδηεῖς τοι μαχοτο, ουδέ μει τους ψωνι πατοτοσαν
Ελοιτ ιξ τελημον, και οιαν διοκον 1L. E. 497.

Know thou, who'er with heavenly power contends,
Short is his date, and soon his glory ends.
From fields of death, when late he shall retire,
No infant on his knees shall call him sire.

But though Lucretius may, perhaps, with respect to one idea, be a copyist of Homer, Virgil is a far closer copyist of Lucretius. Yet he has written, as Dr. Warton judiciously asserts, with less tenderness and effect:

Interea dules pendent circum occulti noti:
He feels the father's and the husband's bliss,
His infants climb, and struggle for a kiss;
His modest house strict chastity maintains.

Warton.

Our own language boasts of a variety of imitations of this elegiac and exquisite passage; of which several are possessed of great feeling and simplicity. The following is from the pathetic muse of Gray:

For them, no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run, to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees, the envious kiss to share.

The two last lines are, very nearly, a verbal translation. The next imitation to which I shall refer, is by Thomson: it is freer than that of Gray; but executed with equal felicity. It occurs in his Winter, to which season it particularly adverts:

In vain for him th' officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm:
In vain, his little children, peeping out
Into the mingled storm, demand their sire
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife nor children more shall be bold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home.

It is not unlikely that Thomson, rather than Lucretius, has been copied in this delineation by Klopfstock, in the following verses, which comprise a part of the meditations of the repentant Abadonna:

Soll ich gehen und schauen den mann, der dort mit dem tode,
Und mit gedanken von jenem gericht in schreckender angst ringt?
Soll ich sehen das blut des erschlagenen? Vielleicht, das er ruhig,
In den schatten der nacht fortelte, stammelnde kinder
The dulcet kiss that rous'd thy secret soul,
Again shall never hasten!—nor thine arm,
With deed heroic, guard thy country's weal!—
O mournful, mournful fate!” thy friends exclaim,
One envious hour of these invaled joys
Rob's thee for ever!”—But they add not here,
It robs thee, too, of all desire of joy:"
A truth, once utter’d, that the mind would free

The little smiling cottage; where at eve
He meets his rosy children at the door,
Prattling their welcomes, and his honest wife,
With good brown cake, and bacon slice, intent
To cheer his hunger after labour hard.

Of a purport precisely similar, and pregnant
with similar imagery, is the ensuing address of a
cottager to his beloved wife, from the Idyls of
Gessner, with which I shall conclude this note.
It occurs in his Herbstmorgen: Bey dir ein-
geschlossen mögen winde witten, und schneeges-
tüber die ganze aussicht rauben; dann erst fühl
ichs, wie du mir alles bist. Die fülle meines glückes
seyd ihr, ihr anmutsvolle kinder, mit jedem lieb
russ der mutter geschnückt; was für segen blüht in euch
uns anf. Die erste silbe die sie euch stammeln lehrt,
was, mir zu sagen, dass ihr mich liebet. Wenn
ihr, komm ich vom felde oder von der heerde zurück,
an der schwelle mit frohen gewimmel mich rufet;
mit kindischer freude die kleinen geschenke empfanget; O wie erquicht
mich dann jede eurer unschuldvollen freuden!
When seated by thee, let the pent-up winds put
forth their rage; let the snow-storm cover the face
of the earth; then chiefly I think thou art every
ting to me. May the fulness of my prosperity be
the lot of yourselves, ye lovely children! adorned
with every grace of your mother, which blossoms as
a blessing upon us both! The first syllable she
taught you to lisp was to let me know that ye
Dissolvant animi magno se angore, metuque. 
Tu quidem, ut es, lecto sopitus, sic eris, ævi
Quod super est, cunctis privatus doloribus ægris: 
At nos horrifico cinefactum de prope busto
Insatiabiliter deflebimus; æternunque
Nulla dies nobis mœorem e pectore demet.

loved me. As I return from the field or the flock, joyfully ye throng together, and call to me from the sill of the door; and, clinging round my knees, receive, with childish rapture, the little presents I bring you—O how does your pure and innocent happiness transport me!"

Ver. 934. "Thou art safe!" 
"The sleep of death protects thee! and secures 
"From all th' unnumber'd ills of mortal life! ]
If our poet had his eye directed towards Homer in the former part of this pathetic dirge, it is at least equally probable that, in composing the verses, of which these now cited are a translation, he was not without recollecting the following lines from the same exquisite muse:

Alio me tibux ta xar kata xia kalwto;
Περγει σε εσ τε δειπησου θ' ικανημω πυθαθα.
Plut. 463.

May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
 Prest with a load of monumental clay.
 Thy Hector, wrapt in everlasting sleep,
 Shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep.

Pope.
There is also a passage in Virgil, so perfectly similar, that it is highly probable either Homer or Lucretius furnished him with the first conception of it: 

Tum me confecit curis, somnique gravatun
Infelix habitu thalamus; pressitque jacentem
Dulcis et alta quies, placidaeque simillima morti.

En. vi. 390.

Then, freed from cares, the funeral couch pos
sessed'd
My weary limbs, and lulled to quiet rest;

To sweet, unbroken slumber, sound as death
When, in soft whispers, he demands the breath.

In the following exquisite and pathetic verses from the well-known epitaph on Bion by Moschus, the same metaphor of sleep, eternal sleep, is admirably introduced. The translation, which I shall subjoin, is highly spirited, and entitled to much praise; though, in some measure, too paraphrastic:

Λι αι τα μαλαξαι μειουκα κατα κατοι σδουται, 
Τε κα χιαμα τυλικυ το τ' ευβαλεις ουνοι αικυς,
Τυπτιν αν εκητι και εις τοσο αλλα θυτι 
Αμμας ηι μεγαλοι και καρτερι η σφια αναποι,
Οπτωτι πρωτα θαυμαις ανακοι ες ουνοι καλα 
Ευδομει ας μαλα μαλα επεμενα ενεμενυν ετεω.

The meatiest herb we trample in the field, 
Or in the garden nurture, when its leaf 
At winter's touch is blasted, and its place 
Forgotten, soon its vernal buds renew,
And, from short slumber, wakes to life again. Man wakes no more! Man valiant, glorious, wise, 
When death once chills him, sinks in sleep profound, 
A long, unconscious, never-ending sleep.

GISBORNE.

Spencer has betrayed an obvious imitation of this beautiful address of Lucretius, in the following verses. But this is by no means wonderful; for we have often already detected him exploring our sublime bard for elegant description, and pathetic simplicity:

He there doth now enjoy eternal rest,
And happy ease, which thou dost want, and crave,
And further from it daily wanderest:
What, if some little pain the passage have,
That makes frail flesh to fear the bitter wave?
From every dread, and trouble. "Thou art safe!
"The sleep of death protects thee! and secures
"From all th' unnumber'd woes of mortal life!
"While we, alas! the sacred urn around
"That holds thine ashes, shall insatiate weep,
"Nor time destroy th' eternal grief we feel!"

Is not short pain well borne, that brings long ease,
And lays the soul to sleep in quiet grave?
Sleep after toil, repast after stormy seas,
Ease after war, death after life, does greatly
please.

Fairy Queen.
Shakspeare has caught the spirit of the same metaphor, in the beginning of Hamlet's soliloquy:
To be, or not to be?—that is the question—
Whether 'tis nobler, in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them?—to die—to sleep—
No more! and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—is a consummation
Devoutly to be wished!
I cannot avoid adding to this imitation a most exquisite sonnet of Mrs. Charlotte Smith; as well on account of its sweet simplicity and pathos, as from its being in perfect unison with the imagery of the text:

Oh thou! whose sleep'st where hazel bands entwine
The vernal grass, with paler violets drest,
I would, sweet girl! thy humble bed were mine,
And mine thy calm and enviable rest.
For, never more, by human ills oppress,
Shall thy soft spirit fruitlessly reign:
Thou canst not, now, thy fondest hope resign
E'en in the hour that should have made thee blest:
Light lies the turf upon thy gentle breast;
And, lingering here, to love and sorrow true,
The youth, who once thy simple heart possesst,
Shall mingle tears with April's early dew,

While still, for him, shall faithful memory save
Thy form and virtues from the silent grave.

It is not improbable that this pensive poetess derived the first idea of this elegant and sentimental sonnet from the tender address of Mason to the spirit of his departed and dearly-beloved wife. The reader must excuse my adding it, long as this note already is, from the beginning of the first book of his English Garden. He is not writing, the poet tells us, to "court the world's applause;"

No—tis to soothe
That agony of heart, which they, alone,
Who best have lov'd, who best have been belov'd,
Can feel, or pity; sympathy severe!
Which she too felt, when, on her pallid lip,
The last farewell hung trembling, and bespoke
A wish to linger here, and bless the arms
She left, for heaven. She died, and heaven i-
ers!
Be mine the pensive, solitary balm
That recollection yields. Yes, angel pure!
While Mem'ry holds her seat, thine image still
Shall reign, shall triumph there; and when, as now,
Imagination forms a nymph divine
To lead the fluent train, thy modest blush,
Thy mild demeanour, thy unpractis'd smile,
Shall grace that nymph, and sweet Simplicity
Be drest, (ah, meek Maria!) in thy charms.

Ver. 930. ["Nor time destroy th' eternal grief we feel."]
Thus Virgil, and in almost the same words:
Nulla dies quam memori vos eximet aev.

Æn. ix. 447.
No time your mem'ry ever shall destroy.
DE RERUM NATURA.

Lib. III.

Illud ab hoc igitur quærundum est, quid sit amari
Tanto opere, ad somnum si res redit, atque quietem,
Quur quisquam æterno possit tabescere luctu?

Hocē etiam faciunt, ubi discubuere tenentque
Pocula sæpe homines, et inumbrant ora coronis;

And thus Ercilla, probably with an eye equally
directed to the whole of this address of our own
poet:

Que y ál el dolor me ha puesto en tal estremo
Que mas la vida que la muerte temo.
Que no se mal que y á dañar me pueda
Ni ay bien mayor que no le aver tenido,
Acabese y fenezca lo que queda
Puesque mi dolce amigo ha fenevido.

