



ON DREAMS,

IN THEIR

MENTAL AND MORAL ASPECTS,

AS AFFORDING AUXILIARY ARGUMENTS
FOR THE EXISTENCE OF SPIRIT,
FOR A "SEPARATE STATE,"
AND FOR A PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE.

In Two Essays.

BY JOHN SHEPPARD,
AUTHOR OF THOUGHTS ON DEVOTION, ETC

Οὐδὲ γε ὅπως ἄφρων ἔσται ἡ ψυχὴ ἐπειδὴν τοῦ ἄφρονος σώματος δίχα γένηται, οὐδὲ τοῦτο πέπεισμαι. Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἄκρατος καὶ καθαρὸς ὁ νοῦς ἐκκριθῇ, τότε καὶ Φρονιμώτατον εἰκὸς αὐτὸν εἶναι.—*Cyrus, apud Xenoph.*

"De tels faits, dont l'univers est tout plein, embarrassent plus les esprits forts qu'ils ne le témoignent."—*Bayle, Dict Histor. Majus, Note D. Maldonat. G.*

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TO THE REVEREND
JOHN STUART HIPPISEY HORNER,
PRESIDENT OF THE
FROM SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY INSTITUTION,
These Essays,
FOUNDED ON LECTURES THERE DELIVERED
IN MDCCCXLV. AND MDCCCLVI.
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

THESE Essays will be found to contain so unusually large a share of citations, that the writer may be regarded by some rather as a compiler of materials, than as presenting thoughts of his own.

It will be found, however, that—excepting a very few passages introduced as slightly illustrative, or ornamental—the citations consist of facts and authorities. Had these been omitted, any opinions advanced could have had but small weight or worth. Narratives of facts demand space: inferences

from them may be nought the less conclusive or probable for being expressed with brevity.

The writer has scarcely anything to offer from his own *experience* as to dreams ; and this may appear, at first view, a great disqualification for treating of them ; yet perhaps, on second thoughts, it will be deemed in one respect advantageous ; as promising, in some degree, more unbiassed thoughts, than as though he had himself received extraordinary impressions through this medium, which might have too much influenced his judgment on the whole subject.

These Essays are the substance of lectures given at a literary institution ; since enlarged, and considerably modified in form. The request of respected hearers encouraged their being prepared for the press ; not without a sense of their imperfections, which in the revision and remodelling was much deepened. Hesitation has been at length overruled by considering, that even if the

inferences should appear weak or inconclusive, at least the facts collected are worthy to be thus placed in a combined view and arrangement, and to be examined by those who may argue from them more forcibly and justly. The utility of studying these phenomena,—for which, at the beginning of the following Essays, the judgment of Dugald Stewart is adduced,—might be further advocated from the opinion of Lord Bacon, who, in several hints, recommends such an inquiry.¹ To the instances which follow, very many might of course have been added, and some of them more curious than any which are here offered ; but part of those are anonymous, or of doubtful authority ; and others too marvellous, too seemingly artificial, to be entirely credible. There is none which I should be more inclined to insert than the dream of the Elector Frederic of Saxony, which “in substance (writes Dr.

¹ In his work, “De Augmentis Scientiarum,” (referred to in Stewart’s Elements, vol. i. pp. 11, 12.) See Bacon’s Works, vol. vi. pp. 6, 130, 133 ; Dr. Shaw’s translation.

Merle d'Aubigné) is unquestionably authentic, though circumstances may have been added."¹ It is, indeed, so far attested, that one cannot wholly discredit it; but yet so expertly and consistently complete in its allegorical adapt-
edness, that one cannot but suspect it to be (as D'Aubigné himself intimates) a sort of enlarged or embellished version. Romanists, no doubt, would represent it as an "invention of the enemy;" that is, either of the party called by them heretical, or more probably of the great "enemy" by whom they assert Luther and that party to have been themselves impelled.

An intelligent writer² has thought fit to state, in regard to dreams which have been viewed as "supernatural,"—"of course, we can only conclude that we are ignorant of the natural principle concerned:" he then relates

¹ See his *History of the Reformation*, (Beveridge's transl.) vol. i. pp. 200—202.

² In Chambers's *Edinb. Journal*, 1844.

three or four very striking instances, which, could the authority for their truth have been ascertained, would have been quite appropriate for this volume ; and he adds,—“ The question with many minds will be, are they natural events ? Here we should suppose no enlightened person could hesitate for a moment to answer in the affirmative. As natural events, how, then, are they to be accounted for ? The only answer is, that the principle, if it be one, is unknown to us.”

Now, if “ natural ” be here meant to denote the operation of general laws, in such a sense as to exclude *special* and *extraordinary* design, I have myself to rank among the not “enlightened persons,” who cannot at all view such occurrences as in *that* sense natural.

It is true, that in another (and unwonted) sense of the word,—surprising deliverances, predictive dreams or visions, and even the miracles recorded in scripture,—might be termed natural, as being parts of the great and

diverse train or system of events which God has preordained.¹

Yet they widely differ from the *common* course of events, in being the reverse of ordinary, and therefore (like the creation of a new world, or of a new living creature, if we had been witnesses of these, or if we have good proof of them) they betoken more forcibly the immediate acting of a sovereign mind for an especial purpose.

¹ Bishop Butler holds that "God's miraculous interpositions may have been, all along, by *general* laws of wisdom." (*Analogy*, part ii. chap. iv. p. 224;) and that "there may be beings to whom the whole Christian dispensation may appear as natural as the visible known course of things appears to us." (*Ibid.* part i. chap. i. p. 37.) And Dr. Price, while referring to the bishop, says, "Miracles imply no suspension of the laws of nature." "The interposition of superior power implied in a miracle may be entirely natural." (*Four Dissertations*, pp. 80, 81, and see p. 437.) Dr. Clarke writes, "Absolutely speaking, in the strict and philosophical sense, either *nothing* is miraculous, namely, if we have respect to the power of God; or, if we regard our own power and understanding, then almost *everything*—as well what we call natural as what we call supernatural—is in *this* sense really miraculous; and it is only usualness or unusualness that makes the distinction." (*Clarke on the Attributes*, &c. p. 375.)

But the *accepted* meaning of the word “natural” is, something in the *ordinary* train, grounded on laws of so very broad and customary operation, as not to indicate any *particular* and *occasional* plan or interposition of the Divine Mind. If the writer whom I have cited employed the term in the *unusual* sense, he might just as allowably have said, concerning the creation of the first man or the first mammoth, the healing of the “paralytic” or the raising of Lazarus, “*these* were natural events, and if such, how are they to be accounted for?” Would he *then* have chosen to say,—“The only answer is, that the principle, *if it be* one, is unknown to us”?——Certainly that would not be the answer of a *theist*; and I cannot but judge the *tendency* of the like answer, as given concerning *some* dreams, to be, unconsciously, atheistic also. Not that I would put *any* dreams, except the clearly *prophetical* ones of scripture, on a par with *miracles*: but there are others, as I judge,

which more or less *approach* that character, and which (whether they be termed natural or supernatural) contribute to render a great and *invaluable* "principle" the more known to us, namely, the special providence of the Omniscient Ruler. They do not, indeed, actually involve the divine rule or agency more than the commonest sequences involve it; but they do make it more signally and impressively apparent.¹

Certain writers who have inferred from dreams, as is attempted in the following pages, auxiliary arguments for the distinct subsistence of spirit, have been stigmatized as "pseudopsychologists." The stigma, indeed, may have been chiefly aimed at those of them who contend for the spirit's independency of matter in a sense or degree beyond

¹ Howard's promptness and punctuality in paying his debts, and his kindness to relations, were as really parts of his beneficence as his visits to dungeons; yet the former were much less impressively and signally illustrative of that quality than the latter.

what facts and sound reasonings can substantiate.

But Descartes, Sir Thomas Browne, and Addison, have been so named.¹ I had far rather incur the appellation on such grounds, and in such company, than for opinions of an opposite kind to which it might be far more justly applicable.

Those are most truly, as I judge, "pseudo-psychologists," who, by the assumption that matter is all—that there is no other or spiritual substance, would make the notion of the soul itself a falsehood. That indifference appears to me quite inexplicable, which is expressed by here and there an intellectual person professing Christian belief as well as philosophic acumen, on the question whether there be really and without metaphor "a spirit in man."

¹ St. Paul must not be placed in the same line. But under the same imputation he must surely come, who doubted if his "visions" were "in the body or out of the body," (2 Cor. xii. 2,) and who expected to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 8.)

Were we to surrender the great truth that *so it is*,—that mind, while ever dependent for its existence on the will of God, is really one and indissoluble, a real unit, or spiritual monad,—thus yielding up what consciousness testifies, and both reason and scripture confirm; thus granting that the soul of Bacon or of Plato might be only a congeries of particles wonderfully subtile, and his thoughts only agitations or melodies of these, how could we not discern, yet how ward off, at least one destructive inference?—how retain the belief of man's unity, continued identity, nay, personality: for, except in a spiritual being or real monad, no proper individuality¹ can be conceived to exist.

¹ The term "individual," now so vulgarized, it is true, was used by Cicero to describe the "atoms" or "corpuscles" of Epicurus, (*De Natura Deorum*, lib. i. cc. xxiv. xxv. xxvi.) and it could there only mean physically or actually indivisible; since those atoms*—*corpuscula*—were, as the latter name

* *ἄτομος*, insecabilis, individuus, corpusculum minutissimum.
—*Heder. et Scap. Lexic.*

It is true, we have still stronger arguments for this spiritual existence than the phenomena of dreaming supply ; but, in my judgment, where a subject is all-important, even subor-

distinctly shows, considered as not "unextended." But, even were the mind supposed to be only *one* of these indiscerptible atoms, and the term individual applied to it,—that hypothesis, while it might remove one difficulty, would leave another untouched, and perhaps induce some greater.

The learned Howe, indeed, in his masterly and amusing irony against the Epicurean atomists,* states, that he had "not met with any that had asserted the rationality of *single* corporeal atoms," and so had "not fought with any adversary ;" but adds, that "he knows not what time may produce."†

Had he lived to know what German philosophy can produce or reproduce, he might have been still more uncertain, generally, as to the possible products of time.

It is worth while, therefore, to notice such a hypothesis.

No doubt it removes one difficulty by representing the soul or mind as not actually discerptible or dissoluble, *i. e.* (as we may presume would be meant) except by Omnipotence. But then it still implies,—whether intending it or not,—that this mind or soul has parts, and parts which are numberless. For, as the great mathematician Pascal writes, "however small a given space may be, we can conceive one less and less to infinity without ever arriving at an indivisible unextended

* *Living Temple*, part i. chap. iii. Works, vol. i. pp. 44—52, folio edit.

† *Ibid.* p. 47.

dinate corroborative arguments should not be unnoticed or foregone.

If these observations, more lengthened than was at first intended, should appear

point : ”* and he adds, “persons who are not satisfied with these reasons,” (which he had stated,) “but persist in the belief that space is not infinitely divisible, must never pretend to master geometrical demonstrations.—It is possible to be a very able man and a bad geometrician.” † Again, “a geometrician can no more exist without this principle, than a man without a soul. We perfectly comprehend it to be false, that in dividing a given space we can ever arrive at an indivisible, that is to say, an unextended point.” ‡

Now, according to the before-named hypothesis,—that rational “atom” which constituted the soul or mind of this renowned French geometrician, was doubtless a thing or “individual” of *parts*; nay, of *infinite parts*. If it be denied that these parts could—even by Divine power—be actually severed, it still cannot be denied, I presume, that they existed *together*; and that they were *mentally* separable.

What wonder, then, if this “atom” or “corpuscle,” which was the very soul of Pascal, and whose thoughts, in their sublime littleness, “wandered through eternity,” was able to demonstrate, as it did, that every “extended” atom must have “parts to infinity,” inasmuch as it had in itself a countless host of witnesses to this fact, firmly united, always consistent, never incoherent! We say not that any one of these undivided

* Pascal's Thoughts, Ed. Glasg. 1838, p. 353.

† Ibid. p. 364.

‡ Ibid. p. 356.

too digressive from my immediate subject, they yet cannot be deemed irrelevant to that chief and ultimate design which the title-page announces.

parts of the rational atom was, by itself, rational,—but that, by the supposition, they all, being together and inseparable, formed or made up or evolved, a rationality or soul, which, however small, was yet mighty, alike in mathematics, theology, and satire.

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ESSAY I.

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ESSAY I.

SECTION I.

THIS subject will appear to some, in its nature as in its very name, so visionary, as to afford little prospect of real instruction. Yet an inquiry on the phenomena of dreaming was deemed worthy, by the late eminent Professor Stewart, to occupy a section in his "Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind." He states that three questions may be proposed on it; which I thus abridge:—
"What is the state of the *mind* in sleep? How far do our dreams appear to be influenced by our bodily sensations? What change does sleep produce on those parts of the body, with

which our mental operations are more immediately connected, and how does this change operate in diversifying so remarkably the phenomena which our minds then exhibit, from those of which we are conscious in our waking hours?" The second of these questions he refers "to the medical inquirer;" the third he judges "to relate to a subject which is placed beyond the reach of the human faculties."¹

The present writer is in no way entitled to enter on those physiological investigations, which the professional studies of others so much better qualify them to pursue. Nor, while examining the first question, "What is the state of the *mind* in sleep?" will any pretension be made to treat it in a strictly philosophic manner. The aim is to adduce some recorded facts and popular considerations which may cast a degree of light on it, and to connect with these some inferences, which, if well grounded, are certainly not wanting in interest and importance.

In connexion with the speculations of that distinguished inquirer to whom reference has

¹ Elements, &c. vol. i. p. 327.

been made, it may be mentioned, that, since the selection of this topic, some encouragement has been derived from a note which Mr. Stewart appends to them, as follows: "The phenomena of dreaming may form an article not altogether useless in the natural history of man; inasmuch as they contribute to attract our attention to those intellectual powers, from which it is so apt to be drawn by that external world which affords the first, and (for the common purposes of life) the most interesting field for their exercise. In my own case at least," he adds, "this supposition has been exactly verified: as the speculations concerning the human mind, which I have ventured to present to the public, all took their rise from the subject to which this note refers. The observations which I have stated with respect to it in the text (excepting a very few paragraphs since added) were written at the age of eighteen, and formed a part of the first philosophical essay which I recollect to have attempted.—When I was afterwards led professionally, at the distance of many years, to resume the same studies, this short manuscript was almost the only memorial I

6 STEWART. SCOPE OF THESE ESSAYS.

had preserved of these favourite pursuits of my early youth; and from the views which it recalled to me, insensibly arose the analysis I have since undertaken of our intellectual faculties in general." He then adds, "For some indulgence to the egotism of this note, I must trust to the good-nature of my readers."¹

But apology was not requisite. The note may be very useful, by pointing out to the young the importance and value of a wise direction and employment of thought in "early youth;" as the frequent and perhaps usual germ of whatever they may achieve that is worth achieving, whether studiously or actively, in the maturity of after life. To me it has suggested the hope, that since this subject of dreaming originated the chief work of Dugald Stewart, it may here, however differently and slightly treated, give rise to some productive or profitable thoughts in the minds of inquiring readers.

The principal points which it will be endeavoured in this first Essay to illustrate, are, *the rapidity* of thought as exercised in

¹ Elements, vol. i. p. 574.

dreams,—and the intellectual *inventiveness and power* occasionally exerted in dreaming. These facts, it will be argued, appear to corroborate other arguments for the immateriality of the soul, and to indicate also its capacity for thought in a state of separation from the present or *visible* bodily structure.

In the second Essay it is proposed to examine, and partially confirm, the prevailing impression, that some dreams have been specially ordered for important ends by the ruling Providence of God; yet strongly, at the same time, to discourage a fanciful or superstitious misuse of that persuasion.

Let me here premise, that we may infer how naturally arguments for a spiritual substance, and a divine Providence, have been deduced by mankind from certain phenomena of dreaming, when we are aware how solicitous the philosophic advocates of materialism have been to account for them mechanically. Thus Epicurus, who held that “the soul is a subtle corporeal substance composed of the finest atoms,”¹ taught that “dreams are the effect of images casually flying about, which

¹ Enfield, Hist. Philos. vol. i. p. 467.

from their extreme tenuity penetrate the body and strike upon the mind,"¹ which is itself "formed of particles most subtle in their nature."² Lucretius has presented the same theory in an elaborate poetic dress. Hobbes, among the moderns, has treated of dreaming with the like design.³

A philosopher of exceedingly different character from these, the great Locke,—some of whose opinions have been employed, contrary to his intention, to support the doctrines of materialists, — argues that thought and consciousness are in sound sleep suspended. But his conclusion rests merely on our frequent forgetfulness of having dreamed, and on the testimony of one "that was bred a scholar and had no bad memory," who told him "he had never dreamed in his life, till he had a fever."⁴ Such testimony, if ever so much multiplied, could amount only to this, that the deponents had had no dreams which

¹ Enfield, *Hist. Philos.* vol. i. p. 470.

² *Ib.* p. 469.

³ Hallam's *Literature*, vol. ii. p. 464, and A. Baxter on the Soul, p. 196.

⁴ *Essay on Human Understanding*, book ii. c. i. § 14, p. 46, fol. edit.

they could *remember*; which actually proves nothing in the case.

Dr. Isaac Watts, in one of his philosophical essays, commenting on Mr. Locke's opinion, writes, "Often have I awoke from a dream wherein a multitude of scenes has been impressed on the mind—yet with utmost labour I could not recollect enough to fill up one minute, but only short broken hints of the dreaming scene, which also in a little time vanished."¹ He adds, "It is plain that we may be conscious of sleeping thoughts at that moment when they arise, and not retain them the next moment; so that the forgetfulness of our dreams never so soon, is no proof that we did not dream, or had no consciousness of thinking in sleep."²

The same, I apprehend, might often be truly alleged even of our recent *waking* thoughts. Let any one try to remember, in circumstances where the mind has been unbent or languid, what were the thoughts of the last five minutes, or to verify that there were any by producing *one*. Andrew Baxter, in

¹ Essay v. § 2. Works, vol. v. p. 556, fol. ed.

² Ibid. p. 557.

his "Inquiry on the Soul," says truly, "It is a mark of our imperfect natures, that we cannot become conscious of all our past consciousness at pleasure ;" adding, "no man at night would infer that he was not in a state of consciousness and thinking at a certain time of the day, because he has no memory what thoughts he had at that time. And it is no better argument that a man was not conscious in his sleep, because next morning he hath no memory of what ideas were in his mind."¹

Richard Baxter, a very different author, has these words: "I suppose the soul is never totally inactive. I never awaked, since I had the use of my memory, but I found myself coming out of a dream. And I suppose they that think they dream not, think so because they forget their dreams."²

The late honoured Dr. Abercrombie has a remark of much weight in favour of this opinion. "We have reason to believe," he writes, "that dreams which are remembered occur only in imperfect sleep, and that we do not remember any mental impressions which

¹ Inquiry on the Soul, p. 149, abridged.

² Reasons of Christian Religion, p. 543, Appendix.

occur in very profound sleep, though we have satisfactory proof that they exist. Thus, a person will talk in his sleep so as to be distinctly *understood* by *another*, but without having the least recollection afterwards of the mental impression which led to what he said.”¹

A much-respected clergyman, the Rev. J. B. B. Clarke, (son of the eminent linguist and commentator, Dr. Adam Clarke,) has favoured me with the account of a dream which clearly and curiously testifies of this. Mr. Clarke writes thus: “When I was a boy, it was my father’s custom to hear me, overnight, repeat to him the lesson which I was expected to say the next morning in school. At the time I refer to I was learning my Greek grammar, and the part which I had to repeat was the active voice of the verb *τίπτω*. When I went up to him just before bed time as usual, I could not say it, and was sent away in disgrace. Immediately I went to bed, as was the rule, after having left his study.

¹ Intellectual Powers, p. 154; see also p. 305; and the account of an officer in the expedition to Louisburg, who after dreams in which he had both spoken and *acted*, had not any remembrance of them.—P. 283. *Ibid.*

Before he himself retired for the night, my father invariably went his rounds to the children's bed-rooms to see that all was right. Coming as usual to my room, he heard me speaking, and coming near saw that I was talking in my sleep. I was conjugating the verb *γύπτω*, and he waited till I had gone through it all without a mistake. When I left the room next morning he summoned me to say my lesson. I was as ignorant of it as I had been the night before; and though for my encouragement he told me at the time that he had heard me say it perfectly in my sleep, I still could not repeat it. The above fact he not only told me at the period when it occurred, but more than once in after life. I make no comments, but state the bare fact."

The evident inference is, that a dream completely distinct and intelligent, may yet have been quite effaced by or before waking, from the dreamer's memory.

