

NOTES

STANZA II.

Pagina claudere, jamque retexere desine multa.
Claudere pagina, denique carmina nostra, audite.

Cf. Marcus Aurelius I, 16: "Farewell, my books."
We find the same thought as to the futility of mere erudition in *Omar Khayyám*:

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door as in I went.

"Blind leaders of the blind" comes from Matt. xv. 14.

STANZA III.

Cf. Isaiah xxix. 11; Daniel viii. 26; Habakkuk ii. 2.

STANZA V.

Mutat enim mundi naturam totius ætas
Ex alioque alius status excipere omnia debet,
Nec manet ulla sui similis res. Omnia migrant.
Nihil constat, quoniam minui rem quamque videmus,
Et quasi longinquo fluere omnia cernimus ævo.

For time changes the nature of the whole world, and one condition of things after another must succeed all things, nor does anything abide like itself. We see all things change. Nothing lasts. We perceive that everything ebbs, as it were, by reason of years.

This closely reflects the thought of Marcus Aurelius:

The time of a man's life is as a point, the substance of it ever flowing—to be brief, as a dream or as smoke, so are all that belong to the soul. The time, therefore, that any man doth live is but a little, and the place where he liveth is but a very little corner of the earth; and the greatest fame that can remain of a man after his death, even that is but a little.—Casaubon's translation.

STANZA VI.

Inrevocabilis abstulerit jam præterita ætas,
Denique ab ignibus ad gelidas iter usque pruinas
Finitum est, retroque pari ratione remensum est;
Augescunt aliæ gentes, aliæ minuuntur,
Inque brevi spatio mutantur sæcla animantum,
Et quasi cursores vitæ lampada primordia posse.
Denique non monimenta virum dilapsa videmus
Quærere proporro sibi sene senescere credas?

Time now gone by has irrevocably passed. From summer fires to chill frost a definite path is traced out, and in like manner is again traveled back. Some nations wax, others wane, and in a brief space things are changed and, like runners, hand over the lamp of life. See we not the monuments of men, fallen to ruin, ask whether you would believe that *they* could decay with years?

STANZA VII.

Was the poet thinking of the striking verse in Isaiah xiv. 18?: "All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, every one in his own house."

Or Job iii. 14: ". . . at rest with kings and councillors of the earth, who built for themselves pyramids."

There seems also to be some reflection of Vergil:
Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram
Perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna.
Æneid VI. 268.

Along the illimitable shade
Darkling and lone their way they made,
Through the vast kingdom of the dead,
An empty void, though tenanted.
Conington's translation.

STANZA VIII.

It is curious to see how a French poet of the seventeenth century, Pierre Le Moyne, in his now forgotten poem on Saint Louis in Egypt [1653], has visualized the heart of the pyramids in much the same way.

Sous les pieds de ces monts taillés et suspendus,
 Il s'étend des pays ténébreux et perdus,
 Des déserts spacieux, des solitudes sombres,
 Faites pour le séjour des morts et de leurs ombres.
 Là sont les corps des rois et les corps des sultans
 Diversement rangés selon l'ordre des temps,
 Les uns sont enchâssés dans decreuses images
 A qui l'art a donné leur taille et leurs visages;
 Et dans ces vieux portraits, qui sont leurs monu-
 ments,
 Leur orgueil se conserve avec leur ossements.

STANZAS IX-XII.

These identical reflections, couched even in much the same language, showing that there is no new thought under the sun, occurred to Sir Thomas Browne, the immortal author of the essay on "Urn-Burial."

"What song the sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among the women, though puzzling questions, are not beyond all conjecture. What time the persons of these ossuaries entered the famous nations of the dead, and slept with princes and counsellors, might admit a wide solution. But who were the proprietaries of these bones, or what bodies these ashes made up, were a question above antiquarianism. . . . The iniquity of oblivion scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of man without distinction to merit of perpetuity . . . Time hath spared the epitaph of Adrian's horse, confounded that of himself. . . . Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot than any that be remembered in the known account of time?"

