

which I suppose him surrounded at the moment when *he is about to create his gods.*"\*

What is this (divested of its wanton levity of expression) but to say, that when man has so far traced the course of nature as to be irresistibly impressed with the existence of order, law, variety in constancy, and fixity in change; of relations of form and space, duration and succession, cause and consequence, among the objects which surround him; there springs up in his breast, unbidden and irresistibly, the thought of superintending intelligence, of a mind which comprehended from the first and completely that which he late and partially comes to know? The worship of earth and sky, of the host of heaven and the influences of nature, is not the ultimate and fundamental fact in the early history of the religious impressions of mankind. These are but derivative streams, impure and scanty, from the fountain of religious feeling which appears to be disclosed to us by the contemplation of the universe, as the seat of law and the manifestation of intellect. Time suggests to man the thought of eternity; space of infinity; law of intelligence; order of purpose; and however difficult and long a task it may be to develop these suggestions into clear convictions, these thoughts are the real parents of our natural religious belief. The only relation between true religion and the worship of the elemental world is, that the latter is the partial and gross perversion, the former the consistent and pure developement of the same original idea.

2. The connexion of the laws of the material world with an intelligence which preconceived and instituted the law, which is thus, as we perceive, so generally impressed on the common apprehension of mankind, has also struck no less those who have studied nature with a more systematic attention, and with the peculiar views which belong to science.

\* Dupuis. *Origine des Cultes.*