This may be the fit occasion to express dissent from the opinion of an ingenious author, that "the dream never occurs in sound or perfect sleep, for then all the senses are quiescent or uninfluenced, at least by slight

stimuli.”¹ Indeed some evidence tending to the opposite conclusion seems to present itself in another part of his essay, when, describing “trance or catalepsy,” the author remarks that “consciousness in that state is sometimes perfect,” and relates the case of a lady, who in a profound trance actually heard and felt the preparations for her own burial, and could only rouse herself at the moment when “the coffin-lid was about to be nailed on.”² Such a case also goes far to make questionable the strong assertion of the excellent Dr. John Mason Good, that in “complete apoplexy”—“in sleepy coma from fever”—and “in all cases of suspended animation from drowning or catalepsy,”—“no man has been ever conscious of a single thought or idea.”³ The only fact *possible* to be proved (and *that* would require an immense induction) would be that no one has ever *remembered* any.

¹ W. C. Dendy on Dreams, p. 19. We shall find Lavater (p. 34, below) stating that “problems have been solved in *deep sleep*,” (“tiefen schlaf,”)—and Euler (Section V. below) affirming that “in *profound* sleep the more regular and connected are our dreams.” See also La Mothe le Vayer, p. 36, below.

² Dendy on Dreams, pp. 139, 140.

³ Good’s Book of Nature, vol. ii. Lect. vii. p. 202.

But Sir Humphry Davy, relating what occurred to himself in typhus fever, writes: "I remained, when the weakness consequent to exhaustion came on, in an apparently senseless or lethargic state; yet, in fact, my mind was peculiarly active. There was always before me the form of a beautiful woman, with whom I was engaged in the most interesting and intellectual conversation.—Her figure, for many days, was so distinct in my mind as to form almost a visual image: as I gained strength, the visits of my good angel (for so I called it) became less frequent, and when I was restored to health they were altogether discontinued."¹

Dr. Abercrombie relates: "A gentleman whom I saw lately in a state of profound apoplexy, but from which he recovered, had a perfect recollection of what took place during the attack, and mentioned many things which had been said in his hearing, when he was supposed to be in a state of perfect unconsciousness. A lady, on recovering from a similar state, said she had been asleep and dreaming, and mentioned what she had dreamt

¹ Last Days of a Philosopher, pp. 64, 65.

about.”¹ So little are we entitled to affirm that apparent unconsciousness, apparent cessation of thought, is real. Even if no one had thus remembered the active exercise of thought, occurring in a state when it was judged to be wholly suspended, that want of remembrance (as was observed before) could never demonstrate that consciousness and thought had been in reality quite interrupted.

These preliminary facts and observations, as controverting the views of materialists, are obviously important to my principal design.

¹ Intellectual Powers, p. 153.

SECTION II.

HAVING thus adverted to theories which materialists have raised, or of which they have availed themselves, on this subject, but which appear to be without any solid foundation of fact,—I proceed to offer some illustrations of the *rapidity* of thought as evinced in dreams.

A signal one, drawn necessarily from his personal experience, is given by Lord Brougham in his “Discourse of Natural Theology.” He adduces it to show, “the prodigiously long succession of images that pass through the mind” (in sleep) “with perfect distinctness and liveliness, in an instant of time.” “Let any one,” he writes, “who is extremely overpowered with drowsiness—as after sitting up all night, and sleeping none the next day—lie down, and begin to dictate : he will find himself falling asleep after uttering a few words, and he will

be awakened by the person who writes repeating the last word, to shew that he has written the whole ; not above five or six seconds may elapse, and the speaker will find it at first quite impossible to believe that he has not been asleep for hours, and will chide the amanuensis for having fallen asleep over his work, so great apparently will be the length of the dream which he has dreamt, extending through half a life-time. This experiment is easily tried : again and again the sleeper will find his endless dream renewed : and he will be always able to tell in how short a time he must have performed it. For suppose eight or ten seconds required to write the four or five words dictated, sleep could hardly begin in less than four or five seconds after the effort of pronouncing the sentence ; so that at the utmost, not more than four or five can have been spent in sleep. But indeed the greater probability is, that not above a single second can have been so passed ; for a writer will easily finish two words in a second ; and suppose he has to write four, and half the time is consumed in falling asleep, one second only is the duration

of the dream, which yet seems to last for years, so numerous are the images that compose it.”¹

We may allow something here for a certain largeness and vagueness in the phrase of “years,” and “half a life-time;” and not a little for the extraordinary quality of the noble and learned writer’s intellectual action, which in sleep probably, as certainly when awake, has been more rapid, intense, and versatile, than that of any other mind among myriads.

But if we substitute, in more ordinary cases, *days* or *hours* for years, as having their incidents and images comprised in a dreaming *instant*, these examples will afford ground enough for surprise and speculation; and of these we have a variety.

Dr. Abercrombie tells us, “A friend of mine dreamt that he crossed the Atlantic and spent a fortnight in America. In embarking on his return he fell into the sea, and having awoke with the fright, discovered that he had not been asleep above ten minutes.”² He also cites the following case from Dr. Gregory :

¹ Discourse, pp. 113—115. ² Intellectual Powers, p. 284.

“ A gentleman, after sleeping in a damp place, was for a long time liable to a feeling of suffocation when he slept in a lying posture ; and this was always accompanied by a dream of a skeleton which grasped him by the throat. He could sleep in a sitting posture without any uneasy feeling ; and after trying various expedients, he at last had a sentinel placed beside him, with orders to awake him whenever he sank down. On one occasion he was attacked by the skeleton, and a severe and long struggle ensued before he awoke. On finding fault with his attendant for allowing him to lie so long in such a state of suffering, he was assured that he had not lain an instant, but had been awakened the moment he began to sink.”¹

Lavater states, in a work which I think is not translated, “ Many examples are known to me from personal observation, where sick persons who had waked after slumbering a few moments only, could hardly be persuaded that they had not slept for successive hours ; because, they said, they had had dreams of surprising length, had been in this and that place, gone through this and that transaction,

¹ Intellectual Powers, pp. 283-4.

heard such and such things, answered in such and such a manner.”¹

Archbishop Whately, in his lectures to the parishioners of Halesworth, observes: “It must have occurred to most of you, that now and then a long series of events, such as would occupy several weeks or months, and such as could not even be described in a day’s time, will be presented to the mind, and will appear to pass, in a sleep of perhaps less than an hour.”²

Professor Stewart adverts to this very different “estimate” of time in dreaming; “an inaccuracy” (such is his phrase) “which sometimes extends so far, as to give to a single instant the appearance of hours or perhaps of days.” But he does not judge it necessary to suppose “the rapidity of thought greater than while we are awake.” “For” (he affirms) “the rapidity of thought is, at all times, such, that in the twinkling of an eye, a crowd of ideas may pass before us, to which it would require a long discourse to give utter-

¹ *Aussichten in die Ewigkeit*, t. i. p. 311.

² *Scripture Revelations of a Future State*, 5th Edit. pp. 153, 154.—Published without a name, but ranked in the catalogues among the Archbishop’s works.

ance; and transactions may be conceived, which it would require days to realize.”¹

I know not how to accede to this statement; although here again very sensible how much more rapid may have been the processes of waking thought in such an intellect, than in my own or other ordinary minds.

Most true it is, that waking thought can make an instantaneous *transition* from one object to another the most remote and dissimilar, passing “in the twinkling of an eye” from the sun to a mushroom, or from the depth of a coal-mine to the cluster of the Pleiades; but I cannot believe that our natural waking condition admits of an instantaneous series and connexion of very multiplied thoughts; for instance, that even Johnson or Porson, having committed (as our young students do) a Greek tragedy to memory, could have recited it throughout, mentally, in the twinkling of an eye.

It is indeed surprising, how greatly the succession of ideas can be accelerated by a peculiar stimulant. An Indian drug (not opium) was once prescribed for myself, by

¹ Elements, vol. i. p. 345.

way of experiment whether it might prove useful as a soporific. But it excited a train of suggestions and inferences the swiftness of which I could not have deemed possible. Although these very quickly vanished from memory, there was gained from them an entirely new notion of the rate at which some philosophers and orators may think. On the other hand, while pain of the head which followed, warned me against a second use of so stimulating a medicine, I had procured perhaps the farther evil of some increased discontent with my own wonted foot-pace of cogitation :—as railways make us impatient of old-fashioned vehicles and pedestrian tours.

Yet this acceleration of thought was no more to be compared to what takes place, without any stimulus, in dreams, than the speed of an “express train” to that of an electric telegraph.

What may be the future and ultimate rapidity of thought, as acting in its most refined and perfect vehicle, we can have no present knowledge: but by the exterior and mortal organs of our present bodily system it appears to be retarded. Length of time, in

our ordinary waking state, is requisite to the formation or recollection of a number of ideas; and the more, in proportion to the defects of the individual's organization, or health.

If it be objected, this is to represent the body as an impediment to the mind, it must be replied that in such a view of it the best philosophy and the Christian scriptures agree. Let any one examine what is said of the body by Socrates in the 11th chapter of the *Phædo*, and its accordance with the apocryphal Book of Wisdom (ascribed by some to Philo Judæus), which says, "the corruptible body weighs down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle burdens the meditative mind;"¹ and with St. Paul's desire and promise of being "clothed upon" or indued with "a *spiritual* body."

The only probable way, as I conceive, of accounting for the extreme rapidity of thought in dreams, is to suppose some partial disconnection or liberation of the mind in sleep, from those grosser organs which are the media of its action while we wake.

This opinion seems to have been approached (though not definitely expressed) by

¹ Chap. ix. ver. 15; *νοῦν πολυφροντίδα*.

the distinguished Addison, when he remarks that "Dreams may give us some idea of the great excellency of a human soul, and some intimation of its independency of matter."

He adds, "when the organs of sense want their due repose and necessary reparations, and the body is no longer able to keep pace with that spiritual substance to which it is united, the soul exalts herself in her several faculties, and continues in action till her partner is again qualified to bear her company.—Dreams look like the relaxations and amusements of the soul when she is disencumbered of her machine; her sports and recreations when she has laid her charge asleep.—Dreams are an instance of that agility and perfection which is natural to the faculties of the mind when they are disengaged from the body. The soul is clogged and retarded in her operations when she acts in conjunction with a companion that is so heavy and unwieldy in its motions; but in dreams it is wonderful to observe with what sprightliness and alacrity she exerts herself."¹

Lord Brougham well observes, "The mind's

¹ Spectator, vol. vii. No. 487.

independence of matter, and capacity of existence without it, appears to be strongly illustrated by whatever shews the entire dissimilarity of its constitution. The inconceivable rapidity of its operations is perhaps the most striking feature of the diversity ; and there is no doubt that this rapidity increases in proportion as the interference of the senses—that is, the influence of the body—is withdrawn. Facts, chiefly drawn from the phenomena of dreams, throw a strong light upon this subject, and seem to demonstrate the possible disconnexion of mind and matter.”¹ And in another place, “Nothing can be conceived better adapted than these facts to satisfy us, that the nature of the mind is consistent with its existence apart from the body.”²

We may readily allow the judgment of Professor Stewart to be correct, that while “certain general laws of association,” which regulate the train of our waking thoughts, also operate during sleep, the will has then no power of “stopping the train,” or “diverting the current of thought into a new channel.”³

¹ Discourse of Nat. Theol. p. 111.

² Ibid. p. 118.

³ Elements, vol. i. pp. 334, 335.

We fully admit also that these laws of association include material as well as spiritual influences. That dreams are very frequently suggested by bodily sensations, there is abundant proof.

Thus a manuscript of the eminent Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh, "mentions of himself, that having gone to bed with a vessel of hot water at his feet, he dreamt of walking up the crater of Mount Etna, and of feeling the ground warm under him. He had early in life visited Vesuvius, and actually felt a strong sensation of warmth in his feet, when walking up the side of the crater; but the dream was of Etna, of which he had only read Brydone's description."¹

Cases of this kind, which are frequent and familiar, would suffice to refute the very singular theory of Andrew Baxter, who endeavoured philosophically to show that all dreams must arise from the influence of *separate spirits* on the mind.

But none of the foregoing facts or considerations is adapted to *explain* the immense *celerity* of thought in dreams. This must remain, I apprehend, wholly unaccounted for,

¹ Abercrombie, Intellectual Powers, p. 279, abridged.

except by the supposition already glanced at,—that the mind then acts not by its exterior organization, but either apart from all organs, or (which to me seems far more probable) by that highly refined *interior* organization, to which, during sleep, the torpor of the visible and tangible organs permits a freer agency, *somewhat* like what may take place when the mortal frame is dissolved.

To the whole mystery of this subject, Lord Byron's well-known lines, with his accustomed elevation and energy of diction, powerfully direct our thoughts.

“ Our life is two-fold : sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence : sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality :
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy :
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts ;
They take a weight from off our waking toils :
They do divide our being ; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity.
They pass like spirits of the past ; they speak,
Like Sibyls, of the future ; they have power ;
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;
They make us what we were not—what they will—
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanished shadows.”

SECTION III.

I WOULD now invite attention to the second point proposed, namely, the *intellectual inventiveness and power* frequently exerted in dreams. That original and eccentric writer, Sir Thomas Browne, in his *Religio Medici*, thus describes his own experience : " I thank God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest. We are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of our souls. It is the ligation of our sense, but the liberty of reason ; our awaking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity, my ascendant was the earthly sign of Scorpio, I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company ; yet in one dream I can compose a

whole comedy, behold the action in one dream, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof. Were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams, and this time also would I choose for my devotions ; but our grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awakened souls a confused and broken tale of that that has passed."

He afterwards writes in reference to what he had said of the elevation of the faculties in sleep, " Thus I observe that men oftentimes upon the hour of their *departure* do speak and reason above themselves. For then the soul begins to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality."¹ Let it be noticed that all these are the remarks of an acute and practised *physician*.

The poet Coleridge published a fragment of a poem, *composed* by him in sleep ; or what he terms " a vision in a dream." His prefatory account of the circumstances I thus abridge.

¹ Relig. Med. Edit. 1642, pp. 178—181.

"In the summer of 1797, the author, then in ill health, had retired to a farm-house, between Porlock and Linton. In consequence of slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effect of which he fell asleep in his chair, at the moment that he was reading these or similar words in Purchas's Pilgrimage, 'Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto; and thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall.'—The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition, in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and instantly and eagerly *wrote down the lines* that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business, and detained above

an hour, and on his return to his room found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away."

Of what the poet had previously written down, I present the chief portion, to the reader's curiosity rather than his criticism; for perhaps, according to Sir Thomas Browne, it should be both *recited* and *heard* in *sleep*, in order to be fully appreciated.

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

"But oh, that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
A savage place, as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon lover !

And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced :
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst,
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
And 'mid these dancing rocks, at once and ever,
It flung up momently the sacred river.

" Five miles meandering with a mazy motion,
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war.

" The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves ;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure dome, with caves of ice." ¹

Dr. Moore, in a recent work "On the Power of the Soul over the Body," mentions, "It is related of Cædmon, the Anglo-Saxon bard, that he composed his first and probably his best poem, that on Creation, in a dream. Previous to this, he was unable to repeat a single stave, but afterwards he became remarkable for the facility of his verses."

¹ Coleridge's Poetical Works, vol. i. pp. 266—269.—See Note A. at the end of this volume.

Addison notices this extraordinary power. "In dreams the slow of speech make unpremeditated harangues. Invention works with such ease and activity, that we are not sensible when the faculty is employed. Thus I believe every one, some time or other, dreams that he is reading papers, books, or letters ; in which case the invention prompts so readily, that the mind is imposed upon, and mistakes its own suggestions for the compositions of another."¹

But, it may be said,—the best ascertained of those compositions or rhapsodies,—even those dreaming pindarics of the poet, and that dreaming comedy of the physician, (whatever were our trust in the merit of scenes which he did *not* note down,)—are still but efforts of the *imaginative* faculties. They may prove, to use a phrase of the latter, the "unmatched *fancies* of our sleeps ;" but they make no approach to the higher more exact and severe operations of reason, or intellectual *power*.

We shall find, however, no lack of testimony for *those* exercises of the mind in sleep.

¹ Spectator, No. 487, abridged.

Lavater states, "many a mathematician has in deep sleep solved the most difficult problems, and performed complex calculations with inexpressible quickness."¹

Dr. Abercrombie adduces most striking facts, to show mental operations in dreams of a highly intellectual character. "Dr. Gregory, (he states,) mentions, that thoughts which sometimes occurred to him in dreams, and even the particular expressions in which they were conveyed, appeared to him afterwards, when awake, so just in point of reasoning and illustration, and so good in point of language, that he has used them in his college lectures, and in his written lucubrations.

"Condorcet related of himself, that when engaged in some profound and obscure calculations, he was often obliged to leave them in an incomplete state and retire to rest; and that the remaining steps, and the conclusion of his calculations, had more than once presented themselves in his dreams.

"Dr. Franklin also informed Cabanis, that the bearings and issues of political events,

¹ *Aussichten*, t. i. p. 310. He gives as his authorities treatises of Kant and Kruger, and Haller's *Elements of Physiology*.

which had puzzled him when awake, were not unfrequently unfolded to him in his dreams.”¹

“The following anecdote,” Dr. Abercrombie adds, “has been preserved in a family of rank in Scotland, the descendants of a distinguished lawyer of the last age. This eminent person had been consulted respecting a case of great importance and much difficulty; and he had been studying it with intense anxiety and attention. After several days had been occupied in this manner, he was observed by his wife to rise from his bed in the night, and go to a writing desk which stood in the bed-room. He then sat down, and wrote a long paper, which he put carefully by in the desk, and returned to bed. The following morning he told his wife that he had had a most interesting dream;—that he had dreamt of delivering a clear and luminous opinion respecting a case which had exceedingly perplexed him; and that he would give anything to recover the train of thought which had passed before him in his dream. She then directed him to the writing desk, where he found the opinion clearly and

¹ Intellectual Powers, p. 303.

fully written out ; and it was afterwards found to be perfectly correct.”¹

I may add, that Richard Baxter, no poet, but a grave divine and controversialist, declares of himself, “ Many a time (in dreams) my reason hath acted for a time as regularly and much *more* forcibly than it doth when I am awake.”²

An author of entirely different character and pursuits—La Mothe le Vayer³—writes thus : “ Cardan affirms in his Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul, that he owes many geometrical demonstrations to the reasonings of his mind while he slept; for that when he was composing the books of his new geometry, he accomplished when sleeping what he could not have dared promise from himself when awake. And I can assure you that it has happened to *me*, as well as to many others, to have had thoughts in the most profound sleep, which I reviewed with astonishment on awaking, and that when I have been able to remember the terms in which I had put them, whether in verse or in prose, I have admired the advan-

¹ Intellectual Powers, pp. 303—305.

² Reasons of Christian Religion, (Appendix,) p. 543.

³ He is styled by Hallam, “ universally a sceptic.”—*Literature of Europe*, v. ii. p. 510.—See Note B, at the end of *this volume*.

tage which the superior part (the spirit) had taken during the torpor of the other.”¹

A case of a different kind from all these is thus referred to by Dr. Moore. “Tartini, a celebrated violin player, composed his famous ‘Sonata del Diavolo,’ while he dreamed that the devil challenged him to a trial of skill on his own violin.”²

This sonata is extant; and an ingenious writer, already quoted, refers to it as the “exquisite product” of “the dream, as it is termed, of Tartini.”³

His supposition that Tartini’s and some other dreams might be not strictly such, but rather waking reveries, appears to me unsustained by any proof.

These facts may at least sufficiently refute the indirect assertion of Mr. Locke, when he says, “’Tis a wonder that the soul should retain none of its more rational soliloquies and meditations;”⁴ (*i. e.* which occurred in sleep.) He evidently means to intimate, by an irony, that such did *not* occur. But the

¹ Œuvres, fol. ed. tom. ii. (bound as tom. iii.) p. 662.

² Power of the Soul over the Body, p. 121.

³ Dendy on Dreaming, p. 108. ⁴ Essay, book ii. c. i. p. 47.

facts show, both that they *have* occurred, and that some of them *have* been retained. And if none had been so, this would have afforded no proof of their *non*-occurrence: for, as Dr. Abercrombie again observes, (in a different part of his work from the passage before cited,) “there can be no doubt that many dreams take place which are not remembered, as appears from the fact of a person talking in his sleep so as to be distinctly understood, without remembering anything of the impression that gave rise to it.”¹

It is very observable, that the subjects of mental exertion in dreams, which have been thus recorded, are most unlike each other: imaginative invention, musical composition, mathematical calculations and problems, politics, law;—and the witnesses as unlike in opinions, pursuits, and habits: the sceptic, the Christian,—the physician, the poet, the violinist, the advocate, the diplomatist, the divine.