Compare Sir Leslie Stephen's noble brief for the forgotten great in his essay on "Forgotten Benefactors," especially the last paragraph.

"They will be forgotten before long as we too shall be forgotten—the incalculable majority within a generation or two. The thought may be painful, but the reasonable conclusion is, I think, not that we should fret over the inevitable; rather that we should purify

our minds from this as from other illusions, and feel ashamed of the selfish desire that our own names should be preserved when we know that so many who were far better and nobler than ourselves will be inevitably forgotten, and were better and nobler without the stimulus of any such paltry desire. . . . Though the memory may be transitory, the good done by a noble life and character may last far beyond any horizon which can be realized by our imaginations."

STANZA XIV.

The suggestion of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius is positive in these lines of the original. But the Roman emperor makes the trio to be composed of Alexander, Pompey, and Cæsar:

"Alexander, Pompeius, Cæsar, cum tot urbes funditus evertissent tot hominum myriades in prælio cecidissent, ipsi quoque tandem vita excesserunt."—III. 3. [I have quoted an old seventeenth century Latin translation as it brings out the identity between the two more strikingly.]

The lines of the poem are worth quoting here, for they are not unimpressive:

. . . prole Phillipi
Non eris altior, at meritis minor hoc quoque scribe
Ludere, prælia, cunctaque mœnia sponte patere.
Orbis et extrema vidit, et ultima, vir fore natus,
Gentibus, urbibus et dominantibus est dominatus.
Illeque Cyrus? Fama relinquitur. Cæsar obisti.

Thou shalt not be higher than the son of Philip, but shall be written less of achievement than he. He saw the farthest and uttermost ends of the earth, born to be a man, and ruled over nations and cities and kings. And thou, Cyrus? Where art thou? Fame has abandoned thee. And Cæsar? Thou, too, art dead.

STANZA XV.

This stanza seems to be a reflection from the Book of Ecclesiasticus xli. 3, 4, by Joshua Ben-Sirach:

"Be not affrighted at death thy lot; remember them that have been before thee and that came after. This is the lot of all flesh from the Lord. Wherefore dost thou push from thee the ordinance of the Most High? Be it a thousand years, or a hundred, or ten, there is no grievance concerning life among the dead."

Compare Matthew Arnold's fine lines:

Yes, as the son of Thetis said,
I hear thee saying now:
"Greater by far than thee are dead,
Strive not. Die also thou!"

STANZA XVII.

Persius has put this thought with a pithiness which is the despair of the translator, and of course minus the biblical allusion:

Cum lux altera venit
Jam cras hesternum consumpsimus; ecce aliud cras
Egerit hos annos, et semper paulum erit ultra.
Satires V. 67.

When dawns another day
Reflect that yesterday's to-morrow's o'er,
Thus one to-morrow, one to-morrow more,
Have seen long years before them fade away
And still appear no nearer than to-day.
Gifford's translation.

Compare: Les années paraissent longues quand elles sont encore loin de nous; arrivées, elles disparaissent; elles nous échappent en un instant.—Massillon, *Fragment du sermon sur la mort, la brièveté de la vie*, one of the finest monuments of pulpit eloquence in literature.

STANZA XVIII.

Purpura transiit escaque finiit, ultio restat.
Rege coro sata vermibus est data, factaque vermibus.
At claros homines voluerunt se atque potentes,
Ut fundamento stabili fortuna maneret
Et palcidam possent opulenti degere vitam,
Nequiquam quoniam ad summum succedere honorem

Certantes iter infestum fecere viæ,
Et tamen e summo, quasi fulmen, deicit ictos
Invidia interdum contemptim in Tartara tætra;
Ut satius multo jam sit parere quietum
Quam regere imperio res velle et regna tenere.
Ergo regibus occisis subversa jacebit
Pristina majestas soliorum et sceptrâ superba,
Et capitis summi præclarum insigne cruentum,
Sub pedibus vulgi magnum lugebit honorem.
Quod siquis vera vitam ratione gubernet,
Divitiæ grandes homini sunt vivere parce
Æquo animo.

