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SHORT ESSAYS

—IN REFUTATION OF—

AGNOSTICISM, ATHEISM AND MATERIALISM

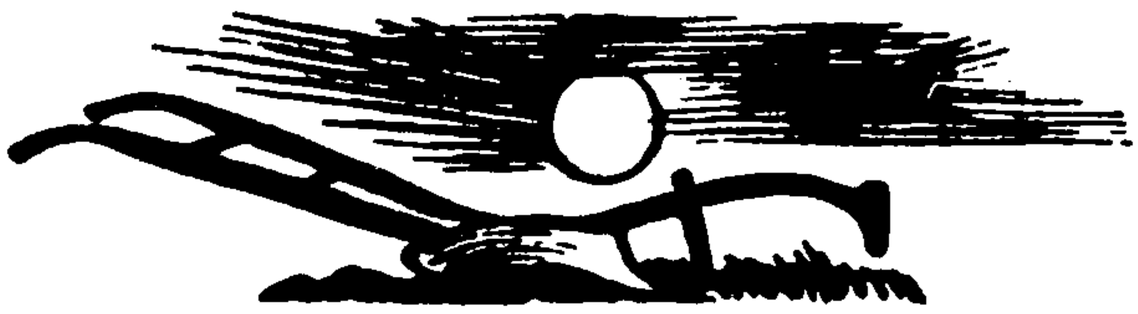
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PREFATORY REMARKS.

The object of the writer of the following short Essays is to place the subject of Infidelity in so plain and concise a form before the minds of general readers, as to make it easy for those who have not time nor opportunity to read books on the subject, of more extensive and elaborate form.

If my design in this, my first effort, adds to the defence of Truth against Error and Atheism, I will feel myself highly gratified that I have given a helping hand to the active ministers of the Gospel, and friends of Divine truth.

I have mentioned some of the ancient Greek philosophers on purpose to show the difference and contrast between them and modern Darwinian Agnostics and Positivists of the present time, and that the ancient Greeks were men of higher and purer conceptions of thought than the Free-thinkers of the present day, although they lived in darker times.

J. S.

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PREFACE.

True religion can not suffer by its principles being thoroughly investigated, and enlightened conclusions are also likely to convince the Sceptic. The state of religion in the present time is momentous, and presses on its advocate to "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Natural philosophy seems to be the machinery which the Materialists, Agnostics and Atheists now employ to overthrow the principles of the Christian religion, and involve the human race in worse than Antideluvian and Babylonian darkness.

It is because some men are "without God, and without hope in the world," they wish to obscure the atmosphere of truth, and lead men into the paths of libertinism in which they themsel alk; or to get a name as innovating philosophers, who can lead the minds of untaught men back into worse than primeval darkness. And it is because these philosophers have the "magic of a name," as discoverers of phenomena in the *fauna* and *flora* of foreign countries, and the geological strata of the globe, that they may lead men astray. They are naturalists, botanists, geologists, &c., and seem wiser than other men, and wish to appear so to the public, that they may have blinded followers. These may do infinite harm to simple and sincere believers in revelation.

The discoveries of Newton and Herschel, and the writings of Dick, have done much good to the cause of truth and science; but those men were Christians; their discoveries "display the glory of God, and show forth His handiwork." They demonstrate the being of God, and confirm the believer in his faith in the Scriptures.

While the Darwins, the Spencers, the Comptes, the Huxleys, the Tyndals, &c., of modern times, have, by their vain philosophy, caused many to rest their faith on second causes, and leave God, the great First Cause, out of the question.

The Materialism of the present day seems to raise an idol of its own, and to fall down and worship it. The theory, or rather the hypothesis of evolution, is most deceptive in its tendency,—many of its surmises are unverified, while its advocates present it to the unlearned and credulous as a system of true philosophy. But as long as such philosophy remains unverified in any *one point*, it is vain and deceptive, and can not be accepted as established truth, much less can such be regarded as an element of Christian faith. It seems to be what the Apostle Paul warns men against in his Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. (Eph. v. 6): "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Again (Col. ii. 8): "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

In *fine*, no evolution as set forth in Darwin's "Origin of

Species," or his "Descent of Man," can be accepted by the person who believes in the *being* of a *God*, without disbelieving the word of revelation. Nor can he accept *evolution* in ethics, as taught by Herbert Spencer, and others of the same class, without impairing his faith in the existence of God, for all those forms of evolution are only inventions of Agnostic Infidelity and blind Atheism. Evolution in Ethics or Positivism has only for its purpose the denial of *God's being*, and the worship of human intellect, as man improves, mentally, from generation to generation. Therefore, their only objects of adoration are, and will be, such men as Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Socrates, Byron, Plato, Aristotle, Charlemagne, Milton, Dante, Julius Cæsar, Hypocrates, Paul Leibnitz, Bacon,* David Hume, &c. These are cases of mental evolution, and all such will be their only gods of the future,--the modern mythology of the Positivists. From all such let all believers of Christianity and the Bible turn away.