For, in such grief I draw my lingering breath,
Life is my dread beyond the pangs of death:
There is no ill that now can wound my breast,
No good, but what 1 in my love possesst.
Fly then! ye hours, that keep me from the dead;
For he, the spirit of my life, is fled.

HAYLEY.

Ver. 940. *What then has death, if death be more
repose,
And quiet only in a peaceful grave.
What has it thus to war this life of man?*

Ovid has thus imitated this passage with much spirit
and felicity:

Stulte, quid est somnus, gelidæ nisi mortis imago?
Longa quiescendi tempora fata dabunt.

Amor. ii. 941.

Say, what is sleep, thon fool! but Death's re-
pose?
And long the time for slumber fate bestows.

It is impossible, in this place, not to be reminded
of the very elegant epigram of our late worthy poet-
laureat, Dr. T. Warton, designed to have been
placed beneath a statue of Sleep, in the classic garden
of his friend Mr. Harris, and for the idea of which
he was certainly indebted to Lucretius:

Sonne levis! quanquam certissima mortis imago,
Consortem cupid te, tamen esse tori:
Alma quies, optata veni; nam, sic, sine vitâ
Vivere, quam suave est; sic sine morte, mori.

Dr. Walcot has well translated this; but the
translation loses somewhat of the resemblance to Lu-
cretius, which is contained in the original:

Come, gentle Sleep, attend thy votary's prayer,
And, though Death's image, to my couch repair!
How sweet, thus lifeless, yet with life to lie,
Thus, without dying, O how sweet to die!

These frequent imitations, however, by poets in
later periods, are not in the least to be wondered at:
for, as it is justly observed by Mr. Wakefield, "the
lines in the present book, from ver. 858, to its con-
clusion, are to be ranked with the most noble mo-
ments of ancient letters; not, indeed, yielding to
any of the poetical efforts of Greece herself; so po-
lished are they, and smooth, so serious, magnificent
and pathetic, that nothing can possibly exceed them;
and so deeply do they penetrate, as it were, to the
very marrow of the soul." Haud dubitaverim affir-
mare hos ducenos et quinquagens fere versus, ad
hujusce libri finem, esse vel nobilissimis antiquarum
literarum reliquis annuendos; neque ipsius qui-
dem Graecie poëtas velim excipi: adeo sunt omnia
climata, numerosa, magnifica, gravia, tabernis, ut nihil
supra; et usque ad medullam animæ penetrantia.

Ver. 943. — *E'en o'er the festive board,
The glass while grasping, and with garlands
crown'd.*] Dryden has well paraphrased
the whole of this passage, as he has, indeed, all the
remaining verses of this book:
Book III.  

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

What then has death, if death be mere repose,
And quiet only in a peaceful grave,
What has it thus to mar this life of man?
Yet mar it does. E'en o'er the festive board,
The glass while grasping, and, with garlands crown'd,

When healths go round, and kindly brimmers flow,
Till the fresh garlands on their foreheads glow,
They whine and cry, "Let us make haste to live;
Short are the joys that human life can give!"

Eternal preachers! who corrupt the draught,
And pall the god, who never thinks, with thought:
Idots! with all that thought, to whom the worst
Of death, is want of drink, and endless thirst.

Nothing was so common, amidst the festivals of
all ancient nations, as the introduction of wreaths or
garlands of flowers. In the nuptial ceremonies of the
Hebrews, the bridegroom was always encircled with
a costly ornament of this kind, which is the decoration
referred to by Isaiah in cap. lx. 10. and in some
readings, is literally so rendered. It is also more
clearly designated in various places of the Psalms,
and especially in the Song of Songs. But, at other
feasts, as well as at the bridal banquet, a similar
chaplet was introduced: thus, in Lamentations,
cap. v. 15.

The joy of our heart is ceased!
Our dance is turned into mourning!
The crown is fallen from our heads!

Anacreon is perpetually alluding to the same cus-
tom; and hence the following verses of Sophocles:

Κινεῖς οὔτε στέφανος,
Οὔτε θανάτου κολκάν
Νυμφίος ἡπτέρριν ὀμῖλον
Οὔτε γλαυκός αὐλον στῦναι.

AJAX FLAG.

By war disturb'd, the genial board
No longer will its sweets afford;
Their fragrant odours round my head
The verdant wreaths no longer spread;
Nor music's charms my soul delight.

MR. CUMBERLAND has hence, with much pro-
priety, decorated Belial with a similar chaplet, whom
Milton had before celebrated as the demon of
wine and concupiscence:

—around his temples twin'd

A wreath of roses; and, where'er he pass'd,
His garments fann'd a breeze of rich perfume.

CALVARY.

Among the Greeks and Romans, however, not
only the visitors themselves were encircled with
garlands of flowers, but even the servants, and the gob-
lets as well. Thus, Homer:

—Κρεπτης επιστέφανα τοποῖα:
Their flowing bowls they crown'd.

And Virgil:

Tum pater Anchises magnum cratera coronà
Induit, implevitque mero.

Then round the bowl a roset crown profuse
Anchises twin'd, and fill'd with sparkling juice.

At times, indeed, the floor itself of the room in
which the festive train assembled, was completely
strewed with roses and other odorous flowers; and
Pliny expressly tells us, that this voluptuous ceremo-
yony was adopted to dispel, by the fragrance of
the perfume, that heaviness and stupefaction which
too frequently succeed excessive drinking. Hist.
Nat. xxii. 19. It is a custom still prevalent in Per-
sia and Arabia, and is alluded to in the following
stanzas of Rakeek, one of the improvisitori minstrels
of the latter country, who existed during the most
flourishing period of the Caliphate. The translation is
by Mr. Carlyle, and occurs in his specimens of Ara-
bian poetry:

Though the prevish tongues upbraid,
Though the brows of wisdom scowl,
Ex animo ut dicant, “Brevis hicc' est fructus homullis:
“Jam fuerit; neque post umquam revocare licebit!”
Tamquam in morte mali cum primis hoc sit eorum,
Quod sitis exurat miseros atque arida torreat,
Aut alia quoius desiderium insideat rei.
Nec sibi enim quisquam tum se vitamque requiret,
Quom pariter mens et corpus, sopita, quiescunt;
Nam licet æternum per nos sic esse soporem:

Fair ones! here on roses laid,
Careless will we quaff the bowl.
There is a custom of high antiquity still retained
in Wales, which is not very different from this of
Greece and Arabia; but which, in point of innocence
and picturesque effect, is far more commendable: I mean that of collecting and strewing roses,
and other odoriferous flowers, at the annual village
wake of sheep-shearing, antecedently to the banquet
which is afterwards liberally provided for the artless
and honest swains. These fragrant flowers, however,
are not stewed in the open shade, under the coolness
of which the feast is celebrated; but, with a
kind of religious rite, borrowed, perhaps, many an
age ago, from the borderers upon the Ganges,
sprinkled over the river, in whose purifying stream
the ceremony of sheep-shearing has just been
completed, and whose limpid fulness affords them the
fairest promise of plenty for the ensuing year. Dyer,
in his Fleece, has not neglected to avail himself of
this picturesque custom; and he thus notices it with
true poetic skil:

—-with light fantastic toe the nymphs
Thither assembled, thither ev'ry swain:
And o'er the dimpled stream a thousand flowers,
Pale lilies, roses, violets, and pinks,
Mixt with the greens of burnet, mint, and thyme,
And trefoil, sprinkled with their sportive arms.—
Such custom holds along th' irreligious vales,

From Wreakin's brow to rocky Dolvoryn,
Sabrina's early haunt, ere yet she fled
The search of Guendolen, her step-dame proud,
With envious hate enraged. The jolly cheer
Spread on a mossy bank, untouch'd abides Till cease the rites; and now the mossy bank
Is gaily circled, and the jolly cheer
Dispers'd in copious measures. Book I.

Ver. 948. As if, in death, the worst such wretches
fear'd
Were thirst unquenched, parching ev'ry nerve.] It is probable, our poetic moralist alludes, in this
place, to the following of that hoary but musical
drunkard, Anacreon:

Thus elegantly, but diffusively translated by Mr.
Moore:

Age begins to blanch my brow,
I've time for nought but pleasure now.
Fly—and cool my goblet's glow
At yonder fountain's gilded flow;
I'll quaff, my boy, and calmly sink
This soul to slumber as I drink.
Soon, too soon, my jocund slave,
You'll deck your master's grassy grave;
The thoughtless maniacs oft indignant roar,
"How short the joys of wine!—e’en while we drink
Life ceases, and to-morrow ne’er returns!"
As if, in death, the worst such wretches fear’d
Were thirst unquenched, parching ev’ry nerve,
Or deem’d their passions would pursue them still.
Not anxious, thus, mankind the world resign
At evening hour when soul and body rest;

And there’s an end; for ah! you know
They drink but little wine below.

The Arabian poet Tarafa, however, surpasses
Anacreon infinitely in his devotion to the pleasures
of drinking; and, in the language of our poet, seems
literally afraid of unquenchable thirst after death.
It is thus he expresses himself in his Albecriyyo,
one of the seven poems that, on account of their
merit, were transcribed in letters of gold, and sus-
pended, where indeed we should scarcely have
expected to find a poem of this description, in the
temple at Mecca:

Fadhernei arawwefi hámete félí hhayááhá
Mekháfahá shirbin’ félí állhayáhí mosáarredi
Careímon’ yorawwefi nafsaho félí hhayáthí
Setálamo fín mutná gádán’ áyyoná álsádei

"Suffer me, whilst I live, to drench my head
with wine, lest, having drunk too little in my life-
time, I should be thirsty in another state.
"A man of my generous spirit drinks his full
draught to-day; and to-morrow, when we are dead,
it will be known which of us has not quenched his
thirst." Sir W. Jones.

Ver. 946. —"E’en while we drink
Life ceases,—] Juvenal has elegantly imi-
tated this querulous and impertinent observation
of the drinking debauchee in the following verses:

Nunc mihi quid suades post damnun temporis, et

Deceptas? Festinat enim decurrere, velox
Flosculus, anguste, miseraeque brevissima vite
Portio: dum bibimus, dum serva, unguenta puellas,
Poscimus, obrept non intellecta secutus.