The testimony fully warrants, in my judgment, the conclusion of Bishop Newton; who grounded it, not on *these* facts, but on others of the same kind. “It is very evi-

¹ *Intellectual Powers*, p. 305.

dent," he writes, " that the soul is in great measure independent of the body, even while she is within the body; since the deepest sleep that possesseth the one cannot affect the other; and while the avenues of the body are closed, the soul is still indued with sense and perception, and the impressions are often stronger, and the images more lively, when we are asleep than when awake. They must necessarily be two distinct and different substances, whose natures and properties are so very different, that while the one shall sink under the burden and fatigue of the day, the other shall still be fresh and active as the flame; while the one shall be dead to the world, the other shall be ranging in thought through the universe. Why then should the death of the one be any more the death of the other, than the sleep of the one is the sleep of the other? Since the soul can think and act in this manner without the body, even while united to it, why should she not be able to think and act in a more enlarged and more exalted manner, when separated from the body, or united to a spiritual body that shall no longer hinder her operations?

Since the soul hath her distinct joys and sorrows, pleasures and pains, while the body is senseless and asleep, why should she not be capable of the same, when the body shall be no more?"¹

¹ Dissert. xxvi. Works, vol. iii. pp. 193-4, abridged.

SECTION IV.

THIS brings us to the abstruse question, in what manner the soul may be best conceived capable of thought and emotion when our external bodily frame is dissolved. The difficulty of apprehending “unextended substance,” and of conceiving the locality of a being which is quite apart from matter, has supplied materialists with one chief objection against the existence of spirit at all : although Locke, from whom they have tried to derive support, has said most truly, “if the notion of spirit have great difficulties in it, we have thereby no more reason to deny or doubt the existence of spirits than of bodies ; for the notion of body is hard and perhaps impossible to be explained.”¹ He adds, “it is no more a contradiction that thinking should exist separate from solidity, than that solidity should exist separate from thinking.”²

¹ Essay, book ii. c. xxiii. § 31, p. 168, abridged.

² Essay, book ii. c. xxiii. § 32, p. 168, abridged ; and see pp. 159, 166.

The objection, however, is in fact built on a supposition not capable of proof, and I think very improbable,—namely, that the soul is separated from all matter at death. Many good and wise men have believed, on the contrary, that “perfect spirituality, utterly separate from matter in any possible state, is the exclusive attribute of Deity,”¹—“the prerogative of the Divine Being alone.”² Bishop Newton deems it most probable that even spirits superior to man are “clothed with some fine aerial or ethereal vehicle, and that the only perfectly pure” (meaning unembodied) “spirit in the universe is God.”³ So Augustine, and others of the Christian Fathers, fully held.⁴ The learned Broughton thinks that “with exquisitely fine ethereal bodies all created spirit is naturally clothed.”⁵

It is well known to have been a tenet of the Pythagorean philosophy, entertained

¹ Robert Hall. Works, vol. v. p. 59.

² Doddridge. Lectures, vol. ii. p. 420.

³ Dissert. l. Works, vol. vi. p. 70.

⁴ Burnet, de Stat. Mort. p. 169 ; and Cudworth, Intell. Syst. vol. iv. pp. 8, 37—42.

⁵ Broughton on Futurity, pp. 405-6, and p. 120.

afterwards by Plato and his followers, that the human soul has an interior luciform ethereal body, which remains united to it after death.¹ "Plato," (Bishop Berkeley writes,) "compares the soul to a charioteer that guides and governs a chariot, not unfitly styled *ἀνγαιδὲς ὄχημα*, a luciform æthereal vehicle ; terms expressive of the purity, lightness, subtilty and mobility of that fine celestial nature in which the soul immediately resides and operates."² Galen, the greatest physiologist of antiquity, writes of this as "the primary vehicle of the soul," and as "extended throughout the brain."³ And Hierocles observes, "to our lucid or splendid (interior) body this mortal body is but an accession."⁴ Several Christian Fathers held this opinion. Irenæus and Origen were of the same per-

¹ Cudworth, *Intell. System*, vol. iii. pp. 523—529.

² *Chain of Philosophical Reflections*, &c. pp. 78-9. Quoted in Broughton on *Futurity*, p. 120.

³ In his work on Hippocrates, cited in Cudw. *Intell. Syst.* iii. pp. 523-5.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 524.

The Rabbis also wrote much of this refined or subtile body, from which the soul is not to be separated. See quotations from their Hebrew in Wollaston's *Religion of Nature*, p. 197, note.

44 CHRISTIAN FATHERS ON THE 'VEHICLE.'

suasion, that the soul after death had a certain subtile body still united to it, having the same characterising form (*εἶδος χαρακτηρίζον*).¹ Dr. Cudworth remarks, that they and other ancients who adopted this tenet did not regard it as in the least inconsistent with that of a future resurrection ; and also that "although it agrees with the Pythagoric, they were led into it by scripture itself :"² as by the "historic phenomena of angels in the scripture," by the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Hades, and by St. Paul's expression, "the earthly house of this tabernacle," where Origen and Methodius distinguish the "earthly house," (or dwelling,) the mortal body, from the tabernacle (*τὸ σκῆνος*), vehicle, or subtile body which, *with* the soul, is "burdened" by that mortal earthly dwelling.³ And in fact, the "coverings" of the Hebrew "tent" or tabernacle in the wilderness may possibly have suggested this peculiar figure. The outer covering, "covering above,"⁴ was of coarse and heavy skins; while the

¹ Cudw. *Intell. Syst.* vol. iv. pp. 17, 18, 50, 51.

² *Ibid.* p. 45, *et seqq.*

³ *Ibid.* pp. 51, 52.

⁴ *Exod.* xxvi. 14 ; xxxvi. 19.

inner curtains, forming properly the tent itself, were of fine twined linen, and the veil within these was probably of more subtile and curious device. The "covering above" might not unfitly be named "the *house* of this tabernacle." If that were taken down or fell, the fine curtains or finer veil might still be a vehicle for that pure and luminous glory which was symbolic of a spiritual and living Presence.

Dr. Hartley observes, that "an infinitesimal elementary body, intermediate between the soul and gross body, appears to be no improbable supposition."¹ Dr. Paley indirectly favours the notion of a material and inseparable vehicle of the spirit, when he writes,—“If any one find it too great a strain upon his thoughts, to admit the notion of a substance strictly immaterial, that is, from which extension and solidity are excluded, he can find no difficulty in allowing, that a particle as small as a particle of light, minuter than all conceivable dimensions, may just as easily be the *depository*, the *organ*, and the *vehicle* of consciousness, as the congeries of

¹ Observations on Man, vol. i. p. 34.

animal substance which forms a human body, or the human brain ; that, being so, it may transfer a proper identity to whatever shall hereafter be united to it ; may be safe amidst the destruction of its integuments ; may connect the natural with the spiritual, the corruptible with the glorified body.”¹

This may be thought by some scientific readers an unsuitable digression into conjectural and antiquated philosophy and theology : but if the theory of an inseparable vehicle of the soul—favoured as I think it is by the phenomena of dreaming—facilitate our conception of consciousness and emotion in our proximate and intermediate state, it were strange if it should fail to interest us. It appears also to acquire, from the microscopic researches of our day, a constantly increasing probability. Knowing as we do, on good testimony, that “animalcules exist so minute that myriads can swim in a drop of water, and yet each one possesses organs of digestion, circulation, &c. made up, necessarily, of an immense number of atoms,”²—we have such

¹ *Evidences*, vol. ii. p. 393.

² *Bird's Natural Philosophy*, p. 5.

practical proof of the tenuity which may characterise an organized vehicle of the human mind as the ancients *could* not possess. Although the later Platonists *supposed* this vehicle physically indivisible,¹—so that it might well warrant the poetical description of La Fontaine—

“An atom’s quintessence, an extract of the light,”²

still they were quite ignorant of the fact that organized life actually so approaches this exility, that to one class of infusory animalcules the name *monas* seems, in a figure, suitably enough applied. If this assist us to conceive of the spirit’s retaining an inexpressibly subtile organism when it lays down this exterior frame, by which it may still have and express thought and emotion, till it “superindue”³ that form which shall be “spiritual” and immortal,—the microscopic facts have for me a deeper interest as illustrations of this probability, than as *mere* facts. While valuing all scien-

¹ See Proclus, quoted in Barclay, on Life and Organization, p. 437.

² “Quintessence d’atome, extrait de la lumière.”—Fab. liv. x. l.

³ A word used by Cudworth.

tific investigation of the works of God, I prize it and its results incomparably most, as they throw light on His highest attributes and on our own noblest prospects.

An author already quoted has a passage to this effect.—“The soul, we know by experience, retains *ideas* during sleep. For of what else do *dreams* consist? And we know that the bodily senses are at that time as it were locked up, and the tie or connexion between soul and body considerably loosened or relaxed. Why then may not the soul retain its ideas when the connexion is quite dissolved, and the body lies asleep in death? We shall the more readily believe this, if we admit the hypothesis of the soul’s material vehicle, composed of most exquisitely fine particles of matter. For if the soul receive now its ideas by means of impressions made on this vehicle or clothing, which is inseparable from it and departs with it from the body, we can the more easily conceive how ideas accompany it into the world of spirits.”¹

It was stated in the lines prefatory to these

¹ Broughton (preb. of Sarum, and vicar of St. Mary Redcliff, Bristol) on *Futurity*, pp. 121, 122, abridged and altered.

Essays, that little or nothing can be advanced from my personal experience which would illustrate our subject. What will be now briefly mentioned may perhaps be excepted, if it shall appear, as it does to myself, to favour the opinion of some such interior organism, not essentially affected by the state of the body, and probably not separable from the spirit.

During painful returns of chronic indisposition, characterised by much mental languor and depression, when unable to bear a part in intercourse even with near friends, it has happened to me, while asleep, to be engaged in very animated and pleasing conversation, sustaining, of course, the parts both of myself and of one or more companions in the dreaming interview ; and great has been the disappointment, on waking, to find the fetter and the burden still fixed, from which in sleep the mind had been transiently released.

I would, indeed, that those dreams had been far more like what an American poetess describes, when she writes—

“ Is it not sweet
To 'scape from stern reality, and glide
Where'er wild fancy marks her fairy way
Unlimited? If adverse fortune make

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Our pillow stony, like the patriarch's bed
At lonely Bethel, do not pitying dreams
Plant a bright ladder for the angels' feet,
And change our hard couch to the gate of heaven ? ”

And again—

“ If thou wilt seek the fellowship of dreams,
And make them friends, they e'en may bear thee up
From star to star, and let thee hear the rush
Of angel-wings upon God's errands speeding ;
And while they make some silver cloud thy car,
Will whispering tell thee that the unalumbering soul
Wears immortality upon its crest,
And by its very power to soar with them
Proves that it cannot die.”¹

I regret that my own dreams, whether in sickness or health, have been exceedingly below this most exalted character ; still, such as they were, they have at times proved somewhat medicinal : for although to awake from them into the sense of great lassitude and anxiety has been indeed gloomy, yet has reflection on that very contrast tended to nourish hope that the mind, thus emancipated in sleep, *might* again be one day permitted to act pleurably and with alacrity when the frame was awake ; that some residue of latent energy was thus evinced, which God's provi-

¹ Mrs. Sigourney, a Christian authoress of much talent. *Pocahontas and other Poems*, pp. 302-3.

dence could yet suddenly or gradually call forth to animate the duties and intercourses of waking life. This kind of fact therefore deserves to be ranked, at least in my esteem, as among the more special providential ends to which dreams may conduce ; a topic which will be entered on subsequently. But it is adduced here as appearing to favour the opinion under discussion. It is an instance where the bodily frame performs its functions languidly,—where the cerebral organs and nerves, in sympathy with the rest, are specially affected,—and yet where the mind, which in waking hours, at such periods, shrinks with conscious incompetence from social converse and engagements, enters into these in sleep with vivacity and earnestness. Does it then so enter into them, by a total self-abstraction and isolation, attained by sleep, from organs, nerves, and matter altogether ? That seems quite improbable, if only from the very nature of the social scenes which those dreams have presented : not to speak at present of the prior question whether such entire abstraction from matter be ever ordained or permitted for created minds. But

if it be *not* by such entire abstraction, or total separateness of action from the body, that the mind so acts in sleep, then, it may be justly asked,—*how does it act at that season?* By what conceivable way, in *such* a state of the body, and of the brain in particular, does the mind exert itself with such contrasted animation, vigour, and promptitude,—except by acting during sleep, in some conjunction with, or through the medium of, an interior vehicle? What third supposition or solution can be framed?

On the whole, my impression is, that the theory of the mind's operating, after its separation from the mortal body, by means of an ethereal vehicle, separable with it from our external frame, at any rate greatly aids the imagination with respect to the then continued action of the spirit, and that the phenomena of dreaming, especially when so explained, further help to facilitate our conception of this.

SECTION V.

It may be here asked—Do you then adopt and advocate the doctrine of the “sleep of the soul”? The answer to that query must depend altogether on what sense is attached to the phrase. If it be taken or meant to describe such a “profound sleep” as is supposed to amount to “total insensibility”¹ or suspension of consciousness, which seems to be what has been most *usually* understood by the phrase “sleep of the soul;” for *that*, it is manifest, no plea is offered, but for the very contrary.

There is, however, another sense of the word sleep, much more analogous to its real ordinary meaning, in which I conceive it may very *fitly* describe (though of course very imperfectly) the state of the separated spirit.

¹ Whately. *Scripture Revelations of a Future State*, pp. 93, 92.

It is in this sense that Watts would have the word employed, when he puts the following objection,—“How comes death to be called so often in scripture a sleep, if the soul wakes all the while?”—and answers it by this second query,—“Why is the repose of the man every night called sleep, since the soul wakes, as appears by a thousand dreams? But, as a sleeping man ceases to act in the affairs of this world, though the soul be not dead or unthinking, so death is called sleep, because during that time men are cut off from the businesses of this world, though the soul think and act in another.”¹

Dr. Thomas Burnet of the Charterhouse, in his Latin treatise “on the state of the dead, &c.” remarks, that “in scripture they are said to sleep; which intimates a state of rest, silence, and cessation of work, that is, as to the outward world; so that we have no more communication with it in the state of death than in the state of sleep;”² and he afterwards adds, “It is however to be noted, that when a

¹ Watts's Works, vol. i. p. 544, 4to ed.; and as quoted in Huntingford's Testimonies, pp. 38-34.

² De Statu Mortuorum, &c. p. 98.

cessation of work is attributed to the souls of the dead, we are not to understand this as universal and of every kind, inward as well as outward, but outward only ; so that they operate or affect nothing in the corporeal world, nor are any way affected by it. Yet they have, meantime, life, and indwelling or immanent thoughts (*cogitationes immanentes*). As Christ said of the deceased patriarchs, they “all live” unto God ; *i. e.* in relation to Him and the invisible world, and in regard to their intellectual powers, they live and act with vigour (*vivunt rigentque*).”¹

The distinguished Swiss mathematician, Leonard Euler, (in a passage part of which has been already cited,) writing of the state of the soul after death, observes, “Sleep likewise furnishes something like an example (pre-figuration) of this : as the union of soul and body is then in a great measure interrupted, yet the soul ceases not from activity, being employed in the production of *dreams*. These are usually disturbed by the remaining influence which the senses exercise ; and we know

¹ Burnet. De Statu Mortuorum, &c. pp. 99, 100.

by experience, that the more this influence is suspended, which is the case in profound sleep, the more regular and connected are our dreams. Thus after death we shall find ourselves in a more perfect state of dreaming, which nothing shall be able to discompose. It will consist of representations and reasonings perfectly well kept up" (sustained).¹

Dr. Hartley remarks, "Upon the whole we may guess, that though the soul (after death) may not be in an insensible state, yet it will be in a passive one, somewhat resembling a dream, and not exert any great activity till the resurrection."²

The Genevese naturalist, Charles Bonnet, throws out, in his remarks on sleep, this passing inquiry—"Is the state of the soul, when separated from this mortal body, (*corps grossier*,) that of a perpetual dream—pleasing for the good, painful for the wicked?"³—a suggestion that may recal to English memories the well-known soliloquy which, one

¹ Letters of Euler to a German Princess, vol. i. p. 359, abridged. This passage is given from an English translation, which is wanting in elegance, I would hope not in faithfulness.

² Observations on Man, vol. ii. p. 416.

³ Contempl. de la Nature, tom. i. p. 102.

would hope, has checked some meditated suicides :—

“In that sleep of death what *dreams* may come,
Must give us pause !”

Many have seen in the catacombs of Paris (which are now closed) the infidel’s chosen inscription, “Death is an eternal sleep :” but what is gained for their object of repose, by those whose wish was “father to that thought,” if the “eternal sleep” they coveted should prove also a perpetual and an evil *dream* ?

After all—it may be said—that “sleep of the soul,” although it should be a vividly conscious and ever-*dreaming* sleep, can scarcely be called *real* and *substantial life*. Its visionary and “phantastic” character cannot equal or emulate the clearness and assurance of a waking state.

But I rather believe, that while as to exterior action and communication it confessedly *cannot*, it yet as to interior cogitation and emotion may ; and, in *this* sense of life, may be fairly called quite real and substantial. A theorem, or problem, or calculation, evolved in a dream, is as real and true as if it had been completed in the state of waking ; and the

feeling of lively joy or deep sadness in our sleep is as actual and acute while it lasts as if we experienced it in a waking hour.

Bonnet, writing of the state of the chrysalis, observes, (as some will think, fancifully, or even absurdly,) "In this state the activity of the (insect's) mind does not exert or develop itself outwardly. The state may be compared to that of sleep. I will not, therefore, decide that the activity of the insect's mind does not operate inwardly. It (the chrysalis) may have dreams, by the remembrance of sensations which it experienced in the caterpillar state."¹ This may appear childish or preposterous to some. Yet few people doubt that beagles and lapdogs have dreams: and, if so, why should not the poor chrysalis have its soothing reveries, and the butterfly enjoy some brilliant trance in her siesta on a roseleaf?

Although there be, doubtless, between sleep and waking a broad and manifest distinction, still how equivocal in some sense, and evanescent, is the *reality* (so called) of our present waking life! Is not that true concerning

Essai Analytique, tom. ii. p. 226.

most of our daily imaginings and hopes and fears, which the great poet last quoted has said of our "palaces" and "temples," and of this "great globe itself," that with respect to earthly remembrance they vanish and "dissolve," and like an

"insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wreck behind?"

So that he not unfitly adds, as it regards our mortal condition,

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."¹

The contrast, to be stated even in sober prose, between dreams in sleep and the scenes and thoughts of our waking mortality is not so strong and absolute as may be at first conceived. There are deep meanings in a later poet's query,—

"Is not the past *all* shadow?—What are these?—
Creations of the mind!—The mind can make
Substance; and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have *been*, and give
A breath to forms that shall outlive all flesh."

¹ Tempest. Act iv.

SECTION VI.

RETURNING, for a short time, to our hypothesis of the *innermost* body—the probably inseparable vesture of the soul, I may cite the belief of the philosopher Leibnitz, “that all souls, all simple created substances, are always joined with a body, and that none are ever entirely separated from it.”¹

He also says, “I judge this the only tenable conclusion, the conservation, namely, not only of the soul but of the organic machine, although the dissolution of the gross or ponderous parts has reduced it to a minuteness which escapes our senses.”²

He elsewhere contends that “no derangement of visible organs” (meaning not even death itself) “is capable of producing entire

¹ *Nouveaux Essais*, p. 13 ; quoted in Bonnet, *Palingénésie*, tom. i. p. 291.

² *Opp.* tom. ii. p. 51 ; quoted in *Dissert.* i. prefixed to *Encyc. Brit.* ed. vii. p. 259.

confusion, and depriving the soul of all its organic body.”¹

Now it is to me very apparent, as has been already argued, that this notion of a latent and refined organic vehicle renders our conception of the unbroken consciousness and inward activity of a spirit, when separated from the gross mortal body, much the more distinct and credible ; and also that the phenomena of dreaming materially conduce to support it : nor can I cease to believe the consciousness of the spirit so separated, whether viewed on Christian or philosophic grounds, to be a tenet of great weight and interest.

It is true, we must needs agree with Archbishop Whately, that “on the supposition of utter unconsciousness of the separate spirit” the time of this “total insensibility” is to the spirit itself “no time at all.”—“To the party concerned there is” (as he adds) “no interval whatever.”² But when this very

¹ *Nouveaux Essais* ; quoted in Bonnet, *Palingénésie*, tom. i. p. 298.

² *Script. Revelations of a Future State*, pp. 92, 94, edit. 5. 1842.

eminent logician goes on to affirm, that there would not be in that "any *loss* of happiness that might otherwise have been enjoyed during the interval,"¹ from this, although it may be rash in one not trained in the academic use of logical weapons, I am constrained to differ.