Purple passes and eating comes to an end, but vengeance endures. The flesh that sprang from kings is given to worms — is become worms. Men have wished to be famous and powerful in order that their fortunes might rest on a firm foundation, and that they might by their wealth be able to lead a tranquil life; but in vain, since in their struggle to mount up to the highest dignities they rendered their path one full of danger; and even if they reach it, yet envy, like a thunderbolt, sometimes strikes and dashes men down from the highest point with ignominy into noisome Tartarus; so that far better is it to obey in peace and quiet than to wish to rule with supreme power and be the master of kingdoms. For kings shall be slain and the ancient majesty of thrones and proud sceptres shall be overthrown and laid in the dust, and the glorious badge of the sovereign head bloodstained beneath the feet of the rabble, shall mourn for its high prerogative. Were a man to order his life by the rule of true reason, a frugal substance joined to a contented mind is for him great riches.

STANZA XIX.

With mediæval fondness for redundancy the poet turns this thought and figure over and over, which I have omitted to do in the stanza.

Terrea gloria nunc quasi lilia, cras quasi ventus.
Quid rogo carnea gloria? Quid rosa? Fœnum.
Stat rosa pristina nomine nuda tenemus.
Flos erat, est fîmus ille potissimus illeque fortis;

Vix ibi sportula plena, vel urnula quo prius orbis
 Mane stat aggere, nec mora vespere fertur humatus.
 Qui modo flos *fuit*, in spatio *ruit* unius horæ;
 Mox rapitur, *licet* ingenio *micet* atque decore.

[Notice that these two lines are "leonine hexameters," i.e. hexameters containing rhymes or assonances. For an account of the technique of this form of mediæval verse see Taylor, *The Mediæval Mind*, vol. II, pp. 199-200.]

Laus stat imaginis, umbraque nominis, immo nec
 umbra.
 Proinde licet quot vis vivendo condere sæcla;
 Mors æterna tamen nilo minus, illa manebit,
 Nec minus ille diu jam non erit, ex hodierno
 Lumine qui finem vitæ fecit, et ille,
 Mensibus atque annis qui multis occidit ante.
 Jure igitur pereunt, succumbunt omnia plagis
 Sic igitur magni quoque circum mœnia mundi
 Expugnata dabunt labem putrisque ruinas.
 Ergo rerum inter summam minimamque quid escit?

Earthly glory, like lilies now, to-morrow is as the wind. What is the glory of the flesh? I ask. 'T is earth. Its roses? Grass. The rose of yore exists in name only; mere names we wear. He was a flower and now is slime, that powerful, that brave one. Scarcely would he fill a basket or a little urn who before filled the world. In the morning he stands upon the earth; in the evening he is carried out for burial. That which was but now a blooming flower falls in the space of an hour, and is shortly snatched away, though it flash with the beauty of body and soul. The glory of a statue remains and the shadow of a name. Nay, not even a shadow. You may complete as many generations as you please during your life: none the less, however, will everlasting death await you; and for no less a long time will he be no more in being who, beginning with to-day, has ended his life, than the man who died many months and many years ago. With reason all things perish. So shall the walls of the great world around be stormed and fall to decay and crumbling ruins. Therefore between the sum of things and the least of things what difference?

Ausonius, the best of post-classical Latin poets, sums up in one line a thought which the mediæval ecclesiastic could not help being turgid about:

Una dies aperit, conficit una dies

Idyl xv.

Malherbe, in the beautiful lines of consolation which he wrote to his friend Du Perrier, who had lost a little daughter, exquisitely uses this figure of the rose born to perish so soon.

Mais elle était du monde, où les plus belles choses

Ont le pire destin,

Et, rose, elle a vecu ce que vivent les roses

L'espace d'un matin.