Sat. ix. 125.

Now what’s thy antidote for hopes destroy’d?
Time basely murder’d? pleasures unenjoy’d?
Lo! the brief blossom hastens to decay
That, mid its sufferings, soothes life’s little day.
E’en while we drink, while girls and garland
cheer,
And flowing ointments—ideot age is here.

Ver. 949. —thirst unquenched, parching every
nerve,] This metaphorical mode of expressing
the effect of extreme thirst is by no means un-
common, either in ancient or modern times. Thus,
Ovid:

Copia nulla famem relevit: siti arida guttur
Urit.—

Met. xi. 129.

No store contents him; thirst unquenched still
Burns all his throat.

And Mr. Cumberland, in his Calvary, describing
the punishment of Satan:

Panting he roll’d in streams of scalding sweat,
Parch’d with intolerable thirst; one drop
Of water then to cool his raging tongue
Had been a boon worth all his golden shrines.
Nec desiderium nostri nos adigit ulla:
Et tamen haud quaquum nostros tunc illa per artus
Longè ab sensiferis primordia motibus errant;
Quom conraptus homo ex somno se conligit ipse.
Multa igitur mortem minus ad nos esse putandum est:
Si minus esse potest, quam quod nihil esse videmus.
Major enim turbâ disjectus materia\i
Consequitur letò; nec quisquam expergitus exstat,
Frigida quem semel est vitaï pausa sequûta.

Denique, si vocem rerum Natura repente
Mittat, et hocc' aliquòi nostrûm sic increpèt ipsa:
"Quid tibi tanto opere est, Mortalis, quod nimis ægris
Luctibus indulges? Quid mortem congemis, ac fles?
Nam, gratum fuerit tibi vita ante acta, priorque,
Et non omnia, pertusum congrega quasi in vas,
Conmoda perfluxere, atque ingrata interiere;
Quur non, ut, plenus vitæ, conviva, recedis,
Æquò animoque capis securam, stultè, quietem?

Ver. 972. "Why quist thou not, thou fool! the feast of life
"Fill'd,—\] Horace has an imitation of
this passage, in the following verses:
Unde fit ut raro, qui se vixisse beatum

Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore vitae
Cedat, uti conviva satur, reperire queamus. Sat. i. 1.
Whence thus unfrequent see we that the man,
Who, blest through life, has reach'd its utmost span,
Nor would they though that rest were ne’er to end: Nor thus the day’s desire pursues their dreams; Though then the seeds of sense not wander far From sensile movements, scarcely, oft, allay’d, And quick resum’d when starts the soul at morn. Of much less moment, then, should death be held Than sleep, if aught can less than that which ne’er Moment excites whatever; for the crowd Of sensile seeds are wider here disperst; Nor wakes he e’er to action, and the day, Whose frame once feels the chilling pause of life.

Were then the Nature of Created Things To rise abrupt, and thus repining man

Address—“O mortal! whence these useless fears?
“ This weak, superfluous sorrow? why th’ approach
“ Dread’st thou of death? For if the time elaps’d
“ Have smil’d propitious, and not all its gifts,
“ As though adventur’d in a leaky vase,
“ Been idly wasted, profitless, and vain—
“ Why quit’st thou not, thou fool! the feast of life
“ Fill’d,—and with mind all panting for repose?

Should, like the guest, contented with his fare, Rise from the feast, nor ask an ampler share.

Thus, too, Cicero, de Senectute, ad fin. Ex vita ita dixi de, tanquam ex hospitio, non tamen ex domo: commorandi enim natura diversorium nobis, non habitandi dedit. “I depart from life as from a caravansary, and not from a home; for nature has given to us a house of entertainment rather than a mansion.”
"Sin ea, quæ fructus quomque es, periere profusa;
"Vitaque in obsenso est; quœ amplius addere quœris,
"Rursum quod pereat, mali, et ingratum obcidat omne? 955
"Non potius vitae finem jacis, atque laboris?
"Nam, tibi praeterea quod machiner inveniamque,
"Quod placeat, nihil est: eadem sunt omnia semper.
"Si tibi non annis corpus jam marcat, et artus
"Confectae languent; eadem tamen omnia restant,
"Omnia si perges vivendo vincere secla;
"Atque etiam potius, si numquam sis moriturus:'—
Quid respondemus, nisi justam intendere litem
Naturam, et veram verbis exponere caussam?

At, qui obitum lamentetur miser amplius æquo,
Non merito inclamet magis, et voce increpet acri?
"Aufer, ab hinc, lacrumas, Barathre, et conpesce querelas.'
Grandior heic vero si jam, seniorque, queratur:
"Omnia perfunctus vita praemia, marces;
"Sed, quia semper aves, quod abest, praesentia tenmis, 970

Ver. 979. —"things for ever things succeed
"Unchang'd,—and would do, though revolving years, &c.] To the same effect, Sophocles:
Αἰχμον γαρ ἀνδρα τον μακρο περπατησαι,
Κακοσιν έστις μαλι τελλασσατει,
Τι γαρ παρ' ημαρ ἀγιε τερπεν εγι,
Προδινα κακαίσα τον γε καθάλων, Ajax, Flag.

When life but teems with unremitted woes
'Tis poor in man to wish a longer date:
For what can day on day, and year on year,
But put off wish'd-for death, and lengthen pain?

Franklin.

Ver. 992. "What! thou lament? already who hast recog'd
"An ample harvest? —] If an interpreter
"But if thyself have squander'd every boon,
"And of the past grown weary—why demand
"More days to kill, more blessings to pervert,
"Nor rather headlong hasten to thine end?
"For nothing further can my powers devise
"To please thee;—things for ever things succeed
"Unchang'd,—and would do, though revolving years
"Should spare thy vigour, and thy brittle frame
"Live o'er all time: e'en ampler would'st thou then
"Mark how unvaried all creation moves."—

Were Nature thus t' address us, could we fail

To feel the justice of her keen rebuke?

So true the picture, the advice so sage!

But to the wretch who moans th' approach of death

With grief unmeasur'd, louder might she raise

Her voice severe—"Vile coward! dry thine eyes—"

"Hence with thy sniv'ling sorrows, and depart!"

Should he, moreo'er, have past man's mid-day hour—

"What! thou lament? already who hast reap'd

were necessary in this place, Terence would readily
supply the office, by the following apt parallelism:

—Nihil pol jam isthuc mihi res voluptatis ferunt:
Dum ætatis tempus tuit, perfuncta satis sum:
    satias jam tenet
Studiorum istorum: haze mihi nunc cura est
    maxuma, ut ne cui mea
Longinquitas ætatis obstet; mortemve expectet
    meum.

Heic video me esse invisam innerito: tempus est
    concedere.
Heaut. IV. iii. 17.

For joys like these I care not, at this hour;
I've had my portion, and still own their pow'r.
Now all I ask for is, that I may ne'er
Rob, by long life, another of his share;
Tempt him my death to long for, as too slow,
And hate my sight;—I feel 'tis time to go.
DE RERUM NATURA. 

"Inperfecta tibi elabsa est, ingrataque, vita; "
"Et nec opinanti mors ad caput adstitit ante, "
"Quam satur, ac plenus, possis discedere, rerum. "
"Nunc aliena tuæ tamen ætate omnia mitte, "
"Æquō animoque, age dum, magnis concede; necesse est:" 975
Jure, ut opinor, agat; jure increpet, inciletque.
Cedit enim, rerum novitate extrusa, vetustas
Semper, et ex aliis alius reparare necesse est:
Nec quisquam in barathrum, nec Tartara deditur atra.
Materies opus est, ut crescant postera secla:
Quæ tamen omnia te, vitæ perfuncta, sequentur:
Nec minus ergo ante hæc, quam tu, cecidere cadentque.
Sic alid ex alio numquam desistet oriri:
Vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu.

Ver. 993. — "by desiring thus
"The past once more, the present thou abhor'st.

Our poet refers to the following passage of Democritus: Ανοιγον τινι αποστοι οφθαλμτι αν αποστοι, και
παρεξηγουμεν χρησαμεν εις, αμαλδινουσιν. The text itself renders an express version superfluous.

Ver. 998. "Leave, then, to others bliss thy years should shun;
"Come, cheerful leave it, since still leave thou must."] Thus, Horace, to the same effect; and, as Lamminus has observed, with an eye directed to this passage of our own poet:
Vivere si recte nescis, decedere péritis.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti;
Tempus abire tibi est. 

Ep. ii. 2.

Life now grown tasteless, from its banquet rise,
And leave to others who may better prize.
Deep hast thou drench'd its sports, its feats, its wine,—
To others leave them, to depart is thine.

To the same effect is the following passage of Persius, deriving an equal benefit from the labours of our poet:
Indulge genio; carpanus dulcia; nostrum est
Quod vivis: ehis, et manes, et fabula fies.
Vive memori lethi: fugit hora. 

Sat. v. 151.
Book III. THE NATURE OF THINGS.

"An ample harvest? by desiring thus
"The past once more, the present thou abhor'st,
"And life flies on imperfect, unenjoy'd,
"And death untimely meets thee, ere thy soul,
"Cloy'd with the banquet, is prepar'd to rise.
"Leave, then, to others bliss thy years should shun;
"Come cheerful leave it, since still leave thou must."

Justly I deem might Nature thus reprove:
For, through creation, old to young resigns,
And this from that matures; nor aught descends
To the dread gulphs, the fancied shades of hell.
The mass material must survive entire
To feed succeeding ages, which, in turn,
Like thee shall flourish, and like thee shall die;
Nor more the present ruins than the past.
Thus things from things ascend; and life exists
To none a freehold, but a use to all.

Ah! think, vain schemer! how the moments fly; The instant now observ'd, is time gone by;
Seize, then, the hour; thy way with roses strew,
Thy days make happy, for they must be few:
Enjoy the world, ere yet oblivion be,
And dust and ashes all that rest of thee.

Drummond.