The learned writer says, "that which is taken from eternity does not shorten it."² Does not this proposition, as here applied, involve the paradox that eternity which had a *beginning*, (and such must be the constant meaning of the word when applied, as above, to creatures,) is as long, as great, as eternity which had *no* beginning,—or that an endless line to be drawn from any point is as long as the same line protracted infinitely from the same point in *two opposite* directions?

The archbishop adds, "if we are all destined, as we are, to live *for ever*, he that is born, for example, a thousand years earlier, cannot be said to have a longer life than he who is born a thousand years later."³ Now to object to that position because it would seem to involve this indefensible consequence, that even He

¹ Script. Revelations of a Future State, p. 99.

² Ibid. p. 100.

³ Ibid. p. 100.

who was "from everlasting" could not then be said to have a longer life than the angel or the infant formed to-day, who is "to live for ever,"—might be fallacious, as well as presumptuous : inasmuch as the Divine Existence being regarded as simultaneous and insuccessive, the term "long," and similar terms, may in no way be applicable to it.

But the phrase, "to live for ever," when spoken of human beings, describes only a *potential* life, a life future or which is *to be*, but of which it never can be affirmed, now or hereafter, that it *is*, or is complete. The actual life of a creature—according, at least, to all our conceptions—is only the past and present, and will be still so millions of ages hence. Although it be, at all periods, potentially, and in God's purpose, infinite, it is, at all periods, *actually*, finite. That which *will be* for ever endless, is and must be for ever *actually* a finite sum ; and whatever is taken out of that actually finite amount, namely, out of the past, has by so much shortened it.

It is admitted that any even finite period, be it a thousand or a million of years, will at length be a fraction vanishingly small of even

another finite period which will have past : but this does not prove, to my apprehension, that the many centuries since the death of Noah or of Abraham are as nothing, and that to have been totally unconscious during all those ages, instead of living unto God, would have been no loss ; or, which is tantamount, that those patriarchs' centuries of conscious repose and hope have been and are no gain.

On the contrary, I reckon there has been a gain, even in the later instance, of more than three millennia and a half ; no small gain, surely, in itself, however minute in proportion to the vast future.

Then, further, the archbishop has been already quoted, remarking (as others have done) that " a series of events such as would occupy several weeks or months will appear to pass in a sleep of perhaps less than an hour."¹

The "Spectator"² refers to Malebranche as telling us that it is possible some creatures may think half an hour as long as we do a thousand years. I have not found these

¹ Scripture Revelations, pp. 153, 154.

² No. 94, vol. ii. p. 54.

words in Malebranche; and if he were speaking of *lower* creatures, he could not have used them consistently, since he held the astounding Cartesian dogma of their being mere machines. But it is perhaps to the following passage that Addison refers. "I doubt not" (writes Malebranche) "but God can so apply our minds to the parts of duration, by producing in us a great number of sensations in a very little time, as that an hour may appear as long as many ages."¹ To this Lord Brougham's computation of dreaming time would most approach, who thinks a dream lasting one second may seem to last for years. But let us keep far within these reckonings, and even within Archbishop Whately's own. He supposes the events of "weeks or months" to be comprised in the dream of "an hour." Let only those of the waking hours of a *fortnight* be so, and then must the millennia which have elapsed be more than two-hundredfold multiplied, in order to represent the ideal period of thoughts and feelings which has been lived through by the spirits of those patriarchs :

¹ Recherche, (Search after Truth.) Translation, book i. c. viii. vol. i. p. 51.

supposing, only, that the thoughts and emotions of their *separate* state have equalled in rapidity and multiplicity those which occur, on a low computation, in the dreaming state.

Such I conceive to be allowable and probable inferences from the ascertained rapidity of thought in this latter condition, and from that resemblance of the former to it which some philosophic minds anticipate.¹

An acute inquirer on our subject, after noticing this "incalculable rapidity," observes, "in regard to the prospect of futurity, who of us can decide that this is not one evidence of the divine nature of mind—a remote resemblance, if I may presume so to write, of one of His attributes to whom a thousand years are as one day?"² .

The speculation here glanced at seems to be, the possibility—when the mind is disengaged from its mortal body—of the virtual or real simultaneousness of a plurality of ideas. It would be an augmentation of the human powers which we cannot appreciate,

¹ See Watts, p. 54; Burnet, p. 55; Euler, p. 56; Hartley, and Bonnet, *ibid.*; above.

² Dendy on Dreams, pp. 37, 39.

if the mind should become capable to think clearly even of *two* objects at one time.¹

On all this the comment may be made by some,—these are mere hypotheses, not scientific facts : they refer also to what is in itself ideal and intangible, and are without practical utility. Hoping, however, not to be deemed insensible to the importance of physical science, I must equally hope that the reader is not so as to the value of that which is above and beyond it.

It is a truism—and yet needs to be remembered,—that the highest results of mathematical or astronomical research, the most recondite discoveries in chemistry or fossil remains, or the most ingenious applications of science to arts, agriculture, or manufactures, all derive their existence from the *mind itself*, which can alone either produce or estimate or enjoy these results. The study, therefore, of our thinking selves cannot (one would judge) be of *less* interest than that of any

¹ On the marvellous subject of omniscience, striking illustrations are offered in a remarkable chapter of Dr. McCulloch's work on the Attributes,—“the coexistence of ideas in the Divine mind.”—Vol. i. ch. xv. p. 380. See also Locke on Pascal and on Angels. Essay, book ii. c. x. § 9, p. 73.

external and visible objects. But, it may be said, much less sure and demonstrative. Granting this—which, however, is not in all respects beyond dispute—it may then be rejoined,—whatever concerns and will always concern us intimately and chiefly, cannot, though it be more inscrutable in some respects, deserve curiosity and attention less than what affects us very slightly or indirectly, although the latter should be more easy to investigate, or more apparently practical in its application.

To observe the contests of microscopic insects in a water-drop—"myriads of individuals, each of them as perfect in organization as the mighty mammoth of old, or the sagacious elephant of our days, endowed with distinct habits, propensities, and faculties,"¹—to detect the organs of the infusoria, or pursue with Dalton the ultimate atoms in their latent forms—is doubtless exceedingly interesting, as it unveils the recesses of creative skill; but it cannot, methinks, be less so to infer—from these facts, which show how prodigiously matter is subtilised while yet regularly organised—how our thinking self may carry

¹ Dr. Millingen. *Curiosities of Medical Experience*, p. 359.

with it, and wear upon it, some extremely attenuated organism in the dreaming or meditative repose of Hades, and then assume a yet more "spiritual" body for the waking life and active rest of Heaven.

It seems fair to judge, that they who deem this a *less* worthy object of study than the pursuits of Faraday or Ehrenberg, betray a distaste for the knowledge of their present and future selves which is not to be admired, even in a merely *intellectual* point of view.

Pope's weighty maxim,

"The proper study of mankind is man,"

must, of course, not be taken in a restrictive or exclusive sense ; but, in its intended and legitimate meaning, it cannot by the truly wise be discarded.

Before passing from our immediate topic—that of the separated spirit's probable state of reverie, and of the ethereal vehicle in which it may act—to those more general remarks which will conclude the present Essay, it will be appropriate to mention a singular dream, relating to that separate state, which occurred to Zimmermann, (the physician of George II.)

and is recorded by Lavater in one of his letters to him.

“I add,” (he writes,) “as a phenomenon from which perhaps some idea may be deduced as to the state of the soul after death, that remarkable dream which you yourself had, my dearest Zimmermann, in November, 1765. The true narrative of such an experience, by a man who is the sworn foe of all superstition, and who contemns the remotest approach to fanaticism, is of great value. This dream of yours is worthy of notice on two accounts : first, in so far as it may be considered generally to have arisen from an unusual state of the soul, which perhaps resembles its condition after the death of the body ; and secondly, as it contains and suggests some very probable ideas *respecting* that condition of the separated spirit. You saw your wife—whose decease had been announced to you—in a beautiful and aerial form and garb, in her modest tranquil loveliness, yet with an aspect of somewhat strange solemnity.

“She approached you with an amiable majesty not to be described, and with the disclosure, ‘that she had experienced things

which no man had ever conjectured ; that the powers of her soul had been infinitely exalted and enlarged ; that she had looked through the transient past in all its causes and sequences ; that each present moment was for her as a sea of ideas, but the future still somewhat dark ; that she was inexpressibly happy, and yet not perfectly so ; that her whole past course of life ever floated before her mind ; that every thought, every disposition, not leading decidedly to that towards which all her wishes were now directed, appeared to her a fault, and gave her uneasiness ; that she felt a sort of helplessness when contemplating the way to heaven ; that in heaven she was not yet ; judgment had not yet occurred ; that brilliant clouds as yet veiled from their view that blissful home, and thither, thither, they were pressing.' You told me, further, that you had asked of your wife a number of weighty questions, which she so answered, that you saw clearly what the greatest mind among mortals could never have attained the remotest glimpse of ; but that in the attempt to note these down you awoke, and then, notwithstanding the most

strenuous efforts at recollection, were unable to recal the sublime, and new, and prescient ideas, which in the dream you were anxious to record.”¹

On the more special design and use which may be traceable or supposable in dreams of such an order as this, nothing will be said at present. That branch of the subject will occupy us in the subsequent Essay. The general character of this dream, and of some others—namely, that extraordinary affluence and elevation of ideas which the dreamer experienced—appears to be in part explained, though rather vaguely, by Addison, at the close of his paper on sleep, where he writes, “I do not suppose that the soul, in these instances, is entirely loose and unfettered from the body: it suffices if she is not so immersed in matter, nor so entangled and perplexed in her operations, as when she actuates the machine in her waking hours. The corporeal union is slackened enough to give the mind more play.”²

¹ Lavater, *Aussichten*, tom. i. brief 7, pp. 141, 144. See Note C, at the end of this volume.

² *Spectator*, No. 487.

Some approach to a less indistinct explanation of this is made, as it seems to me, by the hypothesis which has been brought before the reader,—that of an exquisitely refined vehicle in close connexion with the spirit, acting when the functions and influences of the exterior body are peculiarly suspended ; a theory which I conceive casts some faint light, at least, both on the present occasional action of the mind in sleep, and on its probable action in that next condition, which, with reference to the exterior body, is fitly called the “separate state.”

SECTION VII.

THIS inquiry, imperfect as it is, will not be fruitless, if it corroborate for any mind the probabilities which exist, independently of the Christian revelation, of a spiritual substance and a life to come ; and if it assist our conception and belief that the spirit will *continue* to experience good or evil immediately after death, and before union to that immortal "indument" with which, if itself renewed, it shall be at length invested and adorned.

Some, however, while admitting that the design is good, may object that the arguments are for such purposes superfluous, since we have the scriptures to rest upon, and "THERE is firm footing ;" whereas all else is fanciful or unsure. Why, they may ask, attempt to add frail props or flying buttresses, when the "pillar and ground" of God's truth uphold so strongly the great edifice of our hopes ? But the fact (as I conceive) should be never

slighted or forgotten, that while in our age the strength of revealed proof has been evinced and searched and recognised afresh,—in our age likewise insidious modifications of unbelief abound ; while some learned Christians, when insisting on the need of tradition and authority, have, for the sake of enforcing this, most strangely depreciated the character of evidence derived from nature and from scripture. It is therefore to me very apparent, that no collateral or prior and independent proof—though it may be merely of a presumptive character—concerning a future life, and even concerning an *immediate* life after death, can be rightly abandoned or even overlooked.

Such arguments should be peculiarly offered to those who refuse serious attention to the claims of revelation ; and ought to impress them, at least, with *this* persuasion—that there is much probable evidence, wholly apart from God's word, for a state of consciousness following death, and following it immediately. If, in any measure, they seriously accede to that conclusion, it is adapted, by its intrinsic importance, to attract or urge them further ;

for I see not how minds, even really suspecting thus much, can with any colour of reason condemn or treat lightly the proposals of revealed truth. If we are even at all *likely* to exist after death, can it seem a matter of small interest to investigate, as far as may be, *what* we are to become—how to fare—with whom to meet or sojourn ;—in that approaching state “ what *dreams* may come,”—whether “ of torture” or “ the touch of joy ;”—and, above all, what will be the circumstances and experience of the full and final awaking ? But where shall any light be obtained on these points, except purely from scriptural sources ?

Yet that very weightiness of the matter seems to be one reason—though perhaps unacknowledged, and sometimes even latent to those who are under its influence—why, by some persons, researches on the mind are depreciated, and physical science exclusively preferred : namely, that the former lead towards the contemplation of thoughts and interests of graver hue or more momentous import than they incline to dwell upon.

This is somewhat as if an inquisitive merchant should cultivate a taste for anatomy or

entomology, but avoid books or conversations on political economy or finance ; half conscious how these might indirectly remind him, that it were well to look more closely into his own ledger, or more frequently scrutinize his scale of domestic expenditure.

True wisdom will incline us to welcome, first and most, those inquiries which have some bearing on our deepest interests and our chosen aims.

To direct our researches exclusively to the qualities and phenomena of matter, were to forget all by which we perceive or explore them—our own mind or spirit, and that Infinite Spirit who is its Author.

If these existed not, what of real or permanent in the universe could remain ? And since these exist, what studies or sciences beside can so intimately and intensely concern us ?

If our present mortal condition be, in some figurative sense, a "*dream* of life,"—as poetry has termed it,—or, as a far higher authority avers, "a vapour that appeareth and vanisheth away ;" if the next or intermediate life be (in a different and stricter sense) a

state of dreaming or of contemplative reverie, inexpressibly vivid and exalted ; if there be, moreover, beyond both these, a waking blessedness, which all who by God's help abjure their pride and self-sufficiency may be "made meet" to share,—then what shall be thought even of our curiosity or love of knowledge, unless it have, some way, a reference to that state, where, with the rapid excursiveness of the sublimest dreams, shall be combined the clearness, continuousness, and progression of the highest waking thoughts?

Every the most indirect or reflected ray which can be brought from science or experience to illustrate that great prospect, must have some value. The prospect itself is seen but as in an obscure and mystic glass : yet there are in it features and aspects of unearthly brightness : while the sceptic's is altogether desolate and dim ; chill "shadows, clouds, and darkness" resting on it, whatever may be his intellectual power or imaginative range.¹

If inquiries or researches, in *whatever* region, tend to support the highest truths and

¹ See Note D, at the end of this volume.

noblest expectations, they have thus an indirect and accessory worth which is beyond all computing ;—if not so, they must become, even to the most ardent votaries of science, of piteously small worth ere long.

The sceptic, by his own confession, is “borne darkly, fearfully afar.” If we follow his flight, he leaves us gazing as on some vast and brilliant “firemist,” or some immense but formless nebula :—while the believer carries us amidst the warmth and harmony of heavenly orbs, and hails them as the “mansions of his Father’s house.”

If each were but a dream, who would not choose the Christian’s ? what right and earnest mind must not long to have it stamped with the signet of reality ? who not prefer those godlike visions which reveal the great First Cause as a reconciled Father, and the divinely opened way to filial union with Him who is the Origin and Giver of all good, and thus to an unfailing tenure of blessedness in full perpetuity ?

Indeed, were this but a dream, then must happiness, nay existence itself—as is feigned in the hallucinations of a self-blinding philo-

sophy—be but a mere dream likewise. Then might we fitly deplore, with the author of *Adonais*, the rueful enigma of man's destiny :—

“Woe is me,

Whence are we, and why are we? Of what scene
The actors—or spectators?”

But it cannot be so. The prospects of the Christian rest on the basis of large and complex evidence. The Deity is their author, and His perfections their guarantee. Else, weak and depraved man has dreamed or conceived of something more great and good than we can know that God has anywhere purposed or devised. To imagine this were to deny a God ; for it were to exclude the Perfect. But if in Him, the Perfect, we really believe, our belief involves the ennobling, inspiring persuasion, that whoever seek happiness in the way which He prescribes, shall be “satisfied, when they awake, with His likeness.”

ESSAY II.



ESSAY II.

SECTION I.

IN attempting to prosecute an inquiry of this kind, one may encounter some discouragement even from the casual question sometimes heard in society,—what will be really understood of the matter after all?—words intimating a belief of hopeless obscurity in the subject, which we are constrained to acknowledge has some degree of correctness. For, without doubt, these phenomena of dreaming are of a character peculiarly shadowy, vague, and irregular; involving causes and operations which utterly elude research. But this will hardly be deemed a reason for not exploring

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them, unless almost *all* studies should be renounced on account of that impervious darkness which soon and surely meets us, in ascending or descending towards their several objects.

Whether we contemplate—as is our duty and our glory—the Infinite and Self-existent,—or pass by a boundless descent from that sole underived and self-sustaining Majesty to the loftiest of created minds,—and thence, without pausing at any step in the vast gradation of lowlier spirit and of organized matter, drop suddenly to a mere ultimate atom, or a particle physically indivisible,—the same unanswerable questions arise, concerning the atom as concerning its Creator, —what is it? how does it subsist? At the lowest conceivable point of entity, as well as at its glorious primal source, the same secrets baffle us. Whether we bow before the Supreme or trace diagrams in the sand, whether we speak of the cedar or hyssop, of thoughts or of dreams, we touch everywhere the veil and verge of mystery; and not to discern this, were rather to vegetate than to think.

A different objection to the line of inquiry

here pursued is current in some circles, and is also found in books. It is to this effect, — that dreams, physiologically considered, plainly arise from broken remembrance and diverse sensation acting on the nerves and brain; shaped by the incidents of the past day; modified by health and diet; produced often by casual sound, or contact, or position of the limbs; and accordingly that the action of our mind is then exceedingly imperfect; as the utterly trivial and confused quality of most dreams evinces. All this we may generally admit; without at all allowing it to follow, either that every dream arises from physical causes because very many do so, or that the action of the mind is *necessarily* feeble and confused in sleep because such is most *commonly* the fact. It is much less equitable than it is easy, to assert that some have meant to represent the mind as having in sleep powers equal or superior in all respects to those of its waking state. Even the learned and original, though somewhat paradoxical, Sir Thomas Browne must not be taken in too literal and large a sense. I doubt not he wished, as he affirms, to pursue

sometimes in dreams his studies and devotions, — as having experienced more vivid and exalted thought in dreaming than when awake. But we do not read of his wishing to *prescribe* in dreams, or recommending his patients to *seek* remedies in that way:—although Galen and Hippocrates appear to have had faith in such a method,¹ and no less a person than the emperor Marcus Antoninus wrote, “I am thankful that remedies were pointed out to me in dreams, for spitting of blood and for a giddiness in my head, as I remember was the case at Caieta and at Chrysa.”²

But there have been adduced in the foregoing pages various and striking testimonies³ for the fact of intellectual power and activity exercised in dreams; which opposite instances, were they ever so numerous, cannot overturn.

If we wished to prove intellectual power in the *negro* race, (which was once denied,)—and if, in an assembly for debate composed of a hundred negroes, we found the most speak

¹ Millingen's *Medical Curiosities*, p. 307, and Peter Martyr, *loc. com.* p. 20.

² Graves's *Antoninus*, book i. p. 64.

³ Pp. 28—37, above.

rather childishly, and some even incoherently, but yet a few who discussed the matter well, and one or two who even spoke acutely on *both* sides—keenly refuting points which themselves had plausibly raised, (as sometimes happens in our dreams,)—we ought not surely to measure the capacity of the negro mind from the instances in which it was undeveloped, but from the few which proved what it *could* attain.

It may be advantageous very summarily to review the chief topics and ultimate aim of the preceding Essay.

After reference to the opinions on dreaming of some ancients and moderns, proofs were offered, first, of the *rapidity* of thought in dreams; second, of the mental *power* and *inventiveness* evinced. An inquiry followed on the probable *manner* of the soul's acting, both in sleep and in the intermediate state. After some notice of the objections to these theories, the great *application* of the facts was urged and vindicated, as reinforcing all other proofs and probabilities both of a conscious life to come, and of the *continuous*

sequence of that conscious life through and after the event of our mortal dissolution.

If these things were, with any fair measure of conclusiveness, shown, we must see that there has been an important design of Providence in rendering dreams a part of the human constitution and experience: since they have conduced to infuse—in the absence of revealed truth or in aid of traditional and obscure disclosures, and even in support of historical revelation which so many are disposed to neglect or repudiate—the sense of a spiritual and prescient power, and of a future life; those great sanctions of moral obligation.

