

abstruse and doubtful speculation: yet the tendency to such a belief prevails strongly and widely, both among the common class of minds whose thoughts are casually and unsystematically turned to such subjects, and among philosophers to whom laws of nature are habitual subjects of contemplation. We conceive therefore that such a tendency may deserve to be briefly illustrated; and we trust also that some attention to this point may be of service in throwing light upon the true relation of the study of nature to the belief in God.

1. A very slight attention shows us how readily order and regularity suggest to a common apprehension the operation of a calm and untroubled intelligence presiding over the course of events. Thus the materialist poet, in accounting for the belief in the Gods, though he does not share it, cannot deny the habitual effect of this manifestation.

Præterea cæli rationes *ordine certo*
 Et *varia* annorum cernebant *tempora* vorti;
 Nec poterant quibus id fieret cognoscere caussis.
 Ergo perfugium sibi habebant Omnia Divis
 Tradere et illorum nutu facere omnia flecti.

LUCRET. v. 1182.

They saw the skies in constant order run,
 The varied seasons and the circling sun,
 Apparent rule, with unapparent cause,
 And thus they sought in Gods the source of laws.

The same feeling may be traced in the early mythology of a large portion of the globe. We might easily, taking advantage of the labours of learned men, exemplify this in the case of the oriental nations, of Greece, and of many other countries. Nor does there appear much difficulty in pointing out the error of those who have maintained that all religion had its *origin* in the worship of the stars and the elements; and who have insinuated that all such impressions are unfounded, inasmuch as these are certainly not right objects of human worship. The