Ver. 1005. — succeeding ages, which, in turn,
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There is an opposite and admirable description of the

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Enjoy the world, ere yet oblivion be,
And dust and ashes all that rest of thee.

Drummond.

Ver. 1005. — succeeding ages, which, in turn,
Like thee shall flour
Respice item, quam nihil ad nos ante acta vetustas
Temporis æterni fuerit, quam nascimur, ante.
Hoc' igitur speculum nobis Natura futuri
Temporis exponit post mortem denique nostram.
Num quid ibi horribile adparet ? Num triste videtur
Quidquam ? Non omni somno securius exstat ?

Atqui animarum etiam, quæquamque Acherunte profundo
Prodita sunt esse, in vitâ sunt omnia nobis:

Par un meme destin il ne pensera plus !
Non, rien n’est plus certain, soyons-en con-
vaincu.

Just like the past, dear Keith, the future view :
As, cre my being, thought I never knew,
So, after death, when once my limbs shall part,
And gross corruption banquet on my heart,
By the same destiny I think no more.—
No—tis a truism—nought can be so sure.

Ver. 1016. *The tales of hell exist not—* So, Ju-
venal :
Esse aliquos Manes, et subterranea regnâ
Et contum, et Stygjio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque unà transire vadum tot millia cymbâ,
Nec pueri credunt, nisi qui nondum ære lavantur.

II. 149.
That angry Justice form’d a dreadful hell,
That ghosts in subterranean regions dwell,
That hateful Styx his muddy current rolls,
And Charon ferries o’er unbodied souls,
Are now as tales, or idle fables pris’d,
By children question’d, and by men despis’d.

*Giffard.*

Ver. 1016. *The tales of hell exist not in the grave,
But here, and curse us living.—* The poet
proceeds to assert, and illustrate, that all the fables
of the popular mythology, respecting future punish-
ments, are merely allegorical representations of the ef-
fects of vice, and illicit passions, in the present world ;
Book III.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Reflect, moreo'er, how less than nought to us
Weighs the long portion of eternal time
Fled ere our birth: so, too, the future weighs
When death dissolves us. What of horror, then,
Dwells there in death? what gloomy, what austere?
Can there be elsewhere slumber half so sound?

The tales of hell exist not in the grave,
But here, and curse us living. TANTALUS,

and selects, for this purpose, the well-known instances of Tantalus, Tityus, Sisyphus, and the daughters of Danæus. In this explanation, he has been copied by the Abbé Pellegrin, in the prologue to whose drama of Le Nouveau Monde, Mercury thus addresses Astrea:

De plus affreux transports, des plus noirs fureurs
J'ai trouvé la terre agitée;
Elle est fertile en successeurs
De Tity et de Promethee,
Les Tantales, les Ixions
Ont inondé vote patrie;
Et l'empire de flots a bien moins de furie
Que le règne des passions.

Of hideous joys, and furies fell,
Mankind I found the constant sport;
Prometheus, Tityus, seem'd from hell
Their fiercest toils and pangs t'import.
There, many a Tantalus, in vain,
Strives;—while new wheels th' Ixions scourage.
Upbraid, no more, the stormy main—
A dier storm the passions urge.

Ver. 1017. — TANTALUS,
With broad, rough rock impending o'er his head,
According to the mythology of the Greeks, Tantalus was a son of Jupiter, by the nymph Plote; he was also king of Phrygia, and grandfather of Agamemnon and Menelaus. It is fabulously reported of him, that, on some signal occasion, he invited the gods to an entertainment; and, to prove their pretensions to divinity, had his own son Pelops sacrificed, and served up in a dish at the table. We are told, also, that all the deities, excepting Ceres, were conscious of the barbarity committed, and immediately sentenced him to everlasting punishment in hell. The nature of this punishment is differently related: the more general fable asserts, that he was placed in the river Eridanus, with his head alone raised above the water, and perpetually tormented with hunger and thirst; both which appetites he was precluded from gratifying, notwithstanding that the tip of his tongue was suffered to touch the water in which he was immersed, and that a large quantity of tempting apples were hung immediately around his head. It is to this fable Horace refers, in the following lines:

Tantalus à labris sitiens fugientia captat
Flumina. Quid rides? mutato nomine, de te
Fabula narratur. Congestis undique sacci
Indormis inhians, et tanquam parere sacris
Cogeris, aut pictis tanquam gaudere tabellis.

In a full flood stands Tantalus,—his skin
Wash'd o'er in vain; for ever dry within:
He catches at the stream with greedy lips;
From his touch'd mouth the wanton torrent slips.
You laugh? yet, change the name, the fable is thy story;
Thou in a flood of useless wealth dost glory;

3 U 2
Nec miser inpendens magnum timet, aëre, saxum
Tantalus, ut fama est, cassâ formidine torpens;
Sed magis in vitâ divôm metus urguet inanis
Mortaleis; casumque timent, quem quoique ferat fors.

Nec Tityon volucrese ineunt, Acherunte jacentem;
Nec, quid sub magnó scrutinur pectore, quidquam
Perpetuam ætatem possunt reperire profectó,
Quam lubet inmani projectu corporis extet:
Qui non sola novem dispersis jugera membris
Obtineat, sed qui terraî totius orbem,
Non tamen jeternum poterit perferre dolorem;
Nec præbere cibum proprio de corpore semper.
Sed Tityos nobis hicc'est, in amore jacentem
Quem volucrese lacerant, atque exest anxius angor:

Which thou canst only touch, but never taste
Th' abundance still, and still the want does last.

Cowley.

But Lucretius supposes a different punishment,
and deduces, in some degree, a different moral: he
represents him as placed in the infernal regions with
a large rock impending over his head, the dread of
whose fall for ever terrifies him. In this delineation
he is supported by many of the Greek poets, particu-
larly EURIPIDES, in his Orestes, and Pindar, in the
following passage:

---kore d' elen

Αταν ύπερπολο
Ται ει πατρυ ύπερφιμη-
στι, καταραν αυτω λιβον,
Τυν αυτ' μενανιν κεφαλας βελον,
Ενφρονινα αλαται.

On. Olymp. i. 92.
A ponderous stone the sire of all
Hung, tottering, o'er the caitiff's head;
The stone for ever seem'd to fall,
And fill'd his joyless heart with dread.

Ver. 1022. Nor {Tityus} there exists, the prey of birds.]
Tityus was, likewise, according, to the popular
mythology, a son of Jupiter by Elara, daughter of
Orchomenus. He attempted to force Latona, the
mother of Apollo by Jupiter, to his libidinous de-
sires: for which he was sentenced to the punish-
ment our poet adverts to in this passage, and which Ho-
mer has given more fully in the following:

Και Τιτυους οδον, γανις ερυκοδος νομι,
Κεφαλας εν δαιµων δ' ιτι μενα κενο τελετα
Τυτι δι μιν έκατερε παραμενης πτα ρεκφος,
Δειριαν εον δονοτης, &c.  

Odys. 1. 578.

There, Tityus, large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erspreads nine acres of infernal ground;
Two ravenous vultures, furious for their food,
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,
With broad, rough rock impending o’er his head,
And craz’d with terror, there is never seen:
But terror dwells with mortals—fate they fear,
And fortune, and a host of fancied gods.

Nor Tytus there exists, the prey of birds.
Nor, though he did, could these the victim’s breast
Consume for ever; e’en though his wide bulk,
Not thrice three acres merely might extend,
But cover the vast globe; nor could he bear
Eternal pain, nor yield perpetual food.
But he is Tytus, and by vultures torn,
Whose anxious breast the rage of love devours;

Incessant gore the liver in his breast,
Th’ immortal liver grows, and gives th’ immortal feast.
For, as o’er Panope’s enamell’d plains
Latona journey’d to the Phthian fanes,
With haughty love th’ audacious monster strove
To force the goddess, and to rival Jove.

Macrobius conceives this celebrated fable to pre-
figure a different affection of the mind from that of-
fered by Lucretius; and to refer to the everlasting stings of a guilty conscience, preying, without inter-
ruption, upon the bosoms of the wicked, Som. Scip. i. 10, while Lope de Vega transfers to Tantalus the allusion which Lucretius finds in Tytus. The verses of the Spanish poet, upon this subject, are beautiful, and well worth inserting and translating. They occur in the Hermosura de Angelica:

Querer y non decirlo, arder y elarse,
Y, clandose, en el fuego consumirse,

Mirar con sed el agua, y refrenarse;
Acometer el bien, y arrepentirse;
Aver de ser el mal, y dilatarse,
Tener la possession, y despedirse,
Es la pena de Tantalos, que luego
Que mira amor, no lo es, que amor es ciego.

To wish, yet ne’er divulge—to burn, yet freeze;
And e’en, while freezing, to consume with fire;
To view the brook athirst, yet never seize;
To aim at bliss, and then repent in ire;
To tread o’er ills still lengthening at the touch,
To grasp delights that all possession spurn—
Such is the fate of Tantalus—and such
To love the fair, that loves not in return.

Thus Gray, in his Ode on Eton College:
RERUM NATURA.

Lib. III.

Aut alia quâ vis scindunt turpedine curæ.
Sisyphus in vitâ quoque nobis ante oculos est,
Qui petere a populo fasces, sævasque secures,
Inhibit; et semper victus, tristisque, recedit.
Nam petere imperium, quod inane est, nec datur umquam;
Atque in eo semper durum subferre laborem;
Hocc' est, advorso nixantem trudere monte
Saxum: quod tamen a summo jam vortice rursum
Volvitur, et plani raptim petit Æquora campi.

Deinde, animi ingratiam naturam pascere semper,
Atque explere bonis rebus, satiareque, numquam;
Quod faciunt nobis annorum tempora, circum
Quom redeunt, fetusque ferunt, variosque lepores;
Nec tamen explemur vitai fructibus umquam:
Hocc', ut opinor, id est, Ævo florente puellas,

Or pining love shall waste their youth,
Or jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart.