It will now be one of my further aims to show, that this design of dreams, or of the dreaming faculty, in general, has been also pursued and promoted in the special character, circumstances, and issue of some dreams in particular. No doubt such dreams—like divine miracles and prophecies—have given rise, from the weakness and craft of mankind, to many erring fancies, and many corrupt imitations and false pretensions for gain: but just so has the *religious* principle (or instinct

of *worship*) led, in the fallen mind of man, to all the like deluding results. Are we to infer thence, with Lucretius, that the religious principle is deceptive and pernicious? None but virtual atheists can admit that inference. Neither is a parallel inference admissible in the case before us.

SECTION II.

THE object, however, of this Essay, as was stated in the former, is twofold; namely, to discourage a fanciful and superstitious misuse of dreams, as well as to vindicate the prevailing impression that some have been ordered for important ends by the providence of the Supreme Ruler.

I would address myself first to the *former* object; adverting to those *superstitions* concerning dreams, which in ancient times conspicuously prevailed, and which, to a certain extent, are still subsisting. It was inevitable, that from the singularity of some dreams, and from what sometimes occurred—to say the least—in seeming fulfilment of them,—there would arise a desire to conjecture and interpret, or to have this done by sagacious professors; and that the covetousness and cunning of men, ever on the watch for lucre, would minister to this desire.

Accordingly we find, from all history, that

divination by dreams had become in the earliest ages a sort of profession. It formed one branch of the occult art of soothsaying, much resorted to by royal, noble, and opulent personages. Thus the Egyptian Pharaoh dreamed, "and his spirit was troubled, and he called for all the magicians of Egypt and all the wise men thereof, and told them his dream; but none could interpret it."¹ Thus the royal builder of Babylon "commanded to call the magicians and the astrologers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams."² The same class of sages is mentioned by Herodotus. He relates, that a dream of Astyages, King of Media, concerning his daughter Mandane, as explained by the Magi, the interpreters of dreams, gave the monarch great alarm.³

Cicero cites, from Dinon's Persian history, the interpretation given by the Magi of a dream of Cyrus, who had seen the sun at his feet and tried to grasp it; and Quintus Cicero,

¹ Gen. xli. 2.

² Dan. ii. 2.

³ Herod. lib. i. c. 107, 109, Taylor's translation, pp. 51, 52. He speaks also of the Magi interpreting a dream to Xerxes, *ibid.* p. 485.

telling a dream of his own, when Proconsul of Asia, adds, "it was foretold to me by the skilful in that science in Asia, that the events would follow which did happen."¹

While this was likely to be a very gainful profession, when the prognostications and their issues met the wishes of the great, it was, like other offices about despots, perilous also. Astyages, from the revolt of his grandson Cyrus, learned that he had been misled by the second interpretation of his wise men, who at first had declared his dream to portend that his grandson would usurp the throne, but afterwards pronounced it fulfilled in his having *played* the king among village boys ; —and then "his first act, on sustaining a defeat from Cyrus, was to empale those Magian interpreters."²

Although the historical accuracy of this narrative may be questionable, it doubtless describes what might be *expected* from such a prince ; which is confirmed by Nebuchadnezzar's procedure, who, when the Chaldeans failed

¹ De Divinatione, lib. i. cc. 23, 28. Opp. t. ix. 3759, 3764.

² Herod. lib. i. cc. 120, 122, 130, Taylor's version, pp. 52, 59, 63.

to divine what his dream had been, became "very furious, and commanded to destroy them."¹ Andrew Baxter truly observes, "though they seemed to be the first favourites, yet their post was not very desirable; for if they happened to mistake in some great matter, it was at the peril of their lives." Still these hazards did not deter men from a profession, which, besides its great gainfulness led, in case of success, to high reputation and reverence.²

Plutarch tells us that a grandson of the great Aristides (Lysimachus) plied constantly near the temple of Bacchus at Athens, having certain tables by which he interpreted dreams for a livelihood.³

The emperor Julian, in a much later age, "chose his favourites among those skilled in occult science ; and those who pretended to

¹ Dan. ii. 12 ; verse 13 is rendered by the Septuagint and Vulgate, "they were slain."

² Timur in his autobiography, in times comparatively modern, writes of the interpreters and learned of his court as expounding his dreams ; and the editor of that curious work refers to the dreams of Tippoo Sultan as given in his published letters, by Col. Kirkpatrick, in 1811.

³ Plutarch in Aristides. Wrangham, vol. iii. p. 187.

reveal secrets of futurity were assured of present honour and affluence.”¹

This gain was often made by the priests. Thus Brizo, who had the care of dreams, was worshipped in Delos, and boatfuls of all sorts of things were offered to her, except fish.²

It may be the assistant interpreters reckoned fish in a small island no luxury, but rather suited for fasts than festivals.

The offices are named together by Achilles.

“ Haste we to consult
Priest, prophet, or interpreter of dreams,
For dreams are also of Jove.”³

Readers of the *Æneid* will remember that the good king Latinus in perplexity went to the oracle of Faunus, where

“ The priest on skins of offerings takes his ease,
And nightly visions in his slumber sees.
Hither—t’ invoke the God—Latinus hies,
Offering a hundred sheep for sacrifice;

¹ Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*, vol. ii. p. 377.

² Athenæus, lib. viii., in Potter’s *Greek Antiq.* vol. i. pp. 306, 307.

³ *Iliad*, book i. l. 83, Cowper; (l. 63, Greek.)

With whose soft fleeces (as the rites required)
 Spread for his couch, ^{and} he lay in rest retired.
 No sooner were his eyes in slumber bound,
 Than from above a more than mortal sound
 Invades his ear," &c.¹

So at the oracle of Amphiaraus at Oropus, the inquirer, reposing on the victim's skin, "expected a revelation by dream."² Now whether the *ονειροπόλος* (versed in dreams) meant in Homer—as Mr. Pope thought³—"a good dreamer" for himself or others, or whether an interpreter of dreams, there was doubtless gain in view. If the priest in any case filled both offices, the implicit faith thus shown by the inquirer may lead us to suppose a more willing and large oblation. But were the sage a ragged fortune-teller, or a white-robed sacrificer,—and whether the king brought a whole flock, or the peasant slept on his only lamb's skin,—the diviner or the conductor of the rites was not without fee. It is true when Penelope's dream about her geese was expounded by her own Ulysses in disguise, no reward is represented by the poet as given or

¹ *Æneid*, vii. l. 86, Dryden's version altered.

² Potter's *Greek Antiq.* vol. i. p. 294.

³ Pope's *Iliad*, vol. i. p. 16.

promised ; but doubtless the good queen must have felt an ample due to be due, if the stranger's words should be verified. I venture to introduce this curious passage.

Penelope says to the unknown :—

“ But I have dreamed. Hear and expound my dream !
—My geese are twenty ; which within my walls
I feed with sodden wheat ;—they serve to amuse
Sometimes my sorrow.—From the mountains came
An eagle, huge, hook-beaked,—brake all their necks
And slew them : scattered on the palace floor
They lay, and he soared swift into the skies.

Dream only as it was, I wept aloud ;
Till all my maidens, gathered by my voice,
Arriving, found me weeping still, and still
Complaining, that an eagle had at once
Slain all my geese. But to the palace-roof
Stooping again, he sat, and with a voice
Of human sound, my tears forbidding, said—

‘ Take courage, daughter of the glorious chief
Icarus ; no vain dream hast thou beheld,
But, in thy sleep, a truth. The slaughtered geese
Denote thy suitors ; and myself who seem
An eagle in thy sight, am yet indeed
Thy husband, who have now, at last, returned,
Death—horrid death—designing for them all.’

He said : then, waking at the voice, I cast
An anxious look around, and saw my geese
Beside their tray, all feeding as before.

Her then Ulysses answered, ever-wise—
 'O Queen, interpretation cannot err
 Unless perversely, since Ulysses' self
 So plainly spake the event. Sure death impends
 O'er every suitor; he shall slay them all.'"¹

It is obvious that dreams would be very often invented, by persons having no regard to truth, with a view to influence those whom it was their interest to flatter or to guide. One of the most eminent Romans has been thought capable of this. "Cicero attending Cæsar into the capitol, happened to relate to his acquaintances a dream of the preceding night—that a boy of noble aspect, sent down from heaven, and with a golden chain, had stood at the doors of the capitol, and Jove had delivered to him the 'flagellum' "²—and then, suddenly seeing Augustus, who as yet was unknown to most, but whom his uncle Cæsar had sent for to assist at a sacrifice, he affirmed that he was the very youth whose image had in his sleep appeared before him." These are the words of Suetonius.³ Plutarch mentions

¹ *Odyssey*, book xix. l. 647, Cowper's version.

² A classical friend informs me that the "flagellum," scourge, is still found among the insignia of the Egyptian Deities.

³ *Vit. August.* c. 94.

the dream also, though with circumstances considerably different.¹ But Cicero himself, in his work "of divination," when taking the incredulous side and making rather light of his own famous dream about Marius, has these words—"to myself truly, *except that Marian dream, nothing* remarkable of the kind has occurred."² Now this treatise was written after Cæsar's death. "If therefore," observes Andrew Baxter, "what he has said be true, Suetonius makes him pay court to Julius Cæsar by telling a fictitious dream concerning the boy Augustus his adopted heir."³ But, although Cicero did pay court to Cæsar, and even composed (strange to say) an epic poem in honour of him,⁴ I would rather suppose this dream invented after the death of both. The early divination of his subsequent greatness, by such a man as Cicero, would be a story sure to please Augustus when sovereign; of whom Suetonius writes, that he "neither neglected his own dreams nor those of others

¹ Vit. Ciceron. Wrangham's translation, vol. vi. p. 331.

² De Divinat. lib. ii. c. 68. Opp. t. ix. p. 3835.

³ Baxter on the Soul, p. 221.

⁴ Life by Middleton, vol. i. p. 435.

concerning him :” nay, that this renowned prince and warrior “regarded it as a dire omen, if his shoe in the morning was put on amiss, the left for the right.”¹ When superstition could so possess a powerful and cultivated mind, we shall not wonder that it pervaded the multitude.

A dream which Cicero has cited from Chrysippus seems invented on purpose to satirize the cupidity of interpreters. “A person tells a soothsayer that he has dreamed of an egg hanging from his bed curtain. The diviner answers, that a treasure is under the bed. He digs, and finds some gold, surrounded with silver : on which he sends the diviner a small portion of the *silver*, who thereon facetiously inquires,—what, nothing of the *yolk* ?”

Nihilne, inquit, de vitello ?²

But still, as has been already said, neither the potency nor childishness of superstition, nor the trickery and covetousness which foster it, can show the principle of *religion* to be

¹ Sueton. Vit. August. cc. 91, 92.

² De Divinat. lib. ii. c. 65. Opp. t. ix. p. 3833.

groundless or hurtful, or indeed less than immensely valuable. A thousand juggleries or illusions cannot prove that there have been no real miracles : and thus millions of futile dreams, with thousands of fictitious ones, cannot disprove that there have been dreams indicative of divine prescience, and kindly ordained by God's providence. Rather, as the strength of superstition shows it to be a graft on that real sentiment of religion which is implanted and rooted in our nature,—so do the prevalent impressions of mankind about dreams—while in great part erroneous—afford some presumption that dreams have been at times divinely sent and fulfilled.

SECTION III.

WE have, however, direct scriptural proof of this ; and in proceeding to my second object—the investigation of such dreams as appear to have been in some special sense providentially ordained—we shall have first to consider the revealed or implied uses of those recorded in the *Holy Bible*.

I would premise, that we find general declarations there as to the divinely directive or warning or prophetic character of some dreams, and as to the illusion and deceit which characterise others. Thus to Aaron and Miriam,—“If there be a prophet among you, I Jehovah will make myself known unto him in a vision—will speak unto him in a dream.”¹ Thus to Jeremiah,—“I have heard what the prophets said that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.—The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a

¹ Numb. xii. 6.

dream ; and he that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat ?”¹ And in a letter to the captives in Babylon they are solemnly enjoined, “Let not your prophets and your diviners deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.”² Such false dreams and dreamers, it should be observed, were denounced chiefly as aiming to pervert the Hebrews to idol worship. But Moses himself, whose law unsparingly condemns them,³ distinctly records — as other sacred writers also do — various dreams of divine origin. These may be in some sort classed, according to the end or use which appears in them severally to be more specific or prominent.

Some were evidently ordered for the immediate protection of the servants of God : as those of the king of Gerar, which procured the rescue of Sarah :⁴ that of the Syrian shepherd Laban, which deterred him from severities against Jacob :⁵ and that which warned

¹ Jer. xxiii. 25, 32 ; compare Deut. xiii. 1.

² Ibid. xxix. 8.

³ Deut. xiii. 1, 5.

⁴ Gen. xx. 3, 6.

⁵ Gen. xxxi. 24, 29.

the Eastern Magi against the perfidy of Herod.¹

Some were for the special encouragement of good men in the undertakings assigned to them. Thus Jacob, in a lonely perilous journey, was cheered by the dream of the mystic ladder and the promise uttered from its summit;² and again, when, in his later years, he and his were invited into Egypt, the Almighty spoke to him "in the visions of the night," and encouraged him to go.³ Thus the dreams of Pharaoh's household,⁴ with Joseph's interpretation of these, and the subsequent dreams of the monarch, brought the young Hebrew out of durance, and procured him power to benefit both his own kindred and the whole Egyptian people.⁵

The singular dream of the Midianite soldier,—that a barley cake had overturned a tent,⁶—interpreted by his comrade as fore-showing the victory of Gideon,—was received by that rustic leader as a fresh token of heavenly aid; and animated him, with his

¹ Matt. ii. 12.

² Gen. xlv. 2, 4.

³ Gen. xli.

² Gen. xxviii. 12, 15.

⁴ Gen. xl.

⁶ Judges vii. 13.

little band, to assail and scatter a mighty host.¹

The dream of Solomon, in which he acknowledged his own insufficiency, entreated wisdom from above, and received a gracious answer,² was adapted to strengthen him in the difficulties of his opening reign, and in fidelity to the Most High.

So when, many ages after, St. Paul at Corinth was divinely addressed "in the night by a vision,"³ and enjoined fearlessly to proclaim the truth, new energy was doubtless given to his efforts in that corrupt city. And a previous "vision in the night"⁴ at Troas, of a Macedonian entreating "help," had so vividly impressed him as a divine call that it prompted his first sailing to the coasts of Europe.

¹ I might mention here the dream told to his troops by Judas Maccabæus before his great victory over Nicanor—that on the intercession of the good high-priest Onias, the prophet Jeremiah appeared in great majesty and presented him a sword of gold, saying take this holy sword, a gift of God, (2 Macc. xv. 11, 16)—but the accuracy of the 2d book of Maccabees being impeached by Dean Prideaux, (Connexion, vol. iii. p. 264,) it can hardly rank with sacred histories.

² 1 Kings iii. 5, 14.

³ Acts xviii. 9, 10.

⁴ Acts xvi. 9.

A primary object of some dreams, with their interpretation and fulfilment, appears to have been that of impressing Heathen sovereigns and their subjects with reverence for the true God and respect for his servants. Pharaoh's dreams, as interpreted, (even before they were fulfilled,) had this effect.¹ He said, of Joseph, "Can we find as this a man in whom the spirit of God is?" and made him his first minister.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the terrible image, and Daniel's *discovery* and exposition of it, forced the proud king to own, "Of a truth your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a Revealer of secrets."²

Several dreams were of a scope distinctly prophetic, and were signally verified in after years ; sometimes even in distant ages.

Thus Joseph's—of the sheaves making obeisance to his sheaf, and of the heavenly luminaries doing him homage,³—must have strongly indicated to his family, after that strange rise to dignity and power which followed, the divine preordination of his lot and theirs.

¹ Gen. xli. 38, 39. ² Dan. ii. 47. ³ Gen. xxxvii. 5, 11.

The earlier vision of Abram, when a "deep sleep fell upon" him, and the long bondage and wonderful deliverance of his descendants were in that state foretold to the patriarch,¹ had the same instructiveness for after generations.

Daniel's "dream and visions of his head upon his bed,"² interpreted, during their continuance, by one to whom in vision he applied,³ were prophetic of the great revolutions of empire, the rise and fall of Antichrist, and the final triumph of pure Christianity. The first dream of Nebuchadnezzar embraced the same objects.⁴

Some appear to have been designed simply for the forcible and solemn impression of religious truth ; as that which Eliphaz relates to Job : "A thing was secretly brought to me, in thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men :—an image was before mine eyes—silence—and I heard a voice,—Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?"⁵ With this the language of *Elihu* to

¹ Gen. xv. 12.

² Dan. vii. 1.

³ Dan. vii. 16.

⁴ Dan. ii. 28—45.

⁵ Job iv. 13, 16.

Job remarkably corresponds :—"In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."¹ Job himself also speaks of this, though in an impatient spirit, as among the methods of divine chastisement. "Thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions."² I would here remark, that there seems no good ground for the distinction made by the learned Calmet, or his editor, between dreams and visions, as if the latter had been more clear or important than the divinely ordained dreams. That all visions were not dreams is obvious :³ witness that of the burning bush ; and of the angel who rescued Peter ; with others. But all divinely ordained dreams might, I apprehend, be termed visions.

¹ Job xxxiii. 15, 17.

² Job vii. 14.

³ For this reason I have not referred to the supposed "trance" of Balaam, (the word is not in the Hebrew,) to the trance or ecstasy of Peter, and to certain visions of Paul and Ananias ; because there is no intimation that these occurred in sleep.

They had, no doubt, an emphasis and vividness which entitled them to that name ; and accordingly we have found in Job the terms "vision of the night," "visions," "visions of the night," employed in close conjunction with "deep sleep" and "dreams"; and Daniel, writing in Chaldee, describes his "dream" as, in other words, the "visions of his head upon his bed."¹ So, when he related, many years before, the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, he thus addressed the astonished king :—"Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these."² The terms, in both cases, appear used, in the original, as synonyms ; or one expresses the state of dreaming, the other the objects presented in a dream. And, let it be remembered, this dream of Daniel consisted of the four great beasts emerging from the sea, representing four great monarchies—the Ancient of days, the flaming throne, the Son of man, and his universal sway. And to the prior dream of the king of Babylon it was a parallel, shadowing out the same events.³ Any predictions,

¹ Dan. vii. 1.

² Dan. ii. 28 ; compare vii. 1.

³ Bishop Newton. *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, vol. i. p. 441.

therefore, more vast in scope or momentous in import than these DREAMS conveyed, the scripture hardly offers. I remark, further, that some of the dreams mentioned, while it has been attempted to class them according to what may seem their primary object, have in fact *combined several* of the uses enumerated. We may take, as the fullest instance, that of Nebuchadnezzar, last referred to, concerning the "terrible image," and "the stone that smote" it. That dream, with its discovery to Daniel in a correspondent "night vision," raised the young Hebrew to be a "great man" and "ruler ;" procuring, of course, his powerful influence for the many thousand captives of his nation. Thus, likewise, he and they were strengthened (as subsequent heroism evinces) in faithfulness to the worship of their God. The effect of these same dreams on the heathen monarch has been already pointed out ; and the far reaching comprehension of their predictive scope has just been noticed, in referring to Daniel's parallel dream during the reign of Belshazzar. Each has wonderfully displayed the divine foreknowledge, and attested the inspiration of the prophet.

Such testimonies must needs assure Christians, that it pleased God in ancient times to make dreams signally instrumental to the designs of His providence. And as for the last-mentioned, (recorded in the book of Daniel,) I invite those who are not Christians—but possess intelligent and inquiring minds—to study and *explain* the far-extending prescience which they manifest.

The dreams which ministered to the guardianship of our Saviour's infancy, form a class quite peculiar, to which there will be here no occasion for adverting ; but with them may be mentioned that which so deeply affected the wife of Pilate, and which we may well believe strengthened that governor's purpose to avouch the innocence of the wonderful person accused before him.

SECTION IV.

It will be next endeavoured to consider the probable uses of some dreams recorded in ancient secular history. We have found already, in reviewing those of scripture, that several of them were sent to heathens and idolaters. Such was Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Laban set a high value on his household "gods."¹ Pharaoh and his officers, no doubt, worshipped Osiris and the bull Apis. Nebuchadnezzar raised a colossal idol of gold. The wife of Pilate had, in all likelihood, been brought up in the Roman polytheism.² Now while other specific ends were severally answered by the dreams of these heathens, one end was common to them all ; that of impressing the

¹ Gen. xxxi. 19, 30.

² Felix, when procurator of Judæa, married Drusilla, a Jewess, daughter of Herod Agrippa, (see Lardner's works vol. i. p. 17,) but this was probably a rare occurrence.

parties and those around them with a solemn sense of the power and prescience of Jehovah. This appears to have been always the *ultimate* object. Where rescue from danger was the primary aim, that rescue might have been wrought or that danger averted by *other* means, had not the purpose been to convince one or both parties of an interposition immediately divine. And in other cases, such as dreams of promise or of prophecy, or premonition of death or peril, (whether already named or to be subsequently adduced,) the final object must have been, and must be, to teach emphatically the foreknowledge and controlling providence of God.

