

powers of nature, as in electricity and magnetism. It cannot be objectionable, therefore, to suppose, for the sake of illustrating religious truth, a repelling body situated between the moon and the sun.*

Between the Christian and heaven there is also an object from which nature shrinks back with dread and aversion. At one time his imagination pictures it as a dark valley, where no ray of light enters, where no friendly voice is heard by the lonely passenger, but where hideous and menacing forms ambush his path. At another time his fancy paints it as a deep and dismal defile, where he must go alone, and where a hideous monster stands in panoply complete, to dispute his passage, and to awaken in the disembodied spirit indescribable terrors. In short, it is what men universally call death, and from which nature, almost without exception, recoils in dismay. But from earth to heaven there is no passage save through that region of terror. Many a Christian would gladly leave the earth and go to possess his inheritance in the skies, did he not dread a boisterous passage through that untrodden valley. Nature approaches the brink of the precipice, and strains her eye to penetrate the gloom ; but she can discern only the swift and dark waters of Jordan rolling by, and the unrelenting countenance of the King of Terrors, with his menacing dart, while ever and anon the dying agonies of one and another victim assail her ear. She shudders at the prospect.

“The pains, the groans, the dying strife,
Fright our approaching souls away ;
Still shrink we back again to life,
Fond of our prison and our clay.”

* I might have taken stronger ground. . Says Professor Loomis, “The phenomena exhibited by Halley’s comet at its return to the sun in 1835, require us to admit the existence of repulsive as well as attractive forces.”—*Recent Progress of Astronomy*, 3d edition, p. 147.