Ver. 1031. Here, too, is Sisyphus—] Sisyphus
was the son of Æolus, and captain of a horde of
banditti, that, for a long time, infested Attica; he
was, at length, slain by Theseus, king of Athens.
Out of compliment to Theseus, the Greek mytholo-
gists feigned that this lawless ruffian, after having
been sentenced to hell, was condemned to the perpe-
tual toil of rolling a heavy stone to the summit of a
mountain, which instantly tumbled back, and com-
pelled him to renew his labour. The moral, which
Lucretius imagines to be concealed under this fable,
is precisely the same as that conjectured by Macro-
bius: "saxum," says he, "ingens volvere ineffica-
cibus, laboriosisque conatibus, vitam terentes, atram
silicem lapsuram, semper et cadenti simul, illorum
capitibus imminere, qui arduas potestates, et infaus-
tam ambiunt tyrannidem, nunquam sine timore vic-
turi, et cogentes subjectum vulgus odisse, dum me-
tuat, semper sibi videntur exitium, quod merentur
excipere. Ubi supr. The version of Lucretius ren-
ders a translation unnecessary.

It is well known, that the description of this pu-
nishment in Homer exhibits a most masterly hand;
and that its version by Pope is altogether worthy of
the original. My readers will not, therefore, be dis-
pleased to find the parallel passage of the Grecian
Or aught of passion equal in its force.

Here, too, is Sisyphus—the man who pants
For public honours, and the giddy crowd
Caresses ever, ever but in vain.
For thus to toil for power, itself at best
A bubble, and that bubble ne’er to boast,
Yet still toil on—is doubtless to roll back,
Up the high hill, the huge, stern, struggling stone;
That which, the steep peak once urg’d up, rebounds
Rapid, resistless, all over the plain.

Then, too, to feed th’ ungrateful mind, and fill
With every good, while still it craves for more,
(As feed mankind the seasons in their turn,
With fruits, and endless beauties, while themselves
Still riot on, and never have enough,)
This, or I err, the fable well unfolds,

The rapidity of the last line in Homer scarcely surpasses that of Lucretius, and the difficulty of the toil expressed in the antecedent verse, not much.
Lucretius has adopted precisely the sudden pause of Homer, prior to the change of the numbers. As to the translation of Pope, I by no means aspire to equal it: it becomes me, however, to insert it, although, undoubtedly, to my own disadvantage:

I turn’d my eye, and, as I turn’d, survey’d
A mournful vision! the Sisyphian shade;
With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone;
The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
Thunder impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.
Quod memorant, laticem pertusum congerere in vas;
Quod tamen expleri nullâ ratione potestur.

Ver. 1045. *This, or I err, the fable will unfolds,*

Frign’d of the damsel, &c.—] It is reported, in fabulous history, that Danaüs, king of the Argives, had fifty daughters, who were married to the fifty sons of Ægysthus, the brother of Danaüs; and that forty-nine out of these fifty sisters, for Hypermnestra could not be prevailed upon to unite in the plot, acceded to the barbarous proposal of their father, and massacred their husbands on the bridal night. Popular mythology represents them as sentenced, in consequence of so inhuman a crime, to the dreadful abodes of hell; and condemned to toil for ever, in filling a leaky vessel with water, which escaped as fast as it could be poured in.

This fable is stated, by the Bryantine hypothesis, to be of Chaldean or Egyptian origin; and to refer to the arkite worship propagated over Greece by some of the wandering Cushite colonies, after their desertion of the plain of Shinar, or the valley of Goshen. I have formerly observed, see note on Book II. v. 1167, that Mr. Bryant conjectured Danaüs, literally, Da-Naus, “the ark or ship,” to have been the same person with Noah,—the machine he had constructed, being called, as is customary even in modern days, after his own name. In consequence of which, from Noah or Naus, which is the same word with a Greek termination, is derived an appellation for every similar vessel in most of the languages of Europe. Thus, in Greek, Nau; Latin, Navis; French, Navire; Spanish and Portuguese, Navio; Italian, Navigio.

But Danaüs, it seems, was the brother of Ægystheus, which, upon the same system, is Ai-C-Es-Theus, and, with the common Ionic contraction, Ai-C-Es-Theus, “the place of the temple of the glorious Theus.” Thus, or Thoth, however, as I have already observed in the above note, was an appellation, among the Chaldeans, for the Creator, or deity supremely adored; and when the idolatrous descendants of Ham first transferred the worship of the true God to the Sun, the Serpent, the Ark, and the builder of the Ark, Noah was also denominated Thenth, Xuth, or Zuth, whence both Zos and Oos; whence, also, Δεος and Deos, and many other parallel terms both in ancient and modern languages. See note as above on Book II. v. 1167.

The affinity here specified, therefore, as subsisting between Danaüs and Ægysthus, and fabulously denominated a broth’rhood, is easily accounted for, by conceiving the two terms to refer to an hypothesis of Noah, and the Temple or hierarchy instituted to his honour. If this be admitted, it is easy to conceive, that the fifty sons and the fifty daughters were so many priests and priestesses employed in the idolatrous worship. And the marriage and barbarous plot here stated to have ensued, may refer to some fresh vow, mutually entered into, of additional superstition, together with the sudden breach of that vow, on the part of many of the votaries, as soon as it had been consummated, and their desertion to the worship of the Sun, the Serpent, or some other deity. The name of Hypermnestra, the only female who refused to comply with the dishonest proposal of the sisterhood is almost literally, Hyp-Ur-Menes-Tar-A, and, with a Doric contraction, Hyp-Ur-M’nes-T’r-A: once more signifying, as though conferred distinctively upon herself, in consequence of her peculiar fidelity, “the place of the ark of the profound and illustrious Noah.” On the word Hyp, (ἡμ in among the Egyptians,) I have already commented in note on Book II. v. 1167, and have there shown, that it was the express and direct term for a boat, barge, or ship; and the word by which the ark of Noah, or Thoth, was described when these names were not figuratively selected for the purpose. And it is curious to observe, that almost every European language, which has not derived its appellation for a water-carriage from the Chaldean term Noah, has been indebted to this additional radical. Hence the Greek Ἴαρος applied, first of all, to ships and water-carriages, which were beautifully and poetically denominated horses of Neptune, and afterwards transferred to horses of
Feign'd of the damsels doom'd, in flow'r of youth,
To fill for ever the still leaking urn.

every species: hence the Saxon, reci; the German, Schiff; the Dutch, schippen; and our own English term ship, differing from the Egyptian alone by the prefix of a single letter. Hence too, at the present day, the Coptics apply the same word ги to the Ibis, which is an aquatic fowl of the crane kind: and hence, probably, the Ethiopic ṣḥ (Hybo) "copious dew;"—water, the immediate element of the Hyp, Ship, or Ibis.

The next term, of which the name Hypermnestra, Hyp-Ur-Mn's-T'r-A, is compounded, is Ur. But Ur or Or, upon the theory now referred to, is the Sun, or God of fire;—it forms the radical of the Egyptian Osiris, and constitutes a part of the Greek nouns, Hercules and Phrygia. The proposed etymology of the word Menes, I have already remarked upon in the note above referred to, Book II. v. 1167: and observed that, from various traditions and authors, it is conceived to be only an additional name for Noah, or whatever other deity was worshiped as the First Parent of all things; whence, obviously, Menas, Minos, Menon, Meno, Moon, Mω, Mahēna, (the same as Mω and Moon,) in the Friendly Isles of the Pacific Ocean, which, both from language and religious rites, are plausibly supposed, by modern authors, to have been peopled from the descendants of Chus.

The term Tar, implies dark, deep, or mysterious. Hence Tartarus, which is only a reduplication of the same word, so as to bestow on it a superlative signification, and imply something extremely dark, extremely deep, or mysterious: and hence again ἐρυθρός (taras) "the foot," being the deepest, or lowest part of the body. Thus, also, the Hebrew הרה ("Targum," "interpretation," rendered conversely, and of course the opposite to mystery. The word :init with this compound terminates, is of similar import with Ai in the foregoing Ai- C'-Es-Theus (Ægyptheus) and refers to place, or situation.

The punishment to which these faithless damsels were doomed, is supposed to prove that the entire fable, is of Arkite and Egyptian origin. In

commemoration of the deliverance of the great father of the human race from the flood, (whether under the name of Thoth, Danaus, Menes, or Osiris, which last was another appellation bestowed upon him,) the Egyptians are known to have instituted a peculiar religious rite, which consisted in the procession of a consecrated ark or vessel, carried in triumph through the streets, as a token of the safe debarkation of the patriarch. Upon this ceremony, Plutarch expressly informs us, de Isid. et Osyrid. that, "on the nineteenth of the month Choiax (corresponding with the sixteenth of our December), they descend into the sea, and the keepers of the robes, together with the priests, take out the consecrated chest, which contains within itself a little ark of gold, ἱστος Ị Μώντως, into which they pour clean water, and proclaim by a shout, from all the multitude present, that Osiris is safe." The filling the ark with water was designed, most probably, to designate that it was sound, and free from leaking: and the punishment fabulously bestowed upon these unfaithful priestesses, to typify, in the first place, the breaches they had committed upon it, and, secondly, to bestow upon them a reward due to their infidelity. It is obvious, from this sketch, that most of the preceding fables are, in like manner, referable to a Babylonian or Egyptian origin. But it would protract the present commentary to an insufferable length, and be wandering too far from its main design, to pursue this subject any further.

Ver. 1046. —the damsels doom'd, in flow' r of youth;
"Ævo florente puellas." This elegant metaphor of Lucretius has been so often copied into every language as to become completely rationalized in all. Virgil himself has not been inattentive to it:

Ante urbem pueri et primo flore juventus
Exercen tur equis. Æn. vii. 162.

The panting youth, in all their vernal flower,
Essay'd their coursers.

Ennius, however, precedes Lucretius in a verse to the same effect, which has been highly extolled by Cicero. It relates to Cethuges:

Vol. I.
Cerberus, et Furiae, jam vero, et lucis egestas;
Tartarus, horriferos eructans faucibus æstus;
Quae neque sunt usquam, nec possunt esse, profecto:
Sed metus in vitâ poenarum pro male factis
Est insignibus insignis; scelerisque lucla
Carcer, et horribilis de saxo jactus eorum,
Verbera, carnufices, robur, pix, lamina, tædae:
Quæ tamen et si absunt, at mens, sibi conscia factis,
Præmetuens, adhibet stimulos, torretque flagellis:
Nec videt interea, qui terminus esse malorum
Possit, quive siet poenarum denique finis:
Atque eadem metuit magis, hæc ne in morte gravescunt.