It should be considered, that *so far* as there *was* among heathens any real sense of a divine government, or of religious sanctions for morality, this arose from a kind of *theism*, obscurely held, amidst or beneath their professed *poly-theism*.

We know, from the collections of Cudworth and others, that the ancient Persians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Greeks, acknowledged one *supreme God*, though they worshipped many inferior forms of being, viewed some-

times as mere names and personifications of the Supreme or of His attributes, sometimes as created and dependent.¹ That worship was a play of the imagination and the passions, unsustained by reason or faith, and often combined with a sort of atheism : so far at least as that the First Cause, or real Deity, was conceived to have no regard to the actions of men.

Yet there was, in many minds, a different and better persuasion. Plato and his followers, though giving the name of divinities to lower intelligences, were yet real theists.²

There was also an impression, more deep and extended than may be commonly supposed, that the Hebrews worshipped the true and supreme Deity. This must have been promoted through the East by the decrees of Nebuchadnezzar and of Darius.³ Tacitus distinctly records their pure monotheism.⁴ At the same time Philo and Josephus state, that

¹ *Intell. Syst.* vol. ii. pp. 406, 552, and throughout that volume.

² See B. Constant, *du Polytheisme Romain*, tom. i. p. 220.

³ *Dan.* iii. 29 ; vi. 26.

⁴ *Hist.* lib. v. c. v.

" scarce any country of note could be mentioned in which there were not Jews." ¹

There were also many proselytes ; and many " worshipping " Gentiles, who openly adopted *theism without* conforming to the ceremonial law ; and others, no doubt, who did so covertly, as a sort of esoteric creed.

Now, while it is certain that heathen philosophy in great part, and the revulsion of many minds from the vulgar polytheism, combined to lead men towards a virtual atheism,—it appears highly probable, that intimations of a divine prescience and providence by dreams were among the means which the supreme Ruler employed to hold in check the ruinous spread of that godless unbelief which, if uncurbed, would disorganize human society. The confession of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled a vast empire, has been already mentioned as the effect of a dream and its discovery.² We may remember, also, that *other* means of counteracting the atheistic spirit, except by immediate miracles, were very scanty. Till a century and a half before Christ, the Hebrew

¹ Lardner's Works, vol. i. p. 61 ; 4to edition. ² Dan. ii. 47.

scriptures were not accessible to the heathen. And when rendered into Greek, they were probably in very few hands except in the synagogues of the Hellenist Jews. But impressive *dreams*, when really fulfilled, formed a sort of private revelation (communicable by the testimony of the party) which was in the nature of prophecy ; and must have had some considerable tendency to make men theists, or to keep them so. If some real belief in God's particular providence were induced by such dreams, (as we know was the case with Nebuchadnezzar,) this is surely an end of great moment.

Unless we hold that all human affairs proceed by a mechanical inflexible fate, we cannot doubt that God by His providence has governed *all* nations ; those where scripture truth was unknown, as well as those where it has been spread. And, in the absence of it, what so adapted to create or deepen the impression of a prescient and governing Power, as the occurrence and fulfilment of some predictive dreams ? Such were related (as instances will be given) of kings, warriors, statesmen, philosophers, and other eminent persons ; and

would therefore have a proportionably wide publicity and influence.

It may, however, be objected, that some of the dreams mentioned in secular history gave direct support to idolatry ; attesting the knowledge and power of some false divinity, or some way indicating the reverence due. For examples, we may name the repair of a temple of Juno Sospita by order of the Roman senate, in consequence of the dream of Cæcilia, daughter of Balearicus ;¹ and the detection of a thief who had stolen a golden goblet from the temple of Hercules, by the repeated dreams of Sophocles, to whom the god denounced the criminal.² It was quite to be expected that the senate, desirous to uphold established rites, should profit by a favourable omen or direction, for repairing a decayed temple. The dream of Sophocles bears strong marks of priestly invention.

Indeed, that these and other artifices and imaginations and coincidences were sedulously used to fortify idolatry, cannot be doubted. "Divination by dreams and impulses," Dr.

¹ Cicero de Divinat. lib. i. c. ii. Opp. tom. ix. p. 3742.

² Ibid. lib. i. c. xxv. Opp. tom. ix. p. 3762.

Jortin writes, "or the opinion of it, contributed to keep up paganism in pagan nations : it contributed also to keep out atheism ; and there is a sort of paganism which, such as it is, is far better than atheism."¹ Dr. Parr also remarks, "superstition has often preserved men from crimes ; atheism from weaknesses only." "There may, indeed," Dr. Jortin adds, "have been modes of idolatry which were worse than atheism, and which, strictly speaking, were a *kind* of atheism, as Bayle and others have truly observed."²

Now I think it was this worst kind of paganism, in which idolatry and an atheistic spirit were mingled, that divinely ordained dreams were adapted to amend, by infusing into it a secret reverence for a Power really prescient and divine. The thinking heathen knew that his idols were dæmons or genii at the most ; or else, mere powers and productions of nature personified. But, very often,

¹ It is a memorable fact, that Lucretius, the great teacher of irreligion to the Romans, who proposed to free men from unhappiness by atheism, at the age of forty-four destroyed his own life.

² Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. i. p. 84.

he believed in no actually ruling Mind above these, omniscient, and governing human affairs. Dreams, therefore, receiving a striking fulfilment, of which he was conscious, or assured by clear and good testimony, were among the best means to persuade him of that ruling, guiding, and controlling Mind. With such, I think, we may rank the following, or some of them ; which, though familiar and even trite to readers of the classics, ought to be adduced if they support our argument.

“Cræsus, king of Lydia,” Herodotus relates, “dreamed that his favourite and accomplished son Atys was to perish by the stroke of a dart. He was so terrified by this dream as to withdraw the youth from the army, and to keep out of his way all sorts of weapons. But Atys, after a while, earnestly entreated permission to join in the chase of a destructive wild boar ; alleging that the dream did not portend danger from a *tusk* or *tooth*. The king, at length consenting, appointed Adrastus, a Phrygian exile, whom he had greatly befriended, to be his son’s guardian in this enterprise. But the unfortunate Phrygian, in



throwing his weapon at the boar, missed his aim, and wounded mortally the son of Cræsus."¹

The historian treats this dream and its fulfilment as a severe rebuke of divine displeasure at the monarch's pride; who, in converse with Solon, had presumptuously gloried in his wealth and power.²

Cicero and Quintus Curtius mention, that when Ptolemy, the friend of Alexander the Great, who afterwards became a great and good king of Egypt, had been wounded in India by a poisoned weapon, the king had his couch placed by him, and while watching fell into a deep sleep. On waking, Alexander told his attendants that he had seen, in a dream, a dragon with a herb or root in its mouth, which told also the place where it grew, (not far off,) and that it had such virtue as would heal his friend with ease. The herb was procured, and Ptolemy, with many wounded soldiers, was cured by the applica-

¹ Herodot. lib. i. (Clio) c. xxxiv.; Taylor's translation, pp. 15, 18.

² The facts are related likewise in Valerius Maximus, lib. i. c. vii. p. 93.

tion.¹ He lived and reigned afterwards to the age of eighty-four.

Xenophon writes, that the illustrious Cyrus, in very advanced age, "being asleep in the royal palace, had the following dream. There seemed to advance towards him a person with more than human majesty in his air and countenance, and to say to him—Cyrus, prepare yourself, for you are now going to the gods. After this appearance in his dream he awaked, and seemed assured that his end was near."²

When Socrates was in prison, Crito went to visit him at dawn of day, and found him still sleeping. On his awaking, he told him that he was informed, by persons who had left the ship off Sunium—the arrival of which from Delos was to be the signal for his death,—that it would arrive on that same day, and on the morrow, therefore, he needs must die. Socrates answered, "Be it so, if it please the gods: but I do not think it will arrive to-day." "Why," asked Crito, "do you so judge?"

¹ De Divinat. lib. i. c. lxvi. Opp. t. ix. p. 3834; and Quint. Curt. lib. ix. (Vangelas Translation, p. 546.)

² Cyropædia, near the end.

"Because," rejoined Socrates, "I am to die on the day *after* its arrival. I believe, therefore, it will not come till to-morrow : and I judge from a certain dream which I have had this morning, and it was well that you did not awaken me." "What," said Crito, "was the dream?" "It appeared to me," replied Socrates, "that a fair and comely woman, clad in white garments, approached me, and accosting me, said—O Socrates,

"The *third* day fertile Phthia thou shalt reach."¹

These are words (with a change in the person of the verb) spoken by Achilles in the *Iliad* when he threatened to return home.² Socrates took them as a prediction of the day of his death, because he judged that to die was to go home to his own country. And the dream was fulfilled.

The poet Simonides, when the ship in which he had sailed touched at a certain shore, humanely caused the interment of the corpse of some shipwrecked person which he found

¹ *Platonis Crito*, c. ii.; and *Cicero de Divinat.* lib. i. c. xxv. *Opp.* t. ix. 3761. Cited also in *Jortin's Remarks*, vol. i. p. 78.

² *Iliad*, book ix. v. 363. (Cowper's version, l. 545.)

there. He was warned in a dream that night by the vision of the mariner, that, if he should embark the next day, he himself would perish. Simonides obeyed this warning: the ship sailed, and all on board perished within his view. Grateful for this deliverance, he consecrated it to enduring remembrance in a highly elegant poem.¹ Simonides lived to his ninetieth year; and is mentioned by Cicero as not only a delightful poet but a learned and wise man.²

I am aware that Cicero afterwards states arguments *against* the prophetic character of dreams, and speaks lightly of his own concerning Marius;³ but Dr. Jortin observes, "whosoever will examine his reasons on both sides may see, I think, that he has not overset all the proofs which he had offered."⁴ Indeed, the philosophy of the "New Academy," which he espoused, tended to scepticism, "disputing for and against every opinion."⁵

¹ Valerius Maximus, lib. i. c. vii. p. 91; and Cicero de Divinat. lib. i. c. xxvii. Opp. tom. ix. p. 3763.

² Cicero de Nat. Deorum, lib. i. c. xxii. Opp. t. ix. p. 3633.

³ De Divinat. lib. ii. cc. lxvii. lxviii. Opp. t. ix. pp. 3834-5.

⁴ Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. i. p. 76.

⁵ Middleton's Life of Cicero, vol. ii. p. 407.—"In Cicero's

On the whole it appears, that occurrences such as have been mentioned, happening to some of the most distinguished ancients,—men whose royal station and success in arms, or whose philosophy or literature, made them known to many lands and successive ages,—must have contributed towards preventing the entire extirpation of *theism*,—of reverence for a divine *Providence* ;—assailed as it was, at once by the absurdities and vices of idolatry, and by the subtleties of disputers.

It is also of course to be supposed, that similar occurrences in the far more numerous ranks beneath, exerted severally a proportionate influence in narrower circles ; compensating, also, by their much greater number, for a less extensive diffusion of each. Cicero narrates, that two Arcadians travelling together to Megara, the one lodged in a friend's house, the other at an inn. The former saw in sleep his companion entreating him to come to his help, for that the host was about to

philosophical works he personates the Stoic, the Epicurean, the Academic, &c. by turns ; and, consequently, delivers their opinions rather than his own."—Broughton on the Soul, p. 40.

murder him. The sleeper rose, alarmed, but thinking the dream an illusion, lay down and slept again. He was revisited, however, by the appearance of his fellow traveller, imploring that as he had not come to succour him while yet living, he would at least avenge his death ;—that he had been killed, cast upon a cart, and covered with soil ;—that he prayed of him to be very early at the town gate, before the cart should leave it. Impelled by this second dream he went thither at dawn, and questioned the peasant what was in his cart ; who fled in terror. The corpse was discovered, and the innkeeper capitally punished.¹ Now these we may judge to have been quite obscure persons. The narrative does not even give their names ; though it happens to have found place in the works of a great writer, and to have come down to us. But how many may have been such incidents, some never recorded, all now vanished from every mind on earth, which yet had influence, in their day and in their sphere, to impress the thought of foreknowledge, justice, and com-

¹ De Divinat. lib. i. c. xxvii. Opp. tom. ix. p. 3764.

passion exercised by a hidden yet supreme Power !

It will be the opinion of some, that too much credibility has been here ascribed to the foregoing passages of Grecian and Roman story, while the criticism of our day discovers or suspects so many fictitious embellishments in the historical works of the ancients. It must not, however, be supposed that the writer yields an absolute and implicit credence to such narratives. On the contrary, he can accord with Cicero's remark, when, taking the sceptical side, he observes of the dream of Alexander, "it may be false, it may be true." So one might perhaps speak of any other relation of the kind, viewed singly, and apart from recollection of the ends which such incidents may have answered.

But when we remember and appreciate the important utility of such occurrences which has been above suggested, especially as taking place in ages and countries not possessed of revelation, and prone to a species of atheism, —when we look forward, also, to what will be presently adduced, the parallel or similar and strongly authenticated facts which have

occurred in recent times and in our own,—these considerations greatly enhance, in my view, the probability that many, at least, of those ancient narratives were founded in truth.

SECTION V.

WE have now to examine the apparent uses of some remarkable dreams mentioned in later biography or in conversation, as having occurred to Christians or to inhabitants of Christendom. And since many of these have been Christians but in name, and not a few, openly or secretly, unbelievers, the application of such dreams, if any have taken place of a specially providential character, would be of the widest range. They would have important uses for real Christians, and not less so for the nominal and for sceptics.

To this it may be objected,—the age of miracles is past. A writer whom I have cited, while professing (with great apparent sincerity) to believe the divine character of dreams recorded in scripture, thinks it would be “little less than profaneness to imagine” that such things should be “in our own time.”

But granting, as I do very readily, that the

age of well-attested external miracles has long been past,—it were an immensely different thing to hold that the internal influence and interposition of Deity in the *mind* and *thoughts* of man has ceased ; or that what may be termed *mental* miracles occur no longer. On the contrary, every great and sudden change of character is such an instance : and, indeed, every case where by some forcible mental impression the course of action is at once and strongly modified. Such events are not to be accounted for by fixed, unswerving, mechanical laws. If not *miracles*, they are at least secret actings of Providence, quite independent of that settled ordinary track which men are wont to call the course of "nature." Nor does the written revelation granted to us supersede the value or utility of such *auxiliary* means. Its divine Author employs various instrumental methods for awakening men's minds to the *weight* and *import* of that revealed truth. Sickesses, distressful bereavements, sudden deaths, great reverses, signal escapes, strikingly conduce to this. By these the mind is often aroused from its insensibility or alienation. And no

sound reason, I conceive, can be assigned why remarkable dreams should not be still, sometimes, among those subsidiary means by which the Almighty "openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction." If, too often, this effect fail or be very transient, just so is it, from the stupor or levity of men's minds, with the other providential means to which I have referred. But the very learned and very sceptical *Bayle* acknowledges, (writing of predictive or premonitory dreams,) "such facts, of which the world is quite full, embarrass the *esprits forts* (or infidels) more than they avow." ¹

We have a strong example of this in Bishop Burnet's memoir of Rochester. The earl told him of a "presage that one had of his approaching death, in the Lady Warre his mother-in-law's house. The chaplain had dreamt that such a day he should die ; but being by all the family put out of the belief of it, he had almost forgot it ; till the evening before at supper, there being thirteen at table, according to a fond conceit that one of these must soon die, one of

¹ Quoted in the original in Jortin's Remarks, vol. i. p. 79, and used as a motto to this volume.

the young ladies pointed to him, that *he* was to die. He, remembering his dream, fell into some disorder, and the Lady Warre reproving him for his superstition, he said he was confident he was to die before morning :—but he being in perfect health, it was not much minded. It was Saturday night, and he was to preach next day. He went up to his chamber, and sat up late, as appeared by the burning of his candle ; and he had been preparing his notes for his sermon ; but was found dead in his bed the next morning. These things, the infidel earl told the bishop, made him inclined to believe the soul was a substance distinct from the body ; and this often returned into his thoughts.”¹ Thus a celebrated unbeliever gives the testimony of his own experience for the *tendency* and actual power of such occurrences to awaken serious and religious thoughts in a most reluctant mind. This has led me to adduce the fact ; and not exactly in its proper place ;—for I would first offer a few instances where the immediate object of dreams appears to have been the *preservation of life* by the premonition of danger. Grotius, in a Latin

¹ Burnet's *Passages*, &c. of John Earl of Rochester, p. 20.

epistle, writes, "A person at Landrecies, engaged in works there, and lodging near the town, warned in a dream that he should beware of a mine of the enemy, rose, and had scarce gone out when the roof fell in and destroyed his resting-place.—But if you see Salmasius, he will relate to you a history which he received from his father. A person came to him, entirely ignorant of the Greek language, but who had heard in a dream these Greek words :—*ἀπιθι· οὐκ ὁσφραίνῃ τὴν σὴν ἀψύχιαν* ;" [which mean, literally,—Begone : dost thou not smell (or scent) thy lifelessness ?] "and on waking had written down the sounds of those words in French letters ; not understanding them at all. On his application, the senator Salmasius interpreted the words to him ; for he is the learned father of a most learned son. The man quitted his house :—on the ensuing night it fell."¹

Dr. Abercrombie states the following fact,

¹ Grotius, Epist. 405. (2nd series.) Quoted in Jortin's Remarks, vol. i. p. 79 ; who adds, "Leclerc, in referring to this, mentions that the elder Salmasius was a counsellor of the parliament of Dijon."—The younger was a French Protestant, and distinguished scholar, who wrote a work in defence of our king Charles the First, which was answered by Milton.

of which he says, "there seems no reason to doubt its authenticity."—"A clergyman had come to this city (Edinburgh) from a short distance in the country, and was sleeping at an inn, when he dreamt of seeing a fire, and one of his children in the midst of it. He awoke with the impression, and instantly left town on his return home. When he arrived within sight of his house he found it on fire, and got there in time to assist in saving one of his children, who in the alarm and confusion had been left in a situation of danger."¹

He adds, "The following anecdotes I am enabled to give as entirely authentic. A lady dreamt that an aged female relative had been murdered by a black servant; and the dream occurred more than once. She was then so impressed by it, that she went to the house of the lady to whom it related, and prevailed upon a gentleman to watch in an adjoining room during the following night. About three in the morning the gentleman hearing footsteps on the stair, left his place of concealment, and met the servant carrying up a quantity of coals. Being questioned as to where he was

¹ Abercrombie, *Intell. Powers*, p. 292.

going, he replied, in a confused and hurried manner, that he was going to mend his mistress's fire ; which at that hour in the middle of summer was evidently impossible ; and on farther investigation, a strong knife was found concealed beneath the coals.—Another lady dreamt that a boy, her nephew, had been drowned along with some young companions with whom he had engaged to go on a sailing excursion in the Frith of Forth. She sent for him in the morning, and with much difficulty prevailed upon him to give up his engagement. His companions went, and were all drowned.”¹

We may observe, also, that in one of these instances the preservation of life was attended by the prevention of crime. Other signal cases of this kind might be adduced ; together with some in which the detection of crime already perpetrated, and the punishment of the criminal, are attested to have been brought about by the same secret indication.

In all these instances it should likewise be not forgotten, that the great collateral object appears to have been always intended, and

¹ Abercrombie, *Intell. Powers*, pp. 293, 294.

doubtless often fulfilled, of impressing one or several minds with a more intimate and lively conviction of powers and agencies supernatural and divine. Even in dreams which, though they have had a surprising coincidence with events, remain obscure as to any special design, this general object may yet be discernible.

The following is of that character. A person of rank, whom I met at the house of a friend, told me that a visitor then in his own mansion had spent some months lately in America, leaving his family in England ; that one night in sleep he had felt a sort of distressing sensations or forebodings, such as he had never known before, which so affected him that he carefully marked down the night and hour of their occurrence ; and by the next mail received news from England that his little boy had died at the precise time when he had himself been the subject of those peculiar feelings.

The gentleman who related this to me (as he had received it) was highly intelligent and acute, but evidently of a sceptical habit. His stating the fact without the least question of

its certainty and accuracy, showed how clearly and circumstantially it had been attested to him. He suggested that it might possibly be accounted for as a species of distant sympathy by electricity. One might still ask—who fixed the invisible communication across the Atlantic? what power worked the signals, and for what purpose?

The impression on him who had experienced it was probably much more salutary; and then an important end was answered: important not merely in cases of previous unbelief, as in that cited of Lord Rochester, but wherever belief is wavering or dormant. How many are conscious of such feebleness or languor of faith in “things not seen,” amidst the various impulses and influences of things which *are* seen; and would welcome whatever auxiliary methods might be ordained to fortify or enliven it. In dreams which remain to be adduced, this seems to have been always the principal and sometimes the only apparent purpose; and we shall now offer a few instances of a second class, which appear to have had for their primary object the preparation of the Christian’s mind for an affliction, or

consolation under it, or encouragement in some special duties.

