

ing over the problems of mind and matter. On the other side of the Mediterranean we hear the same interrogatories resounding from the region of civilization's dawn, in Egypt, and in far-off India and China other races have found themselves confronted by the self-same mysteries, and, with equal courage, have demanded from the depths of Nature their solution. These sublime questions have stared with equal steadiness in the face of Greek, Egyptian, Phœnician, Chaldæan, Jew, Persian, Arabian, and Hindoo. Perennial problems, omnipresent as mind itself, they have reappeared upon American shores; and we find that the sacred books of the Aztecs yield us a cosmogony and a theogony no less sublime than those of India, Persia, and Greece.

Problems which, in all ages, have stood foremost in the conflict of the human mind with the vast unknown, would mock at the attempt to grapple with them in the brief compass of a chapter or two; but we can not pass them by without taking a few bearings upon their salient points. Waiving entirely the questions which arise in reference to moral and intelligent existences, let us attempt to bring together a body of considerations bearing upon the doctrine of periodical destructions and renovations in the material universe. It will thus, I think, be made to appear that the existing order of things *is not eternal*, and that a crisis is approaching which will demand the interposition of *a power superior to Nature*.

Dr. Reid, the Scottish metaphysician, asserts that God has implanted in the mind of man an original principle by which he believes in and expects the continuance of the course of Nature. This, evidently, is an error, since our expectation of the continued recurrence of natural phenomena in the same order is based upon our past experience, and is, consequently, an induction instead of a necessary truth. The fact is, that in all ages of the world, and among