No man need ever expect a Utopia upon earth. Upon earth to find that would be impossible, while such views are held by men in matters of religion. All man can do is to conform to the golden rule, as near as possible. A strict conformity to justice and truth is necessary to consolidate the moral good of human society. The Christian religion does not admit of persecution on account of difference in the opinions of men; they may be left to their own de-

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* Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, &c., are not here mentioned or classed as Pagans or Sceptics, but because they are specimens of evolved intellect; they are classed by the Positivists as cases of mental excellence, worthy of their veneration. For the Positivists have no god but humanity.

lusions, but let Christians of every shade of belief avoid the infidelity of the times. For, as in the times of the French Revolution, infidelity was one of the chief causes that led to such bloodshed throughout Europe ; so let men cultivate Scriptural Christianity as it leads to peace and good-will in all nations as well as among men.

The following lines will clearly describe the effects of both :—

Atheism paves the way
For mobish rule and Despot's sway ;
But Scripture truths inspire the mind
With motives just, for actions kind.

J. SINCLAIR,

Pres. Minister.

AN ESSAY—THE PRIMEVAL STATE OF MAN,

SHOWING THE DANGER AND ABSURDITY OF ATHEISM AND AGNOSTICISM.

It is possible, and morally certain, that man, after his creation, was in a state of innocence and purity; but, after his fall, his mind was darkened by sin. In this state, it is recorded, that God left him to his own devices; hence fallen man had to search out, by observation of his senses, the being and attributes of Deity; so, till the time of Moses, men were left to the darkness of their own imaginations, without a written record. The flood came and all but eight persons were swept from the face of the earth. All history was traditional before the time of Moses, who gave the first reasonable record of creation. Reasonable, because it was the only possible account or explanation of the truth as the work of an Almighty hand, or an omniscient Being who has existed through the ages of eternity. Before the light of revelation men must have been in a state of mental and moral darkness concerning their own existence, and the existence of things around them,—the visible universe, and the origin of all things, and this darkness of mind continued, with the exception of the Jewish nation, till the times of the Redeemer, who, in the fullness of time, came and shed the light of the Gospel on the minds of men who were in the regions of moral darkness till His coming. For instance, let us glance at the opinions of heathen wise men and philosophers before the coming of Christ. Take some of the wisest: Socrates and Plato, "they taught and believed in

the immortality of the soul, and the existence of a supreme Being," but their ideas on these subjects were indefinite; yet they are called the wisest of the heathen philosophers. Socrates died 400 years before Christ, and Plato 348 years before Christ. Homer, the greatest poet of the ancients, "believed that water was the origin of all things;" he died 907 years before Christ. Thales, one of the wise men of Greece, "looked upon water also as the origin of all things;" he died 548 years before Christ. Aneximander considered "that the earth was formed in the shape of a cylinder, and taught that men were born of the earth and water mixed together, and heated by the beams of the sun; he considered the sun a circle of fire like a wheel, about 28 times bigger than the earth;" he died 547 years before Christ. Anaximines, a Greek philosopher, said "that the air was the cause or first beginning of every created being, and was a self-existent divinity, and that the sun, moon, and stars had been made from the earth. He considered that the earth and the heavens were a solid figure on which the stars were fixed like nails;" he died 504 years before Christ. Leucippus first invented the hypothesis of atoms and a vacuum; he died 428 years before Christ.

Lucretius, a Roman poet and philosopher, taught in his great poem (De Rerum Natura), "that there is no God, and denied also the immortality of the soul, and declared that all things were at first formed from the *fortuitus concourse* of *atoms* meeting and striking in empty space (vacuum), and forming all things animate and inanimate in the universe;" he died, by his own hand, in the 44th year of his age, 51—some say 54—years before Christ.

The blessings Christianity conferred on mankind since the days of heathen darkness have passed away, are now menaced by a new sect called Agnostics, and, as the term

signifies, they profess to *know nothing* but what is evident to their senses; and, what seems most strange, they profess to know that men at first were descended from monkeys! Charles Darwin, a modern naturalist, writes that men came at first from monkeys, in the following process, viz.: "From a clot of slime in the depths of the sea, which became a protoplasm, or first mould, which produced amœba, which produced sponges, which, in the course of an extent of time, *practically infinite*, became tailed apes or monkeys, whence man was finally generated, and, through non-use of the tail, man (ape) lost the tail during the Miocene period of geology." A singular announcement by Mr. Darwin, who professes to be an Agnostic (a know nothing), but the truth of this rediculous hypothesis has never been proved, nor can be shown.