STANZAS XXII-III.

The thought embodied in stanzas xxii-xxiii is clear evidence of the influence of Aristotelian philosophy, as it was metamorphosed through the alembic of the mediæval—especially the Arabic—mind. The scholastics of the early Middle Ages only knew Aristotle as a logician. But in the thirteenth century the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics* became well known, principally through Toledo translations from Arabic into Latin of the abridgements of Avicenna and the commentaries of Averroes. Europe by that time had a complete and systematically developed philosophy. But Averroistic Aristotelianism was at odds with the traditional teachings of the church. It taught that God knew universals, but not particulars; whence it was argued that God had no foreknowledge and was not a providence. Accordingly, if there was no providence governing the world, everything must happen by hazard or destiny, unless some other supernal influence could be adduced. Since the intelligent mind rejects the idea that events happen from mere chance, and Mohammedan Aristotelianism was opposed to the eastern doctrine of fatalism (or destiny), the Arabs concluded that everything was determined by the movement of the stars—and therefore by the intelligence which ordered them. In such a teaching, obviously, there was no room for the church's chastisement of the damned or for the celestial glory of

the saved. The argument was carried further: Since God does not know the world except in universals and not particulars, how could He have created it? Manifestly it is idle to think that the world was created from all eternity and to all eternity. And if not the world, how can the creatures of earth claim immortality? Averroistic Aristotelianism made a profound impression. Many thinkers accepted it with all its implied consequences. There were clerks at Paris who denied the existence of God, the eternity of the universe and the very immortality of the soul. Such were Boethius of Dacia, Siger of Brabant, and Bernard of Nivelles, whose teachings we will find again farther on. Compare what has been said in the introduction.

STANZA XXVI.

The same thought is to be found in John of Salisbury, *Polycrat.* VI. 12, from whom it most certainly was borrowed:

“In qua laborans mundus jam senuit, in qua plus temporis consumptum est quam in acquirendo et regendo orbis consumpserit Cæsarea domus.”

STANZA XXVII.

This is an echo of the piercing inquiry of St. Augustine in his *Confessions*, bk. I, ch. 6, sec. 9: Dic mihi, Deus, utrum jam alicui ætati meæ mortuæ successerit infantia mea: an illa est quam egi intra viscere matris meæ? Nam et de illa est mihi nonnihil indicatum est, et prægnantes ipse vidi feminas. Quid ante hanc etiam, dulcedo mea, Deus meus? Fuine alicubi? aut aliquis? Nam quis mihi dicat ista non habeo; nec pater, nec mater, potuerunt, nec aliorum experimentum, nec memoria.

STANZAS XXVII-IX.

The figure is of a potter's wheel as the symbol of fortune, and the uncertain fashioning of human life. There is a wonderful description of a potter at his task in Ecclesiasticus, “whose manner of working is described in terms which make us regret that the Hebrew original of this passage is not among the

recovered fragments."—Bevan, *Jerusalem under the high priests*, p. 67. Marcus Aurelius says: "The wheel of the world has ever the same motion, upward and downward, from generation to generation." Omar Khayyám's use of the metaphor will occur to all. Cf. Romans xi. 21.

STANZA XXX.

E mare primum homines possent oriri.

"Anaximander, who lived after 600 B.C., held that man was descended from a fish, and that animals only developed legs and other organs after the waters which originally covered the earth had dried up."

Masson, *Lucretius, epicurean and poet*, p. 172 note.

