

religious feeling, the conviction of a supernatural power, of an intelligence connecting and directing the phenomena of the world, had not its *origin* in the worship of sun, or stars, or elements; but was itself the necessary though unexpressed foundation of all worship, and all forms of false, as well as true, religion. The contemplation of the earth and heavens called into action this religious tendency in man; and to say that the worship of the material world formed or suggested this religious feeling, is to invert the order of possible things in the most unphilosophical manner. Idolatry is not the source of the belief in God, but is a compound of the persuasion of a supernatural government, with certain extravagant and baseless conceptions as to the manner in which this government is exercised.

We will quote a passage from an author who has illustrated at considerable length the hypothesis that all religious belief is derived from the worship of the elements.

“Light, and darkness its perpetual contrast; the succession of days and nights, the periodical order of the seasons; the career of the brilliant luminary which regulates their course; that of the moon his sister and rival; night, and the innumerable fires which she lights in the blue vault of heaven; the revolutions of the stars, which exhibit them for a longer or a shorter period above our horizon; the constancy of this period in the fixed stars, its variety in the wandering stars, the planets; their direct and retrograde course, their momentary rest; the phases of the moon waxing, full, waning, divested of all light; the progressive motion of the sun upwards, downwards; the successive order of the rising and setting of the fixed stars, which mark the different points of the course of the sun, while the various aspects which the earth itself assumes mark, here below also, the same periods of the sun’s annual motion; * * * all these different pictures, displayed before the eyes of man, formed the great and magnificent spectacle by