Mr. Darwin must have understood that, arguments taken from analogy are often very deceptive, for it does not follow that because he finds that frogs and monkeys have four limbs that bear a resemblance to the hands and feet of man, that, therefore, he is a descendent of either. He might as well conclude that man is a distant relative of the cayman of the West Indies, or the crocodile of the Nile.

Professor Huxley says:—

"So long as a single link is wanting in Darwin's 'Origin of Species,' &c., his hypothesis cannot be regarded as established truth."

And this opinion, is in a mere scientific point of view, what can Christianity say in a gospel sense? Mr. Darwin may have contributed to science by some of his writings, but has overstepped the line in his "Origin of Species" and "Descent of Man." His Hypothesis on this subject more resembles the incoherent language of the monoman-

iac than the language of a philosopher. Here the chain is broken, and the language of Pope will apply :—

"From Nature's chain, whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousanth, breaks the chain alike :
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only ; but the whole must fall."

As expressed by Bishop Lewis :—

"Truly, Agnosticism is a contradiction of terms. It asserts that we cannot know anything, and yet assumes to know that we cannot know. As applied to God, it is a cowardly name for Atheism. In its negation it becomes ludicurously affirmative ; while denying God it affirms the deity of matter."

If there be in Darwin's Hypothesis any semblance of truth, why do not men come in a similar way from monkeys still? It is a false system to build men up in unbelief, and to encourage the commission of sin and crime.

The men of the antideluvian age of the world were moved, in a similar way, to deny God without fear. So did the men after the flood, at Babel, when they were dispersed at the confusion of languages. With such a theory of belief, men would relapse into primeval darkness. The vain and deceptive ingenuity (not philosophy) of Charles Darwin will never overturn the faith of reasoning men, in the absolute existence of a *wise, great*, and *omnipotent God*, who rules the universe, whose attributes are made so obvious to the human mind, by the marks of infinite wisdom, and wise design, in the works of creation. Well did the great Sage, Carlyle, declare that, "Darwin is a man of very little intellect."

If Darwin's "Origin of Species" were believed, and inculcated among men, and become the order of the day in society, it would destroy all *moral responsibility*, and degrade

man to a lower place in the scale of *creation and being*, than did ever the darkest theories of heathen philosophers, for some of them professed to believe in one *Great Being*, and in the *immortality* of the *soul;* but Darwin seems to believe in no God but matter, and this matter, according to his belief, must have created itself, or is eternal,—two great absurdities, according to man's ideas of *cause* and *effect* and *final causes*, or the evidences of design in the works of creation.

A man may acquire fame as a philosopher, in classifying the *fauna* and *flora* of the different regions of the earth, and studying its geological structure, and when, after all that he may have discovered, he turns around and says to the men of the world, "These are all the results of chance, or the operations of blind, inert matter." He then acts as a destroyer of man's hope beyond the grave, and a polluter of human society, and a moral enemy to his country. Such is the tendency of Darwin's "Origin of Species and Descent of Man." The outcome of all this is Socialism, Communism and Nihilism, in more monstrous forms than in the days of the French Revolution.

Thomas Carlyle, the Sage of Chelsea, says:

"I have known three generations of the Darwins—grandfather, father, and son; Atheists all. The brother of the present famous naturalist, a quiet man, who lives not far from here, told me that among his grandfather's effects he found a seal engraven with this legend, '*Omnia ex conchis*,' everything from a clam shell. I saw the naturalist not many months ago; told him I had read his 'Origin of Species,' and other books; that he had by no means satisfied me that men were descended from monkeys, but had gone far towards persuading me that he and his so-called scientific brethren had brought the present generation of English men very near to monkeys. A good sort of man is this Darwin, and

well meaning, but of *very little intellect.* Ah! it is a sad thing and terrible to see nigh a whole nation of men and women, professing to be cultivated, looking around in a purblind fashion, and finding no God in the universe. I suppose it is a reaction from the reign of cant and hollow pretence, professing to believe what, in fact, they do not believe. All this is what we have got to. All things from frog-spawns--the gospel of dirt, the order of the day. The older I grow—and now I stand on the brink of eternity—the more comes back to me the sentence in the Catechism which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes: 'What is the great end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever.' No gospel of dirt teaching that men have descended from frogs through monkeys will ever set that aside."

Genesis i. 26. Here it is recorded that God, after making the inferior animals, made man as a special and distinct being, quite distinct from other beings of inferior rank, giving him the intellect and power to rule over all, this, man, in all his states, has succeeded in doing.

The savage as well as the enlightened has, by his inventions, overcome the fiercest animals, which demonstrate that he was created a quite different order of being.