The scientific inquiry of the ancient Greeks far exceeded what is usually thought. Epicurus anticipated the "nerve-storm" of the modern physiologist. Masson, *loc. cit.*, p. 347. Atmospheric pressure and the conservation of energy were also divined, if not understood. "The Darwinian doctrines of evolution, both the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, are closely foreshadowed by him [Lucretius, *De rerum natura*]. The vexed questions of our day as to man's origin and destiny look us in the face again in his poem. . . . Science has now proved that his propositions as to the constitution of matter, in each case, are either certainly true, or else foreshadow the truth. Indeed, its agreement with the results of modern science makes us wonder how the ancient students of nature, who had no means of verifying the observations of the senses through experiment, could have succeeded as they did. Like men walking abroad at night without a lantern, they could take with them no test of experimental inquiry by which to verify their hypothesis; but in spite of all, some faculty enabled them to keep the right path. . . . It was Gassendi who rescued Epicurus' atomic theory from the forgotten science of the old world and revived it as the truest basis for a scientific study of nature. Through Gassendi and his influence both on Newton and on Boyle, as well as on many other minds of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Epicurus' theory has taken firm root in modern

science, and has developed, by stage after stage, into that atomic theory of modern chemistry and, in our own day in particular, in molecular physics. . . . What would Lucretius have said to the spectrum analysis by which the chemist can literally pass beyond the 'flaming ramparts of the world,' and bring us tidings from the distant stars?"—Masson, *loc. cit.*, pp. 76, 81, 83 note. Cf. Tyrrell, *Latin Poetry*, pp. 85-88.

For the detrimental effect of the church upon Greek scientific thought see Hatch, *Influence of Greek ideas and usages upon the Christian church* [Hibbert Lectures], 1890, p. 26 f.

STANZAS XXXI-II.

The thought in these lines was probably less suggested by Genesis i. 2: "And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," than by Vergil's *Georgics* IV. 221:

Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque maris, cælumque profundum.
Through every land God journeys, and across
The ocean wastes and through the depths of heaven.

The psychology embodied here, though written six hundred years ago, agrees with the findings of modern psychological research. "Our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different, . . . No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded. Yet they may determine attitudes though they cannot furnish formulas, and open a region though they fail to give a map."—James, *The varieties of religious experience*, p. 388.

And Benson in his *Life of Fitzgerald*, p. 186, writes: "The most precise and definite religious systems, after all, can only profess to touch the fringe of the deep and perennial mysteries of life. They seem to brighten only the crescent edge of the shadowy orb, and leave the dark tracts unrevealed. The mystery

of pain, of evil, of the future life, of the brevity of existence,—these can not be solved. The utmost that religion can do is to illuminate a few yards of the glimmering pathway.”

STANZAS XXXIII-IV.

Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientium templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.
Quapropter quoniam nil nostro in corpore gazæ
Proficiunt neque nobilitas neque gloria regni,
Quod superest animo quoque nil prodesse putandum.

But nothing is sweeter than to occupy the well-defended serene heights of the wise, built high with learning, from which you may be able to look down on others, and see them wandering and straying in all directions in search of the path of life. Wherefore since neither treasures, nor nobility, nor the glory of a kingdom are of any profit to the body, we must also deem that they are of no profit to the soul.

STANZA XXXV.

This was a popular legend in the Middle Ages and is alluded to by Dante, *Purgatorio*, canto X.

STANZAS XXXVI-VII.

Again I have abridged.

Cur etiam nunc est mortalibus horror,
Qui delubra Dei nova toto suscitât orbi?
Terrarum et festis cogit celebrare diebus?
Profanum. Si certam finem esse viderent
Ærumnarum homines, aliqua ratione valerent
Episcoporum minis obsistere vero.
Nunc ratio nulla est restandi, nulla facultas,
Æternas quoniam pœnas in morte timendum.
Sed metus in vita pœnarum, mens conscia factis,
Nec videt interea qui terminus esse malorum
Possit nec quæ sit pœnarum denique finis
Atque eadem metuit magis hæc ne in morte
gravescant.
Inde metus maculat pœnarum præmia vitæ.

What is the cause of that shuddering awe implanted in the human heart, which at this very time is raising up new churches to God over the whole world, and impels men to throng them on holy days? How immoral! If men saw that there was a fixed limit to the things which beset them they would be able in some way to defy the threatenings of the bishops. As it is, there is no way, no means of resisting, since they all fear everlasting pains after death. The conscience-stricken mind sees not what end there can be of ills, or what limit at last there may be to punishments, and fears lest these very evils will be enhanced after death.