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Flores illebus populj, suadæque medulla
The people's choicest flower, persuasion's pith.
So Dryden, in our own language, in his Alexander's Feast:
Lovely Thaïs, at his side,
Sat like a blooming eastern bride
In flower of youth, and beauty's pride.
Buchanan has culled, and introduced the same metaphor into his Jephthes. It forms a part of his description of Iphis, the Iphigenia of the sacred writings:
Florem juventæ defect ille, et siderum
Similes ocellos.—
These, her sweet flower of youth deplor'd, her eyes
Radiant as stars.

With this explanation, the following passage in Nahum will receive additional beauty, and prove, at the same time, that the poetry of the Hebrews was not insensible to the value of this metaphor:

He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry;
And drieth up all the rivers.

Bashan languisheth, and Carmel:
Yea—the flower of Lebanon languisheth.

Ver. 1048. The Furies, Cerberus, and Hell itself
Of light devoid, and belching from its jaws
Tremendous fires,—live not, nor can they live.:]
There is more unnecessary paraphrase in the corresponding passage in Marchetti, than I have observed in any other part of his version:

Ver. 1048. ——Hell itself
Of light devoid, and belching from its jaws
Tremendous fires,—] Thus Milton, evidently derived from Lucretius:
The Furies, Cerberus, and Hell itself
Of light devoid, and belching from its jaws
Tremendous fires, live not, nor can they live:
But well they paint the dread of justice here
For crimes atrocious, the reward of guilt,
The scourge, the wheel, the block, the dungeon deep,
The base-born hangman, the Tarpeian cliff;
Which, though the villain 'scape, his conscious soul
Still fears perpetual, tort'ring all his days,
And still foreboding heavier pangs at death.

Par. Lost, i. 151.
The following description of Gesner will not appear contemptible, and it may be amusing to have an opportunity of comparing it: "Der fürchterliche wiederschein, den jenseit der gebirge emporwallende flammen in die wolken hinstreut, goss braune d'imrrinig auf das schwarze dunkel." "The fearful reflexion which the flickering flames on the opposite side of the hill scattered through the clouds, gave a dan twilights to the black darkness."

Death of Abel, Book III.

Ver. 1051. But well they paint the dread of justice here
For crimes atrocious, the reward of guilt, &c.]
Cicero has an admirable passage, in one of his orations, to the same effect: Xolite putare, quemadmodum in fabulis, eos qui aliquid impiæ, sceleratæque commiserunt, agitari, et perterreri furiarum tædis ardentibus: sua quemque fraus, suus terror maxime vexat, sum quemque seclus agitat, amentiaque afficit, sua malæ cogitationes conscientiæ animi terrerent. Hæ sunt impiæ assiduae domesticae furiae, que dies noctesque parentum pænas à conscelerissimis filiis repetunt. Pro Ros. Amer. "Do not imagine, as fabulous history teaches us, that they who have committed any impious or atrocious deed are haunted, and terrified by the flaming torches of the furies: every man's own iniquity, the terror of every one's own mind—these are what principally disturb him; he is haunted and driven mad by his own misdeeds; he is startled by his own conscience, and his own dreadful apprehensions. These are, with the wicked, those perpetual and domestic furies that night and day avenge the sufferings of parents on their flagitious offspring."

Ver. 1055. —his conscious soul
Still fears perpetual, tort'ring all his days,
And still foreboding heavier pangs at death.]
The serenity and quiet of the sleep of death, which
Hinc Achirusa fit stultorum denique vita.

Hoc' etiam tibi tute interdum dicere possis:
"Lumina sis oculis etiam bonus Ancus reliquit;"

Qui melior multis, quam tu, fuit, inprobe! rebus.

our poet has painted with a masterly hand, in ver. 937, he now contrasts with the tumultuous and affrighted life, the horrid and fearful decease of the wicked. Dr. Glynn, to whose poem on the Day of Judgment I have referred once or twice before, as comprising passages that have a strong analogy to the style of Lucretius, and have much intrinsic evidence of being hence deduced, has also conveyed this contrasted idea in very appropriate language, in the following lines:

—horror gnaws the guilty soul
Of dying sinners, while the good man sleeps
Peaceful and calm, and with a smile expires.

Ver. 1058. Hence earth itself to fools becomes a hell.] Thus Gesner, in the soliloquy of Cain, after awaking from his dream: zieh er den vorhang weg, und las mich in die helle der Zukunft hinaus-sehn. "He draws aside the veil, and unfolds to me the hell of posterity." Death of Abel, Book IV. The Germans are particularly attached to this bold imagery: but there is a striking and tremendous passage in the Robbers of Schiller, so illustrative of this, and the three or four preceding verses, that I cannot avoid adding it. It is a sudden exclamation of Moor, the hero of the drama, in a dialogue between himself and Rasnan: "My innocence! O my innocence!—See how all Nature expands at the sweet breath of spring.—O God! that this paradise—this heaven—should be a hell to me!—When all is happiness—all in the sweet spirit of peace—the world one family—and its father there above, who is not my father.—I alone the outcast—the prodigal son!—
Of all the children of his mercy, I alone rejected! the companion of murderers—of viperous fiends—bound down, enchained to guilt and horror."—So the sublime epic poet of our own nation:

—which way shall I fly

Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell—myself am hell.

Par. Lost, iv. 75.

Not less terribly descriptive, and equally bold in expression, is the following passage from the book of Job, ch. xviii. 5—17: in the version of which I have endeavoured to preserve the different personifications of the original:

5 Fail shall the light that guides the sinner's way;
The vital flame that cheers him shall decay:

11 Roam where he may wild Terrors shall attend,
And haunt his steps, where'er those steps may bend.

12 At him shall Anguish, gaunt with hunger, rush,
Distress, with pond'rous grieve, his ribs shall crush:

13 Death's first-born Plague shall gnaw him deep within,
Gnaw to the gloss, the summit of his skin.

14 His home Suspicion shall beset: Dismay,
Arm'd like a king, lead on the dread affray:
Hence earth itself to fools becomes a hell.

Thus ponder oft, retir'd: Ancus the good,
E'en he has clos'd his eyes on mortal things;
A man, thou coward! worthier far than thou!

His, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die,
And thou! dost thou bewail mortality?

Ancus Martius was grandson of Numa, and the
fourth of the Roman monarchs. His character is
thus described by Livy: Avites gloriae memor:
medium erat in eo ingenium, et Numà et Romuli ;
cui libet superiorum regum belli, pacisque et artibus,
et glorìæ par. "He forgot not the glory of
his ancestors; the powers of his mind were of a
description between those of Numa and Romulus;
and he was equal to any of our former kings in
the glory and arts both of war and peace."

The reader will, I am confident, readily excuse my
adding in this note, for a comparison with the above
passages of Homer and Lucretius, Ercilla's description
of the death of Lautaro. Lautaro was the most
heroic, as well as most polished, of the Indian chief-
tains: and the manly generosity of Ercilla always
allows him the praise to which he is entitled:

Por el sinistro lado (o dura suerte !)
Rompe la cruda punta, y tan derecho
Que pasa el corazón mas bravoy fuerte
Que jamas se encerro en humano pecho.
De tal tiro quedó ufana la muerte,
Viendo de solo un golpe tan gran hecho :
Y usurpando la gloria al homicida
Se atribuye a la muerte esta herida.

Through his left side,—ye valiant, mourn his
lot!

Flew the keen arrow, with such fury shot,
Its ride'd his heart, the bravest and the best
That ever issued ev'ry breast of human breast.

Proud of the stroke that laid such valour low,
Death seem'd to glory in th' important blow:
And that no mortal might his triumph claim,
In darkness hid the doubtful archer's name.
De rerum natura.

Inde alieí multèi reges, rerumque potentes,
Obciderunt, magnis queí gentibus inperitarunt.

Ille quoque ipse, viam qui quondam per mare magnum
Stravit, iterque dedit legionibus ire per altum,
Ac pedibus salsas docuit superare lacunas,
Et contempsit equis, insultans, murmura ponti;
Lumine adempto, animam moribundo corpore fudit.

Scipio, bellí fulmen, Carthaginiis horror,
Ossa dedit terræ, proinde ac famul insímus esset.

Adde repertores doctrinarum, atque lepórum:
Adde Heliconiadum comites; quorum unus Homerus,

Ver. 1064. Determino wander'd o'er the mighty main,
Led on his legions, and first op'd the way, &c.]
The poet alludes to Xerxes king of Persia, of whom
Herodotus narrates that he walked over the sea,
and sailed on dry land: alluding to his having thrown
an immense bridge over the Hellespont, and dug a
channel nearly around the whole of mount Athos,
through which a considerable portion of his fleet
passed. There is an idle tale related of him by the
same historian, that, upon the destruction of his
bridge, by a violent tempest, he ordered three hun-
dred lashes to be inflicted on the waves, and that
they should be instantly bound with chains. The
courtiers of Xerxes, it should seem, had flattered
him to more purpose respecting his power over this
element, than those of Canute were able to accom-
plish in later times. Milton has alluded to this anec-
dote of Xerxes, in his Par. Lost, i. 366.

So, if great things to small may he compar'd,
Xerxes the liberty of Greece to yoke, &c.

Ver. 1069. Scipio, the war's dread thunder-bolt,
The scourge
Of ransack'd Tyre,—] The poet refers to
Publius Cornelius Scipio, who obtained the honour-
able surname of Africanus from his triumphs over
Hannibal. So capricious, however, at all times, was
the favour of the Roman people, that this consum-
mate warrior, as well as virtuous man, at length fell
into discredit, and was accused by the tribunes of
having been bribed by Antiochus to consent to a
peace. Scipio thought it unworthy of himself to be
in the city during his trial, or personally to stand for-
wards in his own defence: he retired, therefore, to
Laternum in Campania, where he died about the year
of Rome 567. The phrase "thunder-bolt of war,"
belli fulmen, has been copied by Virgil, and applied
both to himself and his relation of the same name,
who afterwards rivalled him so effectually in martial
glory and success:

—geminos, duo fulmina belli,
Scipíadas, eadem Libyæ. Æn. vi. 842.