A Professor, in a lecture on the subject of Evolution, says:

"Man, in his earliest European advent, was the equal of modern man. Nor do we find any where any link graduating from man towards the rank of the brutes. The apes have a geneological tree. We trace them back to the beginning of the tertiary times. Man has no geneological tree; he stands apart as if he had been the product of an independent organization. However this may be, he is most closely related in plan of organization to the other kingdom. The facts, in short, are such that we may, with Waiace, hold to the evolution of the other animals, and yet not embrace the doctrine of the evolution of man." *—*Professor Winchell.*

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* The writer here declares his disbelief in evolution so called.

MEMORIAL LINES ON THE BEING OF GOD.

Creative power in God allseeing,
First caused matter to have a being;
T'was that Spirit, the mighty three,
Made order and species first to be;
Then, to finish the mighty plan,
God said, "Let us make man."

It is made plain by natural laws,
Effects can't exist without a cause;
The effect itself displays design,
Intelligence of Almighty mind:
Without a cause can be no notion
Of the phenomena of motion.

What caused the stars to run their race,
In orbits true, through boundless space?
Globes' inert matter would ever stand
Unless propelled by a mighty hand;
Making perfect motion in their spheres,
Measuring true both times and years;

Making it plain to human reason,
To calculate the time and season.
Inert matter would ever stand
Except propelled by a mighty hand.
T'was this which caused the fix'd relation
Between matter's rest and gravitation;

Which law suspends, in orbic race,
The planets throughout infinite space.
Behold those planets, as they run
In perfect orbit round the sun;
Around the sun these moving spheres
Perform their course in divers years,

Yet, move with regularity profound,
They ever pass in orbits round.
Let men survey earth's varied fanes,
And say blind chance has raised those towers;
As well might earthquakes do the same,
And wrecks of floods build fleets of powers:

And what are fleets of every nation
Compared to works of God's creation?
Castles can't raise themselves erect,
Without design of architect;
And what's in man's experience greater
There can't be laws without a legislator.

These laws of God, in space profound,
Propel the stars in orbits round;
For ever singing as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."
The mind of man, and animal instinct, show
The omniscient God created all below;

Without this faith there can't be true conjecture
About the Universe's glorious architecture.
These facts proclaim to men of sense
The wisdom of omnipotence;
Lucretius, Darwin, Voltaire, Payne, &c.,
Have written their thoughts, both base and vain,
But the truth GOD IS will still remain.

J. S.

A learned writer says:—

"After careful study of all the theories proposed, independently of revelation, we conclude that the first constituent atoms of the earth must have been created by some power or force, not inherent in matter; and that these particles came into being as simple elements, all at the same time, forming a confused and shapeless mass. But a mixture of new created elements would not long remain quiescent or at rest, as they were endowed with chemical qualities and affinities, producing motion and combustion rapidly, so as to produce light. This must have been the light of the first day of creation, when God said, "Let there be light," as the sun, moon and stars did not appear till the fourth day. The origin of all things is ascribed to God. It is reiterated that

God commanded, God saw, God created, and approved. The creation of the world had been delegated to no inferior; so, too, the creative work was performed in a manner worthy of the Supreme Being. It was accomplished with infinite ease. "Let there be light," said the Creator, and instantly the universe was illuminated. It was an invisible energy that permeated the world of atoms, and developed fishes, fowls, and quadrupeds, and adapted them to move in their several spheres. While other nations believed in their imaginary gods, the Jews, though surrounded by idolators, were thus effectually taught to believe in one great power above all else. Man's humble origin from the dust of the ground was fitted to teach him lessons of dependence, when reflecting upon his relations to the Deity, while his high endowments of mind showed his superiority over the brute animal."

The Scriptures given by God to man were not to teach him philosophy, but to explain the simple phenomena of the universe, as they appeared to his senses. Abstract science was left by the Creator to man's intelligence, with which God endowed him when He gave Adam the intuitive mental power of giving names to the different species of animals. (Gen. ii. 19, 20.) But this intuitive power of intellect was intended by the Creator to be enlarged in man's experience and observation. So there was ample scope to Adam and his posterity for the exercise of their mental powers, which was not given to the inferior part of creation. Hence, philosophy and science are perfectly justifiable in the eyes of God, so far as they minister to the glory of God, and the well-being of man; but the philosopher is not to use science to dishonour God, or debase the human race; for this would be to turn the world into a pandemonium.