The following is the abridged letter of an esteemed relative :—

“Our dear young friend F— was staying with us. She had left her father in good health at home, and neither his age nor a chronic indisposition to which he was liable gave reason for apprehension. On a Sunday morning she came down to us looking unwell, and to my inquiries answered, ‘I have had a restless night, with painful dreams.’ Nothing more was said, for it passed from my mind. The next morning my husband brought me a letter from our friend’s brother, begging us to announce to her, as gently as we could, her father’s sudden death from rapid inflammation on the Saturday evening.

“I went down to her, and said, ‘My dear, we have some anxious tidings to communicate.’ I said no more, for she laid her head on my shoulder, and exclaimed, ‘I know all ; my dream was true ; my father is dead.’

“When the first anguish was past, she told me that she had dreamt of *home* ; and going in unexpectedly, had seen a group in bitter

sorrow. All were there but her father, and the sons were gathered round the mother as if they were now all that remained to her. That very scene was then passing in the bereaved home, and the dream must be regarded as sent in kindness to prepare the heart of the affectionate child for her bitter and unexpected loss."

To this may be added a dream which I notice very briefly, because it has been already recorded by me in print, as taken down from the lips of a valued domestic, who had once lived where I now reside.

On one day, a year after the loss of two young children, she had prayed much to be relieved from the dejection occasioned by it, which near friends of my own, since deceased, had tried in vain to alleviate. On that night a dream brought both her children vividly before her, as in a state of social blessedness. Her words to me, after describing it, were, "I had this dream a second time the same night; and by means of it my trouble was taken away, especially my fear about the elder child."¹

¹ Autumn Dream; Note vi. p. 169; second edition.

In Doddridge's dream of an interview with the glorified Saviour, (of which the substance is given in the same volume,¹) he was thus addressed,—“This is not heaven : it is only such a faint and distant representation of the glory to be revealed, as is suited to your mortal nature, and is designed to animate you to a more vigorous and determined zeal in my service on earth.” Accordingly, he stated to his friends, “that he never remembered to have felt sentiments of devotion, love, and gratitude, equally strong” with those which this dream awakened.

The third and last class of dreams to be mentioned are those whose object appears to have been the highest of all : namely, to be instrumental either in the first moral and spiritual change or “renewing of the mind,” or, in the revival or fixing of prior impressions as to the importance of revealed truth, and urgency of spiritual concerns.

The same friend who related the premonition of a parent's death received by her young visitor, writes thus of herself :—“I was between eight and nine years old when, after

¹ Autumn Dream ; Note xxi. p. 186 ; second edition.

an evening spent with a dear and Christian friend of my mother, I attained, in the 'visions of the night,' a remarkable insight into the meaning of scripture. I dreamt that this friend explained to me the chapter concerning the brazen serpent, and opened my eyes to its typical sense ; pointing out the Saviour 'lifted up' as the Healer of mankind. The chapter became, thenceforth, a favourite one ; and I never open it, even now, without remembering that first exposition. There may have been something in the previous conversation which led my young mind to dream of this scripture narrative in a manner so singularly impressive."

The following has been sent to me by a lady of undoubted accuracy, related to herself by a gentleman in a northern county. "I dreamt that I saw a number of happy beings with wings enabling them to fly far and wide, indeed far beyond my ken. So earnestly did I long for the same, that I tried to make them for myself. Day after day I seemed to labour, but in vain. When repeated failure was leading me to give it up, one of these bright and holy-looking beings suspended her flight

to tell me that no one could ever make wings for himself wherewith to soar above ; but, to those who desired them as anxiously as I did, wings should be given.”—“He told me,” the lady states, “this dream when we were riding together, and seemed seriously affected by it.”

The dream of Africaner, the once ferocious Namaqua chief, “at a period when his opinions on religion wavered, and he was about to dismiss from his thoughts the grave subjects of revelation, death, and immortality,” appears to have had a powerful and happy influence on that remarkable convert. It is thus related by Mr. Moffat. “He supposed himself, in his dream, at the base of a rugged mountain, over which he must pass by an almost perpendicular precipice. On the left of the path the fearful declivity presented one furnace of fire and smoke, mingled with lightning. As he looked round to flee from a sight which made his whole frame tremble, one appeared out of those murky regions, whose voice like thunder said, there was no escape but by the narrow path. He attempted to climb it, but felt the reflected heat from the precipice more intense

than that from the burning abyss. When ready to sink with agony, he cast his eyes upwards beyond the flaming gulf, and saw one standing on a green mount, where the sun shone with peculiar brilliancy. This person drew near the edge of the cliff, and beckoned him to advance. Shielding his face with his hands, he ascended through heat and smoke, such as he would have thought no human frame could endure. He at last reached the long desired spot, which became increasingly bright; and when about to address the stranger, he awoke. Being asked how he interpreted this dream, he replied that it haunted his mind for a long time like a poisonous thorn in the flesh, and he could bear to reflect on it only when,—as he said with great simplicity,—‘I thought the path was the narrow road leading from destruction to safety, from hell to heaven: the stranger I supposed to be that Saviour of whom I had heard, and long were my thoughts occupied in trying to discover when and how I was to pass along the burning path;’—adding, with tears in his eyes, ‘thank God, I have passed!’”¹ And be it observed,

¹ Moffat's *Missionary Travels in South Africa*.

"Africaner was a man" (Mr. Moffat testifies) "who never dealt in such commodities" as those superstitious dreams to which some of his weaker and more ignorant countrymen are addicted.

Major-General Burn, who, after a course marked by very sceptical opinions and very dissipated conduct, became a "bright example of Christian purity, humility, and piety,"¹ gives the following statement in his journal. "About a fortnight after my brother's death, I dreamed a very distinct and remarkable dream, which had such a happy effect upon my heart, that I have ever since looked upon it as the principal means the Almighty was pleased to employ in bringing about my conversion.

"I thought I was sitting, a little before daylight, with my deceased brother, on the wall of the parish churchyard, where we had lived many years together. We remained silent for some time, and then he asked me if I would not go with him into the church. I consented, and walked with him towards the porch ; but when we had passed through it,

¹ Preface to his *Life*, by Olinthus Gregory, &c.

and came to the inner door that led into the body of the church, my brother slept in before me ; and when I attempted to follow, (which I was all eagerness to do,) the door, which slid from the top to the bottom, like those in some fortified towns, was instantly let down more than half way, so that I had now to bend almost double before I could, possibly enter. But as I stooped to try, the door sinking lower and lower, the passage became so narrow that I found it altogether impracticable in that posture. Determined to get in, if possible, I at length kneeled down, crept and pushed more eagerly, but all to no purpose. Grieved and vexed, yet unwilling to be left outside, I resolved to throw off my clothes and crawl ; but being desirous to preserve a silk embroidered waistcoat which I had brought from France, I kept that on, in hopes of being able to carry it in with me. Then laying myself on my face, I toiled and strove, soiled my embroidered waistcoat, but could not get in after all. At last, driven almost to despair, I stripped myself, and forced my body between the door and the ground, till the rough stones tore all the skin upon my breast, and (as

I thought) covered me with blood. Indifferent, however, about this, I continued to strive with more violence, till at last I got safely through. As soon as I stood upon my feet on the inside, an invisible hand clothed me in a long white robe, and, as I turned to view the place, I saw a goodly company of saints (among whom was my brother) all dressed in the same manner, partaking of the Lord's Supper. I sat down amidst them, and the bread and wine being administered to me, I felt such seraphic joy as no mortal can express. I heard a voice call me thrice by name, saying I was wanted at home. My joy was so overcoming that it soon broke the bands of sleep, and made me start up, singing the high praises of God."

"So much was I impressed by this remarkable dream, that from this day I was enabled to begin an entirely new life,—as different from that I had led for several years back as it is possible any two opposites can be."¹

¹ Memoirs of General Burn, slightly abridged, but with strict adherence to the original, vol. i. pp. 127, 130.

SECTION VI.

It will be justly expected, that after thus leading attention to the specially providential and very important character of certain dreams, I should suggest, as a practical object of this Essay, what ought to be our habit of mind as to singular dreams of our own or of our friends which may seem to portend something.

Although the lights of our age have banished many superstitions into obscure corners; there may be yet not a few imaginative or credulous minds on whom this kind of impression has too much sway ; who still need to be reminded by the royal preacher, that “in the multitude of dreams there are vanities ;”¹ and by the son of Sirach, that “as he who seizeth a shadow and pursueth the wind, so is he that leaneth upon dreams ;”—“that

¹ Ecclesiastes v. 7.

they are vain and have deceived many, and they have failed that hoped in them.”¹ We may apprise such persons, also, that it was one of the worst men of antiquity, Sylla, who, in his Commentaries inscribed to Lucullus, (as we learn from Plutarch,) advises him “to depend on nothing so much as what Heaven should suggest to him in the visions of the night.”² Such was the counsel of one, who, after base profligacy and wholesale cruelties, died of the most revolting disease.

The fanaticism to which a superstitious view of dreams—carried to its extreme—may give rise, appears in Charlevoix’s account of some tribes of American Indians. “They look upon dreams as a desire of the soul inspired by some Genius, or an *order* from him, and hold it a religious duty to obey them. An Indian having dreamt of having a finger cut off, had it really cut off when he awoke, having first prepared himself for this important act by a feast.”³

Mr. Moffat also says of the South Africans,

¹ Ecclesiasticus, xxxiv. 1, 7.

² Plutarch in Sylla. Wrangham’s translation, vol. iv. p. 110.

³ Quoted in Dendy on Dreams, p. 77.

“they are very prone to superstitious interpretations of dreams ; some of which are too monstrous to be permitted an asylum in the mind. The most ignorant feel pleasure in hawking about their nocturnal reveries : more than this, they hear of *visions*, and think they may have their share : I have heard of some who had seen an angel behind a bush, or heard a voice from heaven ; and of others who had gone to Jerusalem like Mahomet, though not on an ass, or ascended to the heaven and returned the same night. It has been necessary to bring other things before their minds, imparting genuine currency instead of that false coin, which, alas ! is sometimes vended in more enlightened countries than Africa.”¹

It is also well to remember,—with thankfulness at not being exposed to the caprices of tyranny,—that there have been periods in the history of mankind, when it was a most perilous thing to *tell* a dream.

Gordon, in his preliminary discourses on Tacitus, mentions from Ammianus, that even under Constantius, the second Christian emperor, (so called,) there was a “spy for

¹ Moffat's South Africa, p. 185, abridged.

dreams," a Persian named Mercurius, called "*somniorum comes*;" and that some dreams were only to be expiated by the dreamer's blood. People, far from telling their dreams, durst scarce own that they slept; nay, it was lamented by some that they had not been born upon Mount Atlas, where, according to tradition, people never dream."¹

In the reign of an earlier despot, Claudius, Tacitus himself informs us, the illustrious Roman knights surnamed Petra being marked for destruction, "one of them was charged with a dream, as if he had beheld Claudius crowned with ears of corn *inverted*, thus predicting a grievous dearth. Others have said that he dreamed of a crown of vine with whitening or fading leaves, which he construed to portend the prince's death in autumn. This is undoubted, that for some dream both he and his brother perished."²

But it would be almost affronting intelligent readers to suppose that they are likely to pay any serious regard to dreams in *general*. Of the most prevailing character of these, all reflective minds are aware. We have learned

¹ Discourses on Tacitus, p. 80.

² Tacit. Annal. xi.

experimentally to estimate them, like Mercutio in the drama, as

“Children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
Which is as thin of substance as the air,
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos
Even now the frozen bosom of the North,
And, being angered, puffs away from thence,
Turning his face to the dew-dropping South.”¹

All have realised the broken and disjointed yet traceable connexion which they so often have with recent waking engagements, wishes, and anxieties ; so that we can appreciate the poetic fiction of the great dramatist, when, with a sportiveness characteristic of “fancy’s child,” he describes that principle of association in dreams under the image of their fairy patroness and prompter, who comes

“In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,”

and suggests to different classes their several visions.

Addison has a humorous letter, signed Titus Trophonius, who says : “Having long considered whether there be any trade wanting in this great city, I do not find in any quarter an *oneirocritic* or interpreter of

¹ See Note E, at the end of this volume.

dreams. For want of so useful a person several good people are much puzzled, and dream a whole year without being ever the wiser. I hope I am pretty well qualified for this office, having studied by candlelight all the rules of the art. My grand-uncle, by my wife's side, was a Scottish Highlander, and second-sighted. I have four fingers and two thumbs upon one hand, and was born on the longest night of the year. My christian and surname begin and end with the same letters. I am lodged in Moorfields in a house that for these fifty years has been always tenanted by a conjurer. There are some who cannot sleep in quiet the next night, till something has happened to expound the visions of the preceding one. In short, sir, there are many whose waking thoughts are wholly employed on their sleeping ones. For the benefit, therefore, of this inquisitive part of my fellow-subjects, I shall, first, tell those what they dreamed of, who fancy they never dream at all. Next, I shall make out any dream, on hearing a single circumstance of it: and expound the good or bad fortune which such dreams portend. I have several apartments fitted up at

reasonable rates, for such as have not conveniences for dreaming at their own houses.”¹

Another number of the Spectator reports many complaints from “delicious dreamers,” desiring him to silence “those noisy slaves who take their early rounds about the city.” “Several monarchs,” he writes, “have done me the honour to acquaint me how they have been shaken from their respective thrones by the rumbling of a wheelbarrow. A boisterous peripatetic hardly goes through a street without waking half a dozen princes to open their shops or clean shoes, transforming sceptres into shovels, and proclamations into bills.— On the other hand, I have testimonies of gratitude from many who owe to this clamorous tribe frequent deliverances. A small-coal man, by waking one of these distressed gentlemen, saved him from ten years’ imprisonment. A certain valetudinarian confesses he has been cured of a sore throat by the hoarseness of a carman, and relieved from a fit of the gout by the sound of old shoes.”

Much of this is well understood and often felt;—yet not *all* this can set aside the proofs

¹ Spectator, No. 505, vol. vii. p. 119, abridged.

and instances adduced, that there are dreams of a very different quality. The same difference may be observed in men's *waking* thoughts. What a host of *them* are vain, incoherent, and fruitless! How certain it is, nevertheless, and how happy, that some bear marks of a higher origin; that some, in many minds, have been so influential and effective, as to leave no doubt of their source; that some have prompted earnest prayer; some a decisive change of purpose; some the most arduous and beneficent labours. With respect to *dreams*, the author of Ecclesiasticus, in the very passage before quoted, where he censures their vanity, makes a remarkable exception: "*If they be not sent from the Most High in (or for) thy visitation, set not thy heart upon them.*"¹

There remains, however, the serious practical difficulty—how shall we rightly discriminate that which is important from that which is fallacious?

Augustin relates, in his "Confessions," that his mother had a dream which greatly consoled her, when he as a youth was in-

¹ Ecclesiasticus xxxiv. 6.

involved in licentious vice and absurd Manichæan errors. "She saw herself standing on a rule or narrow strip of wood, (*in regula lignea*,) and a youth of brilliant and joyous aspect approaching her with smiles, while she stood mournful and worn out with grief. He inquired the causes of her sadness and those daily tears, (as if for the sake of teaching, not of learning,) and was answered that her lament was over my perdition. He directed her where she might stand (on the strip of wood) most safely, and admonished her to watch and look, for that where she was there also was *I*. And on watching for this, she saw me standing close by her on the same rule or narrow board." He adds: "When she told me that vision, and I tried to turn it thus,—that she should not despair of becoming what *I* was, she at once said, without the least hesitation, 'Not so; for it was not said to me, Where *he* is there also *thou*, but, Where *thou* there also *he*.' I own that I was more moved by the divine intimation as given through the lips of my waking mother, who, unperturbed by my false interpretation, so promptly saw the truth, than even by the

dream itself, in which that pious woman's joy—to be fulfilled at length—was so long before predicted as a solace of her actual pain.”¹

When, subsequently, Augustin and his mother were both solicitous for a particular temporal object, prayers were offered by her, at his desire, that something as to this might be revealed in a dream. But he states, “She then had only certain *vain and fantastic* dreams, induced by the earnestness of her mind on this subject, which she mentioned, not with reliance on them as divine, but as contemning them. For she said that she could discern, by I know not what mental taste or perception, (*nescio quo sapore*,) the difference between revelations and mere imaginations in dreams.”² It seems highly probable that, to a humble and devout Christian, there might be afforded, on some occasions, such a discriminating power.

For myself, as was intimated, I speak as one *untaught* by experience: never having had—though often desirous of it—a dream to which I could attach peculiar weight or significance.

¹ Confess. lib. iii. c. xi. pp. 73, 75. ² Ibid. lib. vi. c. xiii.

One would say, generally, to all who are likely to be in this manner impressible,—Be very slow in permitting any dream to prompt or guide your *conduct*. And yet we cannot contend that this rule admits of *no* exception. For a dream may be so striking and monitory, by its peculiar distinctness, and still more by its reiteration,—and the act or precaution to which it prompts may be of so lawful and blameless a kind, as to make the adoption of it more than justifiable. We cannot censure the traveller at Megara, (unless it were for treating the first summons lightly;) still less the lady at Edinburgh who procured a friendly sentinel for her aged relative. We cannot blame the acquaintance of Salmasius for quitting his abode, nor the poet Simonides for declining to embark: we commend the Scottish lady who prevailed with her nephew to put off his boating, and yet more the clergyman who hastened home in the night to save his child from flames.

But we should of course say, most decisively,—wherever the dream enjoins or counsels what is contrary to the supreme rule of scripture, or what is at variance with sound

reason and prudence, and favours the dictates of passion or fancy,—discard it utterly, as a vain and dangerous illusion. Indeed, there is all reason to conclude, that the dreams of some ardent minds were first prompted and created by the ruling passion, and then stirred and impelled that passion itself into strenuous and confident action. So we may regard the dream of Hannibal, mentioned by several Roman writers,¹ that he saw Jove, or a celestial envoy from Jove, who commanded him to invade Italy, and was followed by a vast serpent and a terrific thunder, which the envoy declared to mean his devastation of that realm. “Gladdened by that vision,” says Livy, “he advanced towards the Pyrenees.”

Timur mentions several such dreams of his own, in one of which he saw the prophet Mahomet, who gave him a club, which became very long in his hand ; and to this exhilarating dream he attributes his victory over Bajazet.² On other occasions, he dreamed that he heard the voice of an angel

¹ Livy, lib. xxi. c. xxii. ; Cicero ; Valerius Maximus.

² Autobiog. p. 17.

animating him to war and triumph. These men, both when awake and in their slumbers, were under the urgent impulses of a restless ambition ; it produced their visions, and then seized on them to stimulate and justify its own acts.¹

Thus, examples give great weight to the general rule, that it is, usually, most unsafe and unwarrantable to act on such suggestions. When dreams are so extraordinary, and so linked with events ensuing, as to be distinguished from the throng of those which are "vanities," and to claim, therefore, a measure of serious regard,—it is mainly (as has been all along pointed out) in the light of corroborative enforcements to the great doctrine of God's ruling providence and the dictates of his word. Like miracles and prophecies, such dreams are not primarily meant to induce outward acts, but that one inward act or sentiment,—that livelier persuasion of the Divine government, which gives increased force to all the monitions of conscience and of scripture.

¹ The dream (perhaps reverie) of Cromwell, in which a spectre predicted his greatness, may be classed with these.—*See Noble's Memoirs of the Protectoral House.*

And it was argued above to be not less credible, that the Great Disposer of all minds should occasionally employ these, than any other impressive means,—as a powerful appeal in public, a touching interview in private, the sudden loss of beloved friends, our personal escape, or theirs, from imminent peril,—in order to rivet the attention, or unseal the heart, to his own words and acts of grace.

It may be inquired—how then would you have us *regulate* our thoughts and feelings with regard to such very impressive dreams, as, if they occur to us, we cannot but suspect to be divinely ordered?

I would answer—if a dream really appear to be of that class which the excellent mother of Augustin thought she could distinguish, as sent with some special design of Providence,—it will be right, I judge, to note down the circumstances, accurately and simply, without the least embellishment,—and then dismiss it from the mind, as one of those “secret things” which “belong unto God” to solve, or leave unsolved.

If nothing follow in which a sober judg-

ment is constrained to recognise connexion and correspondence with that dream, (and this is the more probable issue,) you will be taught that it had not the significant character which your fancy or your emotion ascribed to it.