Sec, both the Scipios, thunder-bolts of war,
The double bane of Afric.

Cicero has caught the same metaphor, and has in-
trroduced it into his oration for Cornelius Balbus: cum
duo fulmina nostri imperii Cnæius et Publius Scipiones
Book III.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

Thousands, moreo'er, like him of crowns poss'est,
Have fall'n like him, and all their pomp resign'd.
E'en he who wander'd o'er the mighty main,
Led on his legions, and first op'd the way
To tread on foot th' unfathom'd gulphs below,
He who thus brav'd the billows, and the storms,
Has clos'd his eye-lids, and his soul resign'd.—

Scipio, the war's dread thunder-bolt, the scourge
Of ransack'd Tyre, sleeps, like the slave, inhum'd.

Add, too, the founders of the graceful arts,
And schools erudite;—add th' immortal bards;
Add Homer's self the muses' realm who rules;

subito in Hispania extincti occidissent. "When the
two thunder-bolts of our government, Cn. and P.
Scipio, suddenly died in Spain."

Hence Voltaire, in his description of Henry the
Great, on his abrupt landing in France, after his vi-
sit to England, by which he fortunately joins his
troops, at the moment of their retreat:
Brillant comme l'éclair au fort de la tempeste,
Il vole aux premiers rangs, il s'avance à leur tête;
Il combat, et le suit, il change les destins,
La foudre est dans ses yeux, la mort est dans ses
mains. 
HENRIADE, ch. iv.

The reader may accept the following version:

Fierce as the thunder-bolt through tempests speeds,
He flies, he joins them, and the foremost leads;
He fights, inspires, the power of fate commands,
Lightning his eyes, and havoc in his hands.

Mr. Mickle has introduced something of the same
image into his translation of the Iliad:
Whose spear's dread lightning o'er th' embattled
plain
Has oft o'erwhelm'd the Moors. 

Book v.

The merit of this simile, however, is all his own;
for it does not occur in the Portuguese, which is as
follows:

—qui os Espanhoses tanto ajudou
A fazerem nos Mouros bravo estrago.

Ver. 1073. Add Homer's self the muses' realm
who rules;] In the original, "Homerus
sceptrum potius;" which Creech has thus pretended
to translate:

Homer, their prince, that darling of the nine—
What Troy would at a second fall repine
To be thus sung—is nothing now but fame.

Such a paraphrastic rendering can scarcely be
called a version: there is not a syllable of authority
in Lucretius for the conceit expressed in the above
verses in italics; and it would certainly have been
unworthy of his judgment. Manilius has applauded
this first and chief of bards in the opening of his se-
cond book, in a style that Lucretius might not have
disdained; and the translation of this passage, which
I shall subjoin, and which is also from Creech, does
credit to his powers of metrical version:
Sceptra potitus, eâdem aliis sopitus quiete est.

Denique, Democritum, post quam matura vetustas
Admonuit memores motus languescere mentis,
Sponte suâ leto caput obvius obtulit ipse.

Ipse Epicurus obiit, decurso lumine vitæ;
Qui genus humanum ingenio superavit, et omnes
Restinxit, stellas exortus uti aërius sol.

Tu vero dubitabis, et indignabere, òbire,
Mortua quoi vita est prope jam vivo, atque videnti?

—cujus ex ore profusos
Omnis posteritas latine in carmina duxit,
Ammemque in tenuis ausa est deducere rivos
Unius facunda bonis.

—from whose abundant spring
Succeeding poets draw the songs they sing;
From him they take, from him adorn their themes,
And into little channels cut his streams,
Rich in his store.

Vida has copied this passage as follows:
Quos inter potitur sceptris insignis Homerus;
Hunc omnes aliī observant, hinc pectore numen
Concipiunt vates, blandumque Heliconis amorem.

Poetic. i. 135.

Nor is it hard to cull each noble piece,
And point out every glorious son of Greece;
Above whose numbers Homer sits on high,
And shines supreme in distant majesty;
Whom with a reverent eye the rest regard,
And owe their raptures to the sovereign bard.

PITT.

Ver. 1075. When hoary hairs Democritus fore-
warn'd] See some account of the termination
of the life of this philosopher, in note on verse 380
of this book.

Ver. 1078. F'en he is fall'n, his lamp of life extinct,
TH' illustrious Epicurus,—] Much of the
history of this unrivalled sage will be found in the
life of Lucretius, prefixed to the first volume of this
work; as also in note on Book I. v. 65.

Ver. 1079. ——whose vast mind
Triumphant rose o'er all men, and excell'd
As, in the heavens, the sun excels the stars.] From
this passage, we again trace the brave and gen-
erous Ercilla enriching his Araucana, by infusing
its spirit and simile into his delineation of the heav-
enly vision that, in a female form, appeared to con-
sole and fortify the affrighted Spaniards after the
Indian demon Eponamon had vanished away. The
poet tells us that she was

Cubierta de un hermoso y limpio velo,
Con tanto resplendor, que al medio día
La claridad del sol delante della,
Es la que cerca del tiene una estrella. CANT. IX.

Clad in the radiance of so rich a veil,
As made the sun's meridian lustre pale.
For it outshone his golden orb as far
As his full blaze outshines the twinkling star.

HAYLEY.

Camoens, in a passage of equal beauty, and where
the same simile occurs, has totally reversed the ef-
BOOK III.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

These all, like meaner mortals, rest in peace.—

When hoary hairs Democritus forewarn'd
His mental powers were hastening to decay,
Quick he uprose, and midway met his fate.—

E'en he is fall'n, his lamp of life extinct,
Th' illustrious Epicurus, whose vast mind
Triumphant rose o'er all men, and excell'd,
As, in the heavens, the sun excels the stars.

And dost thou murmur, and, indignant, die,
Whose life, while living, scarcely death exceeds?

—brighter once amidst the lost
Of Angels, than that star (Lucifer) the stars among.

Par. Lost, vii. 122.

The parallelism of idea in the following verses, from an ancient song in Percy's collection, is very peculiar. It is entitled, from its opening, "You meaner beauties."

You meaner beauties of the night—
Which poorly satisfy our eyes,
More by your number than your light,
Like common people of the skies—
What are ye when the moon doth rise?

So when my mistris shall be seen
In sweetnesse of her looks and minde;
By vertue first, then choice a queen;
Tell me if she was not designde
Th' eclipse, and glory of her kind?—B. i. 251.

The adoption of the moon for the sun, in the former of these stanzas, is synonymous with the same imitation of our poet, as it occurs in Horace:

—Micat inter omnes
Julium sidus, velut inter ignes
Luna minores.

Lib. i. Od. 12.

With night's least lamps the moon compare:—
Such 'mid the stars the Julian star.
Qui somno partem majorem conteris ævi;
Et vigilans stertis, nec somnia cernere cessas,
Solicitamque geris cassa formidine mentem;
Nec reperire potes, quid sit tibi sæpe mali, quem
Ebrius urgueris multis miser undique curis,
Atque, animo incerto fluitans, errore vagaris?

Si possent homines, proinde ac sentire videntur
Pondus inesse animo, quod se gravitate fatiget,
E quibus id fiat caussis quoque noscere, et unde
Tanta mali tamquam moles in pectore constet;
Haud ita vitam agerent, ut nunc plerumque videmus:
Quid sibi quisque velit, nescire, et querere semper:
Conmutare locum, quasi onus deponere possit.

Exit sæpe foras magnis ex ædibus ille,
Esse domi quem pertæsum est, subitoque reventat;
Quippe foris nihilo melius qui sentiat esse.
Thou! who in sleep devourest half thy days?
And, e'en awake, who snorest, dreaming still,
And tort'ring all thy mind with vain alarms?
Thou! who lamentest, oft, unknowing why,
Urg'd on, with fear intoxicated deep,
And in a maze of mental errors lost?

Did men but think, and oft to think they seem,
That from themselves their heaviest sorrows rise,
And knew they too whence thus themselves create
These bosom suff'ring—seldom should we see
Life spent as now each passing hour pourtrays.
All pant perpetual for they know not what,
Nor learn by searching—changing their abodes,
As though the change would leave their load behind.

This, from mere listlessness, his mansion flies:
Straight he returns;—'tis listless all abroad.
That to his villa posts, with rapid wheels,

Here, there, we rush, there, here, with ceaseless strife;
And, fond of living, overshoot all life.
With this, too, may be advantageously compared
the following passage of Euripides:

For thou; each moment altering, tak'st delight
In nothing long; the present quickly grows
Unpleasing, somewhat absent thou esteem'st
More grateful. Woodhall.

In the same manner Plautus, as Lambinus has before observed:

Summe ego homo miser, qui nusquam bene quae
quirescere?
Si domi sum, foris est animus; sin foris sum, animus domi est.

Mercat. III. iv. 1.

Am not I then that wretch who ne'er can rest?
At home, abroad; abroad, still homewards press'd,
Currit, agens mannos, ad villam præcipitanter,
Auxilium tectis quasi ferre ardentibus instans:
Oscitat ex templo, tetigit quom limina villæ;
Aut abit in somnum gravis, atque oblivia quærít:
Aut etiam properans urbem petit, atque revisit.

Hoc se quisque modo fugit: at, quem scilicet, ut fit,
Ecfugere haud potis est, ingratiiis hæret, et obit;
Propterea, morbi quia caussam non tenet æger:
Quam bene si videat, jam rebus quisque relictis
Naturam primum studeat cognoscere rerum;
Temporis æterni quoniam, non unius horæ,

Ver. 1102. That to his villa posts, with rapid wheels,
As though the building were in flames, and call’d
His instant aid.—[Creech has totally mis-
taken the meaning of his author in this passage, and,
therefore, instead of sending the restless mortal, whom
Lucretius describes, into the country, to extinguish
the flames of his villa on fire, he represents him as
flying away from his father’s house in town, for the
sole reason, that it was on fire: nor does the term fa-
ther occur in the original:

Others, with full as eager haste, retire,
As if their father’s house were all on fire,
To their small farm.