But when man directs his mind to the study of science it ought to be for the promotion of truth, of virtue, and the glory of God. Such were the motives of Bacon when he discovered and explained his method of inductive philoso-

phy, practised by Newton, which led to the finding out of the law of gravitation—a law which holds the heavenly bodies, the planets, &c., in their courses or orbits as they revolve through infinite space. Such adds to the glory of the Creator, and shows the wisdom and immensity of His power. But for Charles Darwin to trace the descent of man from a clot of slime in the depths of the sea is a degredation of human thought, only to be deprecated and rejected as a monstrous absurdity.

Lord Bacon, in his essay, says :—

"A little philosophy inclineth a man's mind to Atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth man's mind about to religion, for while the mind looketh upon second causes scattered, it may rest in them and go no farther ; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederated and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."

Pope says :

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast ;
Man never is, but alway to be blest ;
The soul, uneasy and confined at home,
Rests and expatiates on a life to come :
But, take this hope away of being heaven's heir,
Man dies in doubt, black darkness, and despair ;
But hallowed thoughts that on the "Rock of Ages" rest,
Dispel all gloomy fears from the believer's breast.

ATHEISM AND DEISM REFUTED.

The words of a learned divine are the following :

"Of all the false doctrines and foolish opinions which ever infested the mind of man, nothing can possibly equal that of Atheism, which is such a monstrous contradiction of all evidence, to all the powers of understanding, and the dictates of common sense, that it may be well questioned whether any man can really fall into it by a deliberate use of his judgment."

It is impossible for the mind to conceive, even a plausible conjecture, how the universe came into existence without the infinite power and intelligence of the Supreme Being, who gave the things that are their first existence. Blind, inert matter could not create itself, much less could it give existence to the mind. Could the clod of the valley create the mind of the philosopher, the divine, the mechanic, or the farmer? Impossible! The existence of the human mind could have no possible cause but that of Deity, from which it emanated or received its first being, with all its powers of thought and wlll. Matter alone could never have produced an *inferior animal*, with its instincts, its wonderful aptitudes in providing for its young, and the continuation of its kind. Mere matter could never have created such beings with such aptitudes, capabilities, and power of thought and contrivance in building their nests, providing for and preserving their young—therefore, no man, with reason or power of thinking, can deny the existence of a great, powerful and all-wise God, whose intelligence and almighty hand formed the universe. If this be granted—and it cannot be reasonably denied—the same great Being could inspire his servants,

the prophets, and apostles, to do miracles and prophesy, to convince man of his power to overrule the opposition of wicked men in the early ages of the world.

By this step of reason, we come to speak of the inspiration of the Bible, and the miracles recorded in the Old and New Testaments. Having proved that there is an all-powerful and omniscient God, who *created* and *gave laws* to both *matter* and *mind*, can it be possible that this same God could not inspire men to perform miracles, and give a faithful history of such facts in the times in which they were performed?

Take the miracles performed by Moses and Aaron in Egypt. Here we have the history of a people held in bondage by a heathen tyrant for a long series of time;—there appeared to be no hope that the tyrant would let them free. Hence, we find it recorded that the God of Israel sent Moses and Aaron before this tyrant, and enabled them to perform miracles which overawed Pharaoh and his people so that the ruler of Egypt let the children of Israel free. Here was a whole nation made free by the manifestation of miracles, wrought by the power which God gave to Moses and Aaron, in the sight of both Egyptians and Israelites, yet neither people could deny the public facts. Then, if the history of those facts could not be denied, and were not denied at the time of their performance, it is plain that they could not be denied, as the Egyptians themselves were so convinced that they were true miracles that Pharaoh and his people let their captives, the children of Israel, free. All saw the miracles, yet none could prove them to be false, as they were done in the presence of all men, in opposition to the Egyptian magicians.

Again, Moses and Aaron led the people of Israel to the Red Sea; here they had to halt in their march as the ocean

prevented them from making a single step in advance. Pharoah, with his host in quick persuit, when all human means of escape seemed, to the children of Israel, impossible, when the word of the Lord came to Moses (Ex. xiv.) The history of this miracle, if it could be proved to be a fiction at the time, would not some of them have said at the time, or after the time of the miracle, that such a miracle never took place? But no such denial, or even doubt of the miracle, was ever expressed by the Israelites; though all witnessed it, none could deny that it was done by the power of God.

Here were 600,000 men, women, and children in the exercise of their senses, looking on the miracle of crossing the Red Sea, and no one could or did call in question that miracle, although the Israelites were inclined, before they saw the miracle, to murmur against Moses. (Ex. xiv. 10-12.) After this miracle, they all joined Moses in singing the song of triumph: "The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." (Ex. xv.)

The many miracles recorded by Moses will bear the same test as the crossing of the Red Sea.

Since that time, all Jewish records, usages and customs, with the whole Jewish polity, confirm the same, both in ecclesiastical and national history, together with their ceremonies in forms of worship, till this day.