If, on the contrary, there *be* a sequence whose undeniable accordance compels you to assign to your dream a predictive or premonitory character,—then take, thoughtfully and thankfully, the *privilege* of this added confirmatory indication, that a hidden but omniscient Power governs our faculties and the events around us ; suggests ideas and imagery to the mind ; foresees and guides in wisdom the intricate and countless diversities of human affairs.

But, it may be further asked—suppose such a remarkable and striking dream—perhaps reiterated—should urge to an immediate act or proceeding, (as some did which have been here related,) would it be right to obey that practical direction or impulse ?

On this point it is important to observe, that the few dreams of such a kind which have been here mentioned as apparently divine admonitions, have been of a cautionary, warning,

repressive character, calculated to check or prevent some evil in prospect. Such were those lately adverted to as exceptions to the general rule.¹ We may remark also, that where the dreams of persons possessing Christian knowledge have been adapted strongly to modify the whole subsequent course of life and action, and have sometimes, as in the instances of Africaner and of General Burn, actually done this,² they have acted only as reinforcing and enhancing the impressiveness of obligations which should have been previously derived and felt from the import of revealed truth, and in no way as varying from or contravening it. Let it be supposed,—though a thing not at all to be reckoned on in ordinary experience,—that a very striking and

¹ See p. 155.

² The well-known case of Colonel Gardiner, which is most fully attested, and was most extraordinary in its decisive and permanent effects, has not been referred to, simply because he regarded it as a *waking vision*. There is reason to suppose that it was in reality a very vivid dream. In the instance of General Burn also, the testimony for the incident and its effects is clear and unimpeachable. The sceptic may term the occurrences in each case *visionary*: and so, in some sense, they were: but can he deny that the vision of a few minutes was a chief means to the reformation of a whole life?

even reiterated dream prompt you to avoid by some immediate step a threatened evil to yourself, or prevent some evil imminent on another,—if the mode of avoidance or prevention be in no respect adverse to prior rules of Christian duty, it would be wrong, as I judge, to neglect an intimation, the compliance with which can involve no moral fault.

But if your dream flatter and excite a ruling passion or inordinate propensity, or wild and injudicious project, its tendency betrays its source, and marks it for rebuke and rejection. If it prompt even to a course which, without being obviously culpable, still on other grounds appears questionable, it would be most fanatical to substitute for the dictates of waking reason, for the counsels of wise friendship, and the directions of holy scripture, a sort of guidance so unsound and illusory.

SECTION VII.

WHILE it has been attempted in these Essays to evince, both in the general phenomena of dreaming and in the ordination of some particular dreams, uses of no small moment ; it cannot, I trust, be overlooked how much we are bound to exercise a deep and habitual gratitude for living in the daylight of recorded communications from the source of truth, and not in that twilight of antemosaic ages, when isolated visions, and oral traditions of those, were the chief intimations of God's will and grace to man.

It is true, that in our days we have many rejecters of this revealed light ; and among them some who by subtle reasonings would "attenuate all things into inanity ;" disputing on mind and matter, time and space, till they reduce, in their "vain imaginations," the universe to a vision, and life to a mere som-

nambulism, or something less.¹ I refer, chiefly, to that "transcendental" philosophy of the Germans which has acquired an extending influence, of late years, in other countries and in our own.²

Amidst such delirious reveries of self-bewildering thinkers, "mad with logic,"³ truly we may learn yet more and more to cleave to that steadfast record, which assures of God's holy Providence, of a divine Redemption, of heavenly succours, of a real and blessed future.

Be it also not forgotten, but a matter of devout and admiring observation, that the starry night, ever the season of dreams, and of old the scene of prophetic visions, unfolds in all centuries and all regions immense revelations of Omnipotence ; giving glimpses of the

¹ See "Hegel's method"—of "absolute idealism," which is "nothing but Hume's scepticism in a dogmatical form;" denying both "mind and matter."—*Biograph. Hist. of Philos.* 2nd series, vol. iv. p. 210.

² Theories approaching to these were entertained by some of the Greeks. See Note F, at the end of this volume.

³ Even their modern biographer applies to them the line—
"Gens ratione ferox, et mentem pasta chimæris."

—*Lewes's Biog. Hist. ubi supra.*

visible yet latent wonders of innumerable worlds ; so that a host of celestial realities is ever partially brought into our view, yet with a boundless sphere of dream and mystery beyond, in what their remoteness conceals. It has been said, probably from more than one astronomer's chair, that the powerful and exploring intellect of the great discoverers in science has taken a sublimer flight than the most daring fancy of the poets.¹ Most true : but still, it is the believer alone—as was observed in the former Essay—who carries with him the warmth of heavenly hope into the loftiest regions and disclosures of ever-widening science.

Let us hear our own Christian poet of “the night,” as he exclaims—

“O death divine, that giv'st us to the skies!—
From nature's continent, immensely wide,
Immensely blest, this little isle of life,

¹ That remark was pointedly expressed by the very able Professor Playfair, from his Edinburgh chair of Natural Philosophy, in 1813 ; when he compared the achievements of Galileo's and Newton's reason, with those of Ariosto's and Milton's fancy. It was cited (from my MS. notes of his lecture) in a former volume—*Christian Encouragement*, § iii. p. 66. 3d edition.

This dark incarcerating colony,
 Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain,
 That manumits ; that calls from exile home ;
 That leads to nature's great metropolis,
 And readmits us, through the guardian hand
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne ;
 Who hears our Advocate, and through his wounds
 Beholding man, allows *that* tender name."

And again—

"O what a confluence of ethereal fires
 From urns unnumbered, down the steep of heaven,
 Streams to a point, and centres in my sight !
 Nor tarries there ; I feel it at my heart ;
 My heart at once it humbles and exalts ;
 Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies."

We should deeply ponder, also, the great
 lesson which he deduces.

"*Why* such magnificence in all thou seest ?
 —Of matter's grandeur, know, one end is this ;
 To tell the Rational who gazes on it
 —Guard thou the important yet depending fate
 Of *being*, brighter than a thousand suns !
 One single ray of thought outshines them all !
 And, if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar
 Superior heights, and on his purple wing
 Rising where *thought* is now denied to rise,
 Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres !"

I return, for a moment, to that comparison
 by the Scottish philosopher, which may be

summed up in the brief sentence—Realities transcend all dreams.

His remark, uttered the third part of a century ago, has since received new and emphatic confirmations from the new explorings of science. Dreams the most celestial or eccentric, imaginings the most exalted or extreme, are abundantly outgone by the ascertained and visible facts of creation : how much more, it is inevitable to conclude, by the realities which are “*not seen*.”

What are the visions, the reveries, or the fictions of men,—the most oriental stretch of mythic hyperbole,—the most ultramundane dream of the astrologer Cardan,—or the boldest flights of a Dante,—when compared with the telescopic distinction of confused nebular light into constellations or clusters of starry globes ; or with that recent fact, the new planet of Leverrier, whose distance,—not incalculable, but the astonishing subject of successful calculation,—gives us a new standard for estimating the immensities of God’s works, and the exceeding broadness of His one law and sovereignty, by the amazing vastness of our one solar system,—one amidst

systems whose multitude must baffle human research.

Since then even visible realities thus transcend our most excursive dreams, how much more, I repeat, the *invisible* ! and how should hallowed ambition, tempered by profound humility, aspire to rise from man's frail imaginations towards his Maker's real and eternal grandeur, and from all visionary and evanescent good towards the permanent "certainty of waking bliss !"



NOTES.

NOTE A, p. 32.

KUBLA KHAN.

THE reader may wish for the remaining lines preserved by the poet ; which are these :—

“ A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw :
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.

Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That, with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of paradise.”

All who loved the poet, or who honoured his genius, must have earnestly wished that in those early days he had restricted himself to genuine and harmless

"milk" or "honey," instead of indulging in pernicious stimulants. Most devoutly did he himself wish this when he felt their fatal effects; and after he was at last so happily rescued from that baneful snare of opium, which had once attracted him as if it were "the milk of paradise;" but proved, as we learn from what he confessed and recorded, a wine of demons, a very "cup of trembling."¹

It is probable, since he writes of having taken an "anodyne," that the "vision in a dream" arose under some excitement of that same narcotic: but this does not destroy, even as to his particular case, the evidence for a wonderfully inventive action of the mind in sleep; for, whatever were the exciting cause, the fact remains the same: although, doubtless, where there has been no stimulus of the sort, the instances are still more to our purpose. Such a one is the following: a piece kindly supplied me by a lady,—"composed by herself in sleep, after reading Sir Walter Scott's 'Kenilworth.'"

KENILWORTH CASTLE.

(Composed in sleep.)

"IN the tower I stood, and looked out on the sea,
Which slept in the moonlight peacefully.
Ah! many a moon has passed away,
And many a head been strewed with gray,
Since these walls, which now echo the owl's cry,
First reared their strength in the azure sky.

The bat now dwells where the dancers shone,
And the passing wind sighs for music gone;
And in place of the torch's glaring blaze,
The quivering moonbeam gently strays.

¹ See his most affecting letters of April, May, and June, 1814, in "Cottle's early recollections" of him.—Vol. ii. pp. 156, 161, 166, 186.

The Queen who once looked from these casements high,
Where the long grass now waves rank and dry,
Has passed away as a passing moan :
E'en her name is worn from the fretted stone.

And Surrey and Leicester, where are they ?
Oh ! tell me their tale, thou castle gray :
For they clung to their Queen as the ivy round thee,
But they propped her not so faithfully.

I hear you speak in the night wind's sigh,
In the bat's leathern wing fitting quickly by,
In the thrilling sound of the night bird's cry,
Startling the silence fearfully.

They say that Time has been mowing here,
And that Death has been hurling his fatal spear."

I can conceive that the very connectedness and sobriety of these pleasing lines, may induce suspicion or misgiving in some readers as to the certainty of their having been really the product of a dream, and merely noted down (like Coleridge's) from memory on awaking. With myself, who possess full attestation for the veracity and accuracy of the poetess, such doubts can have no admission: and had that lady consented to let her name be attached to the piece, the same confidence would be felt by the whole circle of her friends.

NOTE B, p. 36.

LA MOTHE LE VAYER.

"He was supposed to have a strong disposition to scepticism, and bore with calmness the imputations to which his opinions exposed him: once, when walking in the gallery of the Louvre, he overheard a person whisper to his friend, 'There goes a man without religion:' to which he replied, 'I have religion enough, friend, to pardon your insult.' He was a

great writer; one of his works was a 'Treatise on the Virtue of Pagans,' which was answered by Arnauld. La Mothe's bookseller complaining that his book did not sell, 'I know a secret,' said the author, 'to quicken the sale:—he procured an order from government for its suppression; which was the means of selling the whole edition.'—Rees's Cyclopædia, art. Mothe le Vayer (from Moreri).

This latter anecdote, while it shows his ready wit and resource, and suggests a lesson on the bad policy of trying to repress opinion by coercion, betrays at the same time his lax views in morals: but, in the former, he may be really considered as affording a pattern for all believers, and, to some, a tacit but keen reproof.

NOTE C, p. 72.

ZIMMERMANN'S DREAM.

It appears from Tissot's Life of Zimmermann, that his wife was not really deceased when the above dream occurred to him. We are to interpret the announcement of her death merely as an incident of the *dream*: which, in my judgment, renders that itself the more remarkable; since it was not occasioned by emotions or promptings of the imagination arising from an actual bereavement, but arose independently of any such event. The first wife of Dr. Zimmermann died in 1770, five years after this dream happened, according to the statement of Lavater.

NOTE D, p. 78.

THE SCEPTIC AND THE CHRISTIAN

WE may take, as the type or exemplification of sceptical prospects—and it cannot be deemed an unfair

or unfavourable one—Shelley's beautiful monody on Keats, entitled "Adonais;" a painfully instructive poem from a hapless teacher, evincing, in him, the insuppressible though hopeless sighs and yearnings of humanity for a future life and tender recognition. One might even think, if his wretched reveries of pantheism and absorption were not known and unconcealed, that some phrases strongly indicate the hope of life and reunion to come; as when he exclaims—

"—Peace; peace; he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life."

"—Mourn not for Adonais :—thou young dawn
Turn all thy dew to splendour; for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone."

"—The soft sky smiles, the low wind whispers near;
'Tis Adonais calls! O hasten thither,
No more let life divide what death can join together."

And then—

"The massy earth and sphered skies are riven;
I am borne darkly, fearfully afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the eternal are."

But what this "star" and this "abode" are meant—though most unfaithfully even as figures—to designate, must be gathered from these other lines which precede :—

"He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird:
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own."

This, doubtless, is as exquisite poetry as can be had without the element of real hope in it. It breathes the essential spirit of wild and half-smiling melancholy. One might almost call it the nitrous oxide of literature. Or if we liken it to a stream, it is a sparkling fascinating current, which flows smoothly to the whirlpool of despair.

Compare with this the spirit of Milton's monody on Edward King, the son of Sir John King, secretary for Ireland. It is remarkable that in this case the *subject* of the elegy had been drowned at sea, and in the former case the *poet* soon underwent a like calamity.

"Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more ;
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor ;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
So Lycidas sank low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above
In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes."

Even should it be critically adjudged that these lines of our elder bard have less of grandeur or exquisiteness in them as mere poetry, one pities those who do not prize in them the majesty of truth and hope ; that spiritual sunlight which alone can really "turn all dew" of grief "to splendour ;" while the sceptic's most aspiring and far-reaching beams are but as cold undulations of ether in the wilderness of space.

NOTE E, p. 149.

"CHILDREN OF AN IDLE BRAIN."

It may be added, that in the minds of some young children, and in others which, for want of strength or discipline, remain in adult years still childish, the impression of a dream on the memory appears to be sometimes confounded with a remembrance of real occurrences; and thus comes to be related as such. It is the *inversion* of what Pascal has observed sometimes happens to travellers in new scenes, who are apt to feel and say, "Methinks I am dreaming."¹ And it must be suspected as a possible illusion by some who have not undergone it; since the remark is not uncommon after telling what seems both to the hearer and narrator difficult of belief,—surely I cannot have dreamed it.—Lamentable, however, as well as ludicrous is the case, when such confusedness as leads to mistaking impressions in sleep for realities, at once deludes the party himself, and creates for him an ill reputation with others for incredible stories; that is, in fact, for lying. Probably some portion of what is judged as falsehood or rhodomontade, takes rise from this transmutation of dreams, by some vague and perplexed actings of memory and fancy, into supposed and believed facts. My acute and observant friend, Mr. Bullar of Southampton, writes to me thus:—"I have lately had with me one of my lively little grandchildren, of three years old, who sometimes made out such narratives of what she had been doing or seeing as I could only account for on the supposition that her memory had mixed up her dreams with her waking thoughts. I think I can sometimes trace that this may have been, occasionally, my own case in childhood. I forget who it was, (though I

¹ Thoughts, p. 75. Glasg. ed. 1838.

suspect it may have been Lavater,) that kept what he called, in antithesis to "Diary," a "Nocturnal," registering his dreams, and then analysing the "stuff they were made of," from detecting fragments of one train of thought "tacked to another, as in a patchwork quilt." This hint of thoughts or incidents "*tacked*" together, —(which curiously accords with the Greek term "rhapsodies," applied even to Homer's poems,)—well describes the most frequent character of dreams. It helps us, also, to understand how, in unsteady and ill-regulated minds, (not to say in some superior to those,) things real may have had the unreal so tacked to them, that they have come to be thought all of a piece, and the voyager or soldier has told "of hairbreadth 'scapes and moving accidents," founded on and connected with some which really *did* occur, but which themselves *cannot* have occurred.

A gallant naval officer, the late Captain Sir T. Byard, (maternal ancestor to some esteemed connexions of mine,) who commanded the *Bedford* at the battle of Camperdown, related, in a company where I as a schoolboy was an eager and attentive listener, that he had had on board his ship a negro servant called Black Sam, who was used to assert, and persist in the assertion, that he had once jumped off the Peak of Teneriffe into the ship. Captain Byard added,— "I think he had told this story till he really believed it himself."

Now this Black Sam, though of Othello's hue, we may well believe had nothing of the Moor's talent or fascination; but was noted only as a professed and resolved liar, which, too probably, he might be: still it seems not *improbable*, that in this instance he had unawares "*tacked*" (rhapsodized) the remembrance of a dream to a real occurrence; and so "*believed*" his own "*lie*." It is not unlikely that he had made, with some of his ship's officers, a mountain excursion towards the peak, nor that he had afterwards vividly dreamed of jumping from that height into the ship,

which he had really looked at thence, anchored in the roads below. One may readily conceive how, in an untaught, fanciful, and superstitious mind, the real excursion and the dreaming extravagance had become one and inseparable; his vanity flattered by the imagined feat, and his credence made obstinate by his hearers' raillery. Such a delusion, supposing that it happened or that it may happen, would be a useful lesson as to the importance of "keeping" the mind "with diligence," lest its dreams or fancies mingling with fact and imposing on itself, should ruin its claim to soundness and truthfulness, and lead many to judge us "deceivers," when we may be, in great part, "deceived."

NOTE F, p. 163.

TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY.

IDEALISM.

THE imagined annihilation both of mind and matter by a self-bewildering philosophy,—advocated in the sceptical writings of Hume, and since more laboriously in the speculations of Fichte, Hegel, &c.—was, however, familiar to the subtle genius of the ancient Greeks.

It is very remarkable, that not merely the Eleatics, the Pyrrhonists, &c. disputed in this manner, but that even Plato, the most religious of the philosophers, "has given them some countenance, by hinting it as a thing not quite impossible, that human life is a continued sleep, and that all our thoughts are only dreams. [*πότερον καθεύδουμεν, καὶ πάντα ἃ διανομέμεθα δνειρώττομεν.*] This scepticism (which I am inclined to think most persons have occasionally experienced in their early years) proceeds on principles totally different from the doctrine of Bishop Berkeley, who asserts, with the most dogmatical confidence, that the "existence of matter is impossible, and that the very

supposition of it is absurd."¹ The good bishop firmly held the existence of mind, and of the *supreme* mind. He had, as Pope says, "every virtue under heaven;" and a modern writer remarks, "it is still a moot point whether he was greater in head or heart."—Yet the same pen tells us, "he paved the way to scepticism:"² on which the reflection arises, how unhappy would that excellent Christian and divine have *been*, had he foreseen that his theory might minister to such a result; and how important is it to limit speculation within the boundaries of common sense.

NOTE, (SUPPLEMENTAL,) p. 91.

"A DREAM OF CYRUS, WHO HAD SEEN THE SUN AT HIS FEET
AND TRIED TO GRASP IT."

THE contents of this note, (or part of it,) if I had seen earlier the interesting facts and statements which it offers, would not have been inserted *as* a note, but in Section V. of the second Essay.³ Coming as they do from the pen of a venerable person, of whose piety and charity I have had most pleasing and edifying proofs, in his own parish, both from personal intercourse and from striking testimony, I feel that none can be more highly attested.

The Rev. Henry Woodward, Rector of Fethard, in a recent brief autobiography, entitled "Some passages of my former life,"¹ after narrating his own experience (in 1804) of a mighty spiritual change, writes—"I think that the conviction which above all others cheered my heart was, that the grand transition had already taken place; that I had passed the Rubicon;

¹ Dugald Stewart. Philosophical Essays, (Essay ii.) p. 116.

² Lewes's Biograph. Hist. of Philos. vol. iv. pp. 4, 82.

³ At p. 140.

that I was not to wait till death for the commencement of the eternal day, but that I had already seen the outgoings of the morning; that the sun that now arose would never go down; that I had awoke from sleep, and would never close my eyes again." He afterwards adds, "I would mention the following fact, as illustrative of the manner in which the whole current of my mind was changed. Some time, I forget how long, before that—to me—all-important period, I dreamt that I saw the sun arise, and then, after it, another sun; and I awoke in a state of inexpressible horror. A few days after the transition which I am now describing, I had a repetition of precisely the same dream; and I started from my sleep in almost an ecstasy of joy. I shall make no further comment upon it than this, that it seemed to me as if an all-gracious God had said, 'You see by the different effects of this dream what a change has passed upon your mind. You now have nothing to fear, though the hills were removed, and the mountains were cast into the depths of the sea.'"¹

It will be obvious to discerning and Christian readers, that this might well have been classed with some dreams adduced in the preceding pages, as instrumental to the "renewing of the mind," or "in the revival or fixing of prior impressions of revealed truth." But, being obliged to offer it as a note, I connect it with the dream of Cyrus, as exhibiting the contrast between the "visions" of a heathen prince,—prompted by the ruling passion,—and those suggested by heavenly influence to a spiritually awakened mind, as it began to seek "healing" warmth and lustre in the "wings" of "the Sun of Righteousness."

¹ Orr & Co. and Seeley, London, 1847. ² Pp. 8—10.

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