STANZA XXXVIII.

Mortalitatis

Obsurduerunt aures completæ stridore catenæ.
 [A magnificent line borrowed literally from Augustine's *Confessions*, bk. II, ch. 2, sec. 1.]
 Præsulis infula, solvere vincula, vincla tenere,
 Canone respuat, aereque destruit, astruit aere.
 Gratia vendita, gratia tradita vi feritatis;
 Gratia, gratia, quam parit ternaque marca
 Quæ tamen emptio, sacra redemptio fertur earum.

Men have become deaf with mortality's loud-clanking chain. The chasubled bishop refuses to loose bonds and holds bonds tight, according to the canon law, and destroys or builds up for gold. Grace is sold, grace is bestowed through force and fraud. Grace, grace, which is got for a paltry sum of money. Yet this purchase is called their holy redemption.

"The Stoics and the Platonists refused to admit that self-completion could be attained through the sacrifice of another, a view, of course, implicit in the church's doctrine of atonement. Plato waxed indignant over the moral effect of believing that the unjust man can, while retaining all the gains of his injustice, 'square' the gods and circumvent them by some imposing sort of ritual."—Masson, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

Canon Bigg, *The church's task under the Roman Empire*, pref., p. xiv, has said: "They [Stoics and Platonists] would not admit that the undeserved, vol-

untary suffering of one could make another better. Plotinus expressly rejects the idea as immoral. . . . It seemed to him inconceivable that it should be the duty of a good man to give up any portion of his spiritual wealth for the relief of the poor, to make himself worse that others might be better."

Mr. Henry Osborn Taylor, in his history of *The Mediaeval Mind*, vol. II, p. 296, admirably contrasts the ancient and the mediæval Christian thought:

"While neither Plato's inquiry for truth nor Aristotle's catholic search for knowledge was isolated from its bearing on either the conduct or the event of life, nevertheless with them rational inquiry was a final motive, representing in itself that which was most divinely human, and so the best for man. But with the philosophers of the Middle Ages it never was quite so. For the need of salvation had worked in men's blood for generations. And salvation, man's highest good, did not consist in humanly-attained knowledge or in virtue won by human strength; but was divinely mediated, and had to be accepted upon authority."

STANZA XXXIX.

Perque tot ætates hominum, tot tempora et annos,
Cum fortuna lucem quærat, vix invenit usquam.)
Nam etiam tenebris immersum Tartaron atra
In lucem de nocte vocant.

Through all the periods of man's life, all generations, all years, although man seeks ever for light, scarce ever does he find it. For there are those who summon Hell itself into daylight out of black night and the gulf of shadows.

STANZA XL.

Omnis cum in tenebris præsertim vita laboret;
Quamvis ridicula hæc ludibraque esse videmus.
Multi similes nautis projectis ab undis.

For all life is a struggle in the dark to some, although we see that these things are food for laughter and mere mockeries. Many are like sailors cast up by the waves.

STANZA XLV.

Humana ante oculos fœde nunc jam jacet
In terris oppressa gravi sub religione.

For human life lies shamefully grovelling before
our eyes, bowed to the dust beneath the heavy weight
of superstition.

STANZA XLVI.

The poet, like Lucretius, "feels that he has escaped
from superstition as from some gloomy low-vaulted
prison. He has cut his way through the phalanx of
his priestly jailers, and now is in the open."—Masson,
op. cit., p. 410.

I find these sentences in a recent article by Mr.
Bertrand Russell: "It is escape from prison that
gives to some moments and to some thoughts a quality
of infinity, like light breaking through from some
greater world beyond. Sudden beauty in the midst
of strife, uncalculating love, or the night-wind in the
trees, seem to suggest the possibility of a life free
from the conflicts and pettinesses of our every-day
world, a life where there is peace which no misfortune
can disturb."—*Hibbert Journal*, Oct., 1912, p. 48.