The same kind of argument and proof can be used to prove the authenticity of the miracles wrought by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as He performed them in the presence of the Jewish people at the time of His ministry among men; and they believed, and many were convinced that His miracles were the manifestation of Divine power. Neither Jew nor heathen could confute them at the time they

were performed by Christ; and, only since that time, Deists, Atheists, and Infidels have mocked His miracles, but could not disprove them.

Again, the fulfilment of prophesy proves the authenticity of the Scriptures. Take the 53 chapter of Isaiah, fulfilled in the sufferings and death of the Saviour on Calvary's cross, where it says: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." And again in the same chapter, 9th verse: "He made His grave with the wicked;" and last clause of the 12th verse: "And He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Such direct language could not have been used by the Prophet to express the sufferings and atonement of Christ, unless the Spirit of the most High God had inspired him. Isaiah lived about 760 years before Christ.

The Prophet here describes the sufferings of Christ almost as if he were looking upon the dying Saviour in His agony on Calvary. No Jew can explain this chapter away, as it bears so exactly on the atonement of Christ, and His sufferings for men who will repent of their sins.

Again, the prophesies of Christ, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, had their fulfilment in the destruction of that city, in the times of the Emperors, Vespasian and Titus, when Jerusalem was taken by the Romans, and all were taken captive or put to death. Vespasian was the first of the Roman Emperors who died a natural death, and was also the first of the Emperors who was succeeded by his own son on the thrown. Christ's prophesy, in the 24th chapter of Matthew, was, literally, fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. The institution of the Lord's supper was

× Typo error

appointed by the Saviour before His death on the cross, and has been observed by all Christians since the days of His ministry among men, and will be observed till the end of time, in commemoration of His sufferings and death. Since that time His gospel has prevailed in opposition to the devices of the wicked, though only at first proclaimed by the poor, illiterate fishermen of Gallilee. The Atheist and Deist may mock, but their mockings are in vain. Since the time of Christ, science, civilization, and power have increased, and light and knowledge, both temporal and spiritual, have made many of the nations of the earth great and happy.

These results can only be ascribed to the influence of the gospel of truth, which elevates the human mind in the hope of happiness beyond the grave; while the unbeliever and Atheist are "without hope and without God in the world."

The Bible exceeds every other book for its antiquity, and is vastly superior to the time from which it sprung, in its literature, in its comprehensiveness and importance.

Sir Isaac Newton said: "The Scripture is the most sublime philosophy."

Sir Wm. Jones said:—

"I am of opinion that the Holy Scriptures, independent of their divine origin, contain more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more important and finer strains of both poetry and eloquence, than could be collected from any other books."

The great astronomer, Sir John Herschel, says:—

"All discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the Holy Scriptures."

This seems to be a true observation from the following texts, (Job xxvi. 7): "He stretcheth the north over the

empty space (vacuum), and hangeth the earth upon nothing." A prophesy, it would seem, concerning the law of gravitation. Again, (Daniel xii. 4) : " Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." This seems to refer to travelling by steam and the propagation of the gospel. The spirit of inspiration could only have predicted in these words the facts of the present time.

In *fine*, the Bible gives a more enlightened account of creation, of the origin of life, of mind, of matter, of the universe, and of all things that exist, than any other book or creed in the world. *Atheists*, *Positivists*, and *Materialists* have no ground to reason from but inert matter, which has no power to create itself, nor to give life to animals, much less to give *life* and *mind* to man. *Life* and *mind* are phenominal existences, which only can be accounted for by the belief in the being of an *all-wise* and *omnipotent* God, whose attributes are beyond man's comprehension, and " whose ways are past finding out." Hence the Genesis and Biogenesis given by the Creator to Moses is the only true, and even plausible account, that the minds of reasonable men can accept or Christians can believe. All the hypothical nonsense devised by Sceptics and Atheist have totally failed from absence of proof. The most minute spores, or semina, or infusiora having the germs of life or vitality, owe their vital existence to God, as directly as does the whale of the ocean, or the elephant of the plain. If there be any evolution, it does not change the species or genera of created things ; all things are as they were from the beginning. Domestication, care of man, ahd change of place and circumstance, may have improved the species of inferior animals, but has not changed their nature. The wild elephant and tiger of India are still the same fierce animals from the earliest times.

Some animals have become extinct, as the moa and dodo of New Zealand, and the penguin or great awk, even recently. These facts only show that species of animals have and are becoming extinct. But we do not know or read of any new species coming into existence by the supposed process of evolution. The majority of geologists conclude that four or five distant epochs of destruction and renewal may have taken place, and can be traced in the organic remains contained in the different strata; in other words, that whole groups have been swept at once from existence by some powerful catastrophe, and their places supplied by other races, called into existence by the *creating energy* of the *Almighty*. This would imply that the *hypothesis of evolution* is a mere figment, invented by the Sceptic to *evade* the *truth* that "God created and gave order to all things in the universe."

