theories of the persistence of force, the conservation of energy, and the correlation of its physical manifestations, they do not in the slightest degree affect theology, until they penetrate the region of life. When it is affirmed that physical and vital forces are correlated and convertible—in other words, that all the phenomena of thought, and feeling, and will, are only transformed forces of matter—sound reasoning is violated as well as Scripture. It may be said that the material basis of animal and vegetable life is something in the molecular arrangement of its particles; and this may be called protoplasm. But it cannot be shown that anything but living matter communicates or feeds life. Spontaneous generation is a figment that Materialists have made their as yet unknown God. The true God giveth *life, and breath, and all things.* Acts xvii. 25. But, as man's body was created for the instant inhabitation of his living soul, so the matter of the universe was intended to be the instant abode of life. That life was breathed into it by the Spirit Who brooded over our chaos: He is the Lord and Giver of life in every manifestation of it, from the most elementary protoplasm up to that which beholds the face of God.

OTHER WORLDS.

Other Worlds.

The testimony of Revelation to the universe of other worlds than ours is limited. But what we have is consistent with every discovery and every rational hypothesis of modern science. The heavens have their host: to us an ambiguous word, which refers either to the worlds or to the inhabitants of those worlds, but is in the Scripture limited to the physical universe. As ordered in systems the universe is a κόσμος, as in our Lord's words, *before the foundation of the world:* John xvii. 24. the ancient use of the term to signify the ordered whole of the heavenly bodies is retained in the New Testament, though the common use limits it to man's world. Hence it is τὸ πᾶν, the universe; which, however, is never a unity in the Bible, heaven and earth being sundered. Viewed in the orderly succession of its creations the universe is made up of the αἰῶνες. *By Whom also He made the worlds,* that is, the worlds Heb. i. 2. which fill the ages of so-called past eternity. One of the first exercises of faith is said to embrace the fact that these worlds were *framed,* κατηρτίσθαι, as the phenomenal, or in their present Heb. xi. 3

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appearance, τὰ βλεπόμενα. The silence of the Scripture as to the inhabitants of these worlds is unbroken. But there is nothing either in its words or in its silence that forbids the reasonable inferences of analogy. The one point at which the vast extent of the peopled realms of the universe touches theological faith is the immeasurable dignity conferred on man's insignificance by the Incarnation. More than once the ancient Scripture seems to be oppressed though not overwhelmed by this truth. We can interpret our meaning, at least, into those passages which so often bid the children of the earth to lift up their eyes and behold the innumerable hosts of heaven. *What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?* But in the Creator's relations to His creatures there is no great and small, no greater and less: the transcendent mystery of the Divine condescension must be regarded in itself, and without the most distant reference to the insignificance of man in relation to the universe. The Old Testament derives a lesson from the contemplation that knows no doubt or dismay or fear: its faith is strengthened rather than endangered by every view of the steadfast and unviolated ordinances of heaven. *Lift up your eyes on high, and behold Who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth.* All are equally great in His sight: NOT ONE FAILETH; each has the burden of its own glorious destiny.

Ps. viii. 4.

Is. xl. 26.

Comparative Value.

THEIR COMPARATIVE INSIGNIFICANCE.

There is no grander truth revealed than the comparative insignificance of the creature as material. All the constellations of systems in the universe—or, as the Scripture says, the heavens —are the work of the Divine hand, which *all shall wax old as doth a garment.* They are of less value in all their awful extent and grandeur than one immortal spirit. And with the utmost tranquillity it is said that all the phenomena of creation will pass away, be *dissolved.* In the spirit of Jonah we take pity upon the great works of man which are to be destroyed. But the greater works of God are destroyed, and it costs the Supreme no thought! As to the substance behind the phenomena, and its reconstruction, more will be said hereafter.

Heb. i. 12.

2 Pet. iii. 11.

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