Ver. 1103. —No sooner treads his foot
The sounding ball, than, on the sofa thrown.] The luxury of the Romans did not equal, at the
time of Lucretius, that which was evinced a century
afterwards; but it may be questioned, whether it did
not even then equal that of the present day in any
part of modern Europe. With more than Oriental
indulgence, they partook of all their principal meals
in a recumbent position; and, although the poet has
not made mention of the couch, or reposing seat on
which they then lay at ease, the fact of yawning,
indulging sleep, and seeking oblivion, obviously
proves that he refers to it. And I know of no bet-
ter word by which to express this luxurious contriv-
ance, than the modern term sofa, which it very
much resembled; not immediately, perhaps, in its
form, but in its use and powers; for the guest that
reclined on a dining couch that admitted but himself
alone, lay always at full length, supporting his head
or the upper part of his body, with his left hand; and
where this couch was large enough to admit of more
than one person, an abundance of pillows were sup-
plied to administer to the ease of each. Like the mo-
dern sofa, moreover, the dining couch of the Romans
was lined and covered with the softest, and most or-
namental stuffs or silks. Virgil has given us a rich
and appropriate description of this species of furniture
of the Roman dining room, in his account of the first
feast prepared by Dido for Æneas and his suite,
which he represents after the Roman costume:
Book III.

THE NATURE OF THINGS.

As though the building were in flames, and call’d
His instant aid.—No sooner treads his foot
The sounding hall, than, on the sofa thrown,
He yawns disgusted—or indulges sleep,
And seeks oblivion; or, perchance, he starts,
And tow’rds the town drives back with equal speed.

Thus each his self would fly, that self which still
Haunts every step, and every pain creates,
Heedless of what torments him: which if clear
The wand’rer trac’d, his restless soul, at once
The world forsaking, and the world’s vain boasts,
Would scan the Nature of Created Things.
For little weighs the passing hour of time

—haevis jam se regina superbis
Aurea composuit sponda, mediamque locavit.
Jam pater Aeneas, et jam Trojana juventus,
Conveniunt, stratoque super discumbitur ostro.
Now, op’d the splendid halls, the queen assumes
The couch that decks the midmost of the rooms:
Gold was its frame; Aeneas and his train,
On couches round, their different posts sustain.

With this characteristic delineation of Lucretius,
may be compared the following passage in the Minstrel:

Canst thou forgo the pure ethereal soul,
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of luxury to loll;
Stung with disease, and stupefied with spleen? &c.

Ver. 1112. Would scan the Nature of Created Things.
Thus Virgil, in terms not very different:

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.
GEORG. ii. 490.

Happy the man, the causes who discern
Of things created.

That is, as Wakefield justly interprets it, who is
versed in natural philosophy: and to this effect, in- deed, wrote Epicurus himself, in the following pas- sage preserved by Diogenes Laertius, x. 143. Ουκ εν τιν ψυχολογει λεγει ισει των κυματων, με τη κατευθυνε τι; η του συμματος φως, αλλ’ ισπτασμενοι τι των κατα τους μιδας εκ τω εκ τη φυσιολογει, ακινητας τας απολαμβανον. The text renders the version needless.

Ver. 1113. For little weighs the passing hour of time
When with eternity compar’d, that state
Which, after death, to mortals yet remaine.

"Time, how short, eternity, how long!" is an ex- clamation which may be adopted with equal propriety by the Epicurean and the Christian moralist. The few fleeting hours that comprise the life of man
upon earth, must, in the estimation of both, weigh
as the small dust of the balance, when compared with
that eternity to which we are all hastening. Though,
Ambigetur status, in quo sit mortalibus omnis
Ætas post mortem, quæ restat quomque, manendo.

Denique, tanto opere in dubiis trepidare periclis
Quæ mala nos subigit vitaï tanta cupidō?
Certe equidem finis vitae mortalibus adstat,
Nec devitari letum pote, quin obeamus.

Præterea, vosdamur ibeidem, atque insumus, usque;
Nec nova vivendo procuditur ulla voluptas:
Sed, dum abest, quod avemus, id exsuperare videtur
Cætera; post aliud, quom contigit illud, avemus;
Et sitis æqua tenet vitaï, semper hianteis:
Posteraque, in dubio est, fortunam quam vehat ætas;
Quidve ferat nobis casus, quive exitus instet.

Nec prorsum, vitam ducundo, demimus hilum
Tempore de mortis; nec delibrare valemus,
Quo minus esse diu possimus morte peremptē.
Proinde, licet quot vis vivendo condere secla,
Mors æterna tamen nihilo minus illa manebit:

doubtless, the position of our poet may be doubly appropriated by the Christian who regards eternity as a state of actual being, in comparison with the Epicurean, who could only contemplate it as a state of absolute nihility.

Ver. 1116. Through what vast woes this wild desire of life
Drives us, afraid! what dangers, and what toils!
Yet death still hastens, nor can mortal man,
With all his efforts, turn the unerring shaft.
When with eternity compar'd, that state
Which, after death, to mortals yet remains.

Through what vast woes this wild desire of life
Drives us, afraid! what dangers, and what toils!
Yet death still hastens, nor can mortal man,
With all his efforts, turn th' unerring shaft.

Life, through its circuit too, is still the same,
Nor can it boast one source of new delight.
The bliss we covet seems, at distant view,
To all superior; but, when once possest,
It cloys, we spurn it, and another call.
Yet the same thirst of life corrodes us still,
Though doubtful of to-morrow, and the fate
To-morrow brings—our blessing, or our curse.

E'en could we life elongate, we should ne'er
Subtract one moment from the reign of death,
Nor the deep slumber of the grave curtail.
O'er ages could we triumph—death alike
Remains eternal—nor of shorter date

and sublimity indeed as far excelling it, as the re-
vealed religion of the last exceeds the natural wisdom
of the first.

Ver. 1122. The bliss we covet seems, at distant view,
To all superior; but, when once possest,
It cloys, we spurn it, and another call.] Dr.
Young has copied this passage in his Night Thoughts,
as he has done many others of the last two hundred
verses of the present book; the copy, however, to
which I now refer, is rather a paraphrase than a close
imitation. It has poetic merit and moral excellence;
but is deteriorated by verbal iterations repeated till
they become tedious:
Behold the picture of earth's happiest man!
He calls his wish, it comes, he sends it back,
And says he call'd another—that arrives,
Meets the same welcome, yet he still calls on,
Till one calls him who varies not his call;
But holds him fast in chains of darkness bound
Till nature dies, and judgment sets him free;
A freedom how less welcome than his chains!
DE RERUM NATURA.

Nec minus ille diu jam non erit, ex hodierno
Lumine qui finem vitæ fecit, et ille,
Mensibus atque annis qui multis obcidit ante.

Ver. 1133. To him who yesterday the light forsook,
Than him who died full many a year before.] In the note on ver. 1076, I have given an instance of Dryden's version of a few lines of Lucretius, which were afterwards adopted by Pope in his translation of the Iliad. I have now to offer another instance of similar fosterage and intertexture. The passage before us is thus rendered by Dryden:

When once the Fates have cut the mortal thread,
The man as much to all intents is dead,
Who dies to-day, and will as long be so,
As he who died a thousand years ago.

In the Essay on Man, they occur thus, in a converse form, obviously introduced from Dryden's paraphrase; for Lucretius says nothing of “a thousand years.”

The blest to-day is as completely so
As who began a thousand years ago.

Jortin has some Latin verses of such singular elegance and pathos, and so appropriate with the grand idea conveyed in the last five verses of this book, that I cannot possibly avoid copying and translating them; they are a free imitation of the exquisite epitaph of Moschus upon Bion, which I have already given in the note on v. 937.

Hei mihi! lege rata sol occidit atque resurgit,
Lunaque mutatae reparator dispendia formae:
Sidera, purpurei telis extincta diei,
Rursus nocte vigent: humiles telluris alumni,
Graminis herba virens, et florum picta propago,
Quos cruelis hyems lethali tabe peredit;
Cum Zephyri vox blanda voceat, reditque sereni
Temperies anni, redivivo e cespite surgunt.
Nos, Domini rerum! nos, magna et pulchra nati!
Cum breve ver vitae, robustaque transiit aestas,
Deficimus; neque nos ordo revolubilis auras
Reddit in ætherias, tumuli nec elaustra resolvit.
By punctual laws the sun ascends, and sets;
The waning moon new majesty begets;
Slain by the jav'lin's of the purple day,
The stars revive at midnight: every spray,
Each blade of grass, the pictur'd race of flowers,
That, with fierce phang, the wint'ry wind devours,
When Spring returns, at Zephyr's kindling voice,
Peep from the greensward, and again rejoice.
We, lords of all! we, big with bold emprize!
When once the spring, the flower of manhood, flies,
To him who yesterday the light forsook,
Than him who died full many a year before.

Sink—void of laws to burst the marble tomb,
To ether call us, and with life relume.

Beattie has several exquisitely beautiful and plaintive stanzas on the same subject. It would occupy too much space to copy the whole, but I cannot avoid transcribing the following:

'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more;
I mourn—but, ye woodlands! I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glitt'ring with dew.

Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn,—
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save:
But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn!
O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave!

It is probable, however, that both Jortin and Beattie have been partly indebted for the ideas conveyed in these passages, to that unrivalled and inexhaustible treasure of sublimity and pathos, the book of Job, which thus offers us a parallel description in Ch. xiv. v. 7—10.

Nothing can equal the boldness or the beauty of the phrase in ver. 9, of this exquisite passage: γοαν αναστήσεται· "the fragrance," or rather, "the fragrant exhalation of water." The Arabians still employ the very same term لطش to express the same idea of breath, fragrance, or exhalation, indiscriminately. Yet, is the phrase neither more bold nor more beautiful than the catachresis, in the latter part of the same verse, of hair or tresses (חֵצֵי) for branches or foliage. Our common version interprets this word by the tamer term "boughs"; but the vulgar preserves the image in its full force: "facies comam quasi cum primum plantatum est."
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