THE ABSURDITY OF MATERIALISM.

Of all forms of human belief, none could possibly be more unmeaning than to think that mere matter could *form* or *produce* all things which exist in the universe without the intervention of mind; and that mind must have been both omniscient and omnipotent, for all things animate display both power and wisdom. Unconscious matter *alone* could never have produced *animal life* and *thought*. Between *purely vital* and *purely physical* action, not the faintest analogy has ever been shown to exist. The living world is absolutely distinct from the non-living world, or matter, compared with the antiquity of matter. Probably, the phenomena of life may have been very recent, and an addition to it, not of a refined kind of material force, but a transcendent energy, conferred on matter which controls and regulates both matter and its forces according, *it may be*, *to laws*, but not the laws of inert matter. Matter may have existed before life, even a very indefinite time. Before the Creator caused life to exist, matter may have existed millions of years in the formation of our globe; as the researches of geology may have made plain to thinking minds. Hence, the phenomena of life is a very distinct principle from matter, and can only be explained in *this way*, viz.: That the Creator gave that living principle as a *ruling agent* in connection with and after the rude elements of matter were brought into being.

Materialism, which leads to Atheism, has been *half accepted* by hundreds of persons during *the last few years*. The writings of Darwin and other modern Sceptics, have

led many into this error. The Materialistic doctrines seem to accept, as a truth, that the *non-living* and *living* are one and the same, and that every living thing is just as much a machine as a watch, a windmill, or hydraulic apparatus. According to material contention, everything owes its existence to *properties* of the *material* out of which it is constructed. But is it not strange that it never seems to have occured to the Materialistic devotee, that neither the *watch*, the *steam engine*, the *windmill*, the *hydraulic apparatus*, nor any other *machine* known to, or made by, any individual in this world, is *dependent* for its *construction* upon the properties of the material particles of the matter out of which its several parts have been constructed? The simple truth is, that the essential phenomena of all living beings cannot be explained without recourse to some hypothesis of power totally different from any of the known forms of power, or modes of mechanical energy peculiar to matter. Materialism may be called a chief element in the Atheistic creed, but vital energy which sustains and gives action to mind in the suggestive operation of thought, must differ widely from any quality in matter; the materialism, then, of the Sceptic, becomes a chimera of the hūman brain. It is because the Atheist cannot deny the existence of matter he deifies it as matter of necessity, for he might as well deny his own existence as the existence of matter.

David Hume once made an attempt to deny the existenc of matter, by reasoning from Bishop Berkley's "*Theory of Ideas*," as that writer said in his "*Principles of Humau Knowledge*," that what are called material objects are nothing more than impressions on the mind, or what we would call ideas; therefore, it is only the idea we reason from that we can know the existence of external objects, so Hume drew his conclusions from this theory of Bishop Berkley. This

effort of Hume to deceive men about the reality of matter was a piece of the most absurd sophistry. It shows what men who are infidels will do to deceive others and gain followers and dupes. But neither the philosophical transcendentalism of Berkley, nor the palpable scepticism of Hume, will, in any way, effect or destroy man's belief in his own material personality, nor his belief in the substantial existence of material objects around him. The object of the Atheist and Infidel is to destroy all ground of the Christian's hope, and leave nothing in its place.

But all efforts of the wicked have been in vain to accomplish this end. To blot the idea of an all-wise God from the minds of men has been the fixed intention of all infidel writers since the beginning of time. But the religion of Christ, the Saviour of men, has resisted all their efforts. While the pantheism of Greece and Rome have vanished from the world, the superstitious forms of religion in heathen lands are yielding to the truths of christianity, and the clouds of error are being dispelled by the light of the gospel. The Christian's hope gives peace to man *here*, and elevates his mind to contemplate the glories and happiness of heaven beyond the grave, while all other forms of religion leave him in doubt, darkness and despair.

The Lucretian system of infidelity was, that the universe was at first formed by a concourse of infinite atoms passing through infinite and empty space, and, striking against one-another, formed the worlds.

The Darwinian system of infidelity represents to the men of the world, of the *present time*, that men were at first descended from a clot of slime in the depths of the sea, and, after passing through various changes, became monkeys and then men. This hypothesis seems to be as absurd a myth

as the *nativity* of *Venus* from the *froth* of the sea, or the *birth* of *Minerva* from the brain of Jupiter; a most rediculous element of agnostic belief!

Mr. Darwin's hypothesis that man was at first *evolved* from a clot of slime in the depths of the sea, will appear quite absurd from the following argument: *Evolution* of a *living* being cannot be conceived or predicated of inert matter, for it requires *animal life* to exist, either in embrio or in addition to matter, before life can exist in matter; for all forms of animal and vegetable life or vitality are quite distinct from inert matter; to speak of spontaniety of life in mere matter, is absolute nonsense.

1st. The most minute *spores* or *semena* or *infusoria*, owe their vital existence to God *direct*, as the Giver of all life, as certainly as does the *whale* of the *ocean*, or the *elephant* of the *plain*, through their species, which was at first brought into being by His creative power.

2nd. Vital motion is quite different from mechanical motion; the former is self-moving, the latter is moved by some power external to itself.

3rd. All modes of life and motion are entirely distinct from inert matter.

4th. All modes of action and motion of inert matter are either produced by vital or mechanical forces.

5th. Matter, being unconscious, is destitute of *mercy* and *justice*, and devoid of *reason* and *intelligence*,—could form no laws of Providence such as are seen in the adaptation of means to certain ends, which are conspicuous in the works of creation.

The hypothesis of the Lucretian Materialist, that all things having life, and life itself, have been caused at *first* by

cosmic nebulosity, and the gyrations of infinite everlasting atoms passing through infinite space and striking against each other, and forming globes and worlds, are but the inventions of Atheism and materialistic folly.

As to Darwin's hypothesis, that man was first evolved from a clot of slime in the sea, will appear quite absurd, as life is a very different phenomenon from inert matter. To speak of spontaniety of life in mere matter is absolute nonsense. If any living being could evolve from mere matter, then inert matter might become the copious fountain of animate beings without living progenitors. But the persistency of *species* in both animal and vegetable beings in the world, shows plainly that evolution is a mere chimera of the brain of the man who wishes to eliminate God from the universe. Every living being, from man to the lowest animal, must have a *parentage*, or they cannot come into life without an animate cause. Every being, both animal and vegetable, must bring forth after its kind.

All *remains* of *man* which are found in the tertiary strata of the globe, have their living representatives in the present race of living men, and these remains are only found in very recent deposits, and distinct from other animal fossils, which are the remains of inferior animals which have long passed away; showing man to be the *last of God's creation*, and proving that the Mosaic account is authentic and reasonable.

In conclusion, it is evident that evolution, as held and taught by modern freethinkers, is a figment of Atheism which has for its object the change of human thought and belief to palpable absurdity, viz.: To ascribe the creation of all *animal beings* to inert matter. These modern Sceptics would have men to believe this absurdity instead of the Bible. The Mosaic account of creation is to be swept out

of existence, and the guesses of two atheistic philosophers are to be substituted instead of Scripture truth. If such a revolution of faith should take place generally in society, then we might bid adieu to justice and order among men. It is evident that, so far as Atheism prevails, oaths in courts of justice can be of *no use*.

Dr. Paley says :—

" Remove once out of heaven God, who rules the universe, and there will never be any God upon earth. If man's nature had not something of subjection in it to a Supreme Being, and inherent principles obliging him how to behave himself towards God, and towards the rest of the world, government could never have been introduced or thought of. Nor can there be the least mutual security between governors and governed where no God is admitted. For it is the acknowledging of God in His supreme judgment over the world, that is the ground of an oath, and upon which the validity of human engagements depends."

It must be plain to every sane mind, that the Giver of all life at the beginning of time must have been one independent Being, or Divine energy, which gave all things their existence at first.

The human mind is incapable of forming any other idea or belief. Man's imagination may wing its flight to the regions of immensity, and within the compass of human thought, he can find no object to rest upon but the omniscient, eternal, and self-existing Jehovah, who alone gave life to all beings on the globe, and fixed the *genera* and all *species* all animate things ; therefore, the new doctrine of evolution is false, and leaves no ground of reason to the Darwinian Agnostic on which to build his *supposed* theory of *his so-called* evolution.

JAS. SINCLAIR.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLAN OF THESE SHORT ESSAYS.

The object of the writer is to make the subject as plain to the common reader as it possibly can be.

Bible Christianity of all denominations, without distinction, is one side of the subject, and Infidelity and Atheism the other. While the want of sound reason, or a foundation of human belief, on the part of the Atheist, is clearly shown, the Bible Christian, of whatever denomination he may belong, has both the scriptural and philosophical arguments made plain to his understanding. The arguments here are short and direct, so that they will be easily comprehended by the current reader.

Hoping that this humble effort may aid in the spread of Christian knowledge, when the darkness of Atheism and Agnosticism are now making strong efforts to benight the minds of men, by unsound reasoning and philosophy falsely so called.

This little work, as a short treatise, may give some light where it is now wanting.

J. S.

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