One might use the very words of Goethe in this
connection:

Away from the darkened rooms,
Where they grudge you the light of day;
Where men low-bowing in craven fear
To their mis-shapen idols pray.
Of superstitious worshipers
Enough in the years of old. To-day
Have done with portent, myth and ghost—
Leave them all to your teachers gray.
[Gesetz der Trübe, in *Gott und Welt*.]

STANZA XLVII.

Mutat enim mundi naturam totius ætas
Ex alioque alius status excipere omnia debet,
Nel manet ulla sui similis res. Omnia migrant.
Aurea tempora primaque robora, redde, rogamus.

For time changes the face of the whole world, and one condition of things after another necessarily follows in all things. All things move and suffer change. Give back those golden times, we ask, and that pristine strength.

STANZA XLVIII.

Comparo curribus, æquor arantibus arida velis,
Ruraque piscibus, æra navibus, astra camelis,
Candida de nigris, et de candentibus atra,
Quadrata rotundis mutata.

Perhaps these lines were influenced by Lucretius, III. 784-86:

Denique in æthere non arbor, non æquore in alto
Nubes esse queunt nec pisces vivere in arvis
Nec cruor in lignis neque saxis inesse.

STANZA L.

Sed sua pascua non nisi menstrua sunt animarum,
Solaque funera solaque munera primitiarum:
Quid mora? pascitur, est quia dicitur, est sibi pastor.

His fodder is nothing but the purification of souls and the celebration of first fruits. Enough—he feeds, he is, because so called—is to himself, a pastor.

STANZA LIV.

An allusion to the historic claim of St. John Lateran to be “*omnium urbis et orbis ecclesiarum mater et caput*”—the mother and head of the churches of the city [Rome] and of the world.

STANZAS LV-LVII.

I confess to have dealt very freely in the translation with the original, which is a long and turgid invective:

Hæc neque nomine digna, nec ordine ecclesia stat;
Hæc vitis perit, hæc animas gerit irrequietas.
Hæc bona perdidit; hæc genus edidit ore dolosum,
Pectore mobile, re variabile, menta probosum.

Recta perhorruit, ordine corrui, eminet astu.
 Sollicitudine, fraude, libidine, crimine fastu.
 Est sine nomine, nam sine numine, nam sine jure;
 Perdida cladibus est, quia fraudibus, hæ sibi curæ.
 Pontificum status ante fuit ratus integer ante;
 Ille statum dabat, ordine nunc labatille labante.
 Gratia corrui, algor in horruit amplior Istro.
 Pontificum status excidio datus, exstat avarus;
 Sternite, sternite, gutture sospite, pseudomagistri!

O mala secula, venditur infula pontificalis;
 Infula venditur, haud reprehenditur emptio talis.
 Venditur annulus, hinc lucra Romulus auget et urget;
 Est modo mortua Roma superflua; quando resurget?
 Roma superfluit, afflua corrui arida plena;
 Roma dat omnibus omnia dantibus, omnia Romæ;
 Transita vocula longaque fabula persequitur te.
 Roma ruens rota, fœda, satis notat cauteriat te;
 Gurges es altior, arca voracior, alta lacuna.
 Fas mihi scribere, fas mihi dicere—'Roma peristi.'
 Fas mihi dicere, fas mihi scribere—'Roma fuisti.'
 Fas mihi dicere, fas mihi scribere—'Roma ruisti.'

The church is neither worthy of a name nor erect in its place. It is perishing from vice and displays a restless spirit. It has destroyed its blessings and brought forth a brood crafty of speech, fickle of heart, uncertain in affairs, vicious of mind. It shudders at the right, is careless of order, distinguished by guile, soliciting, deceit, lust, arrogance, and guilt. It is without a name being without God and without justice. It is destroyed by disasters because of frauds—these are its care. Lo, a race vicious of speech, impious in character! The place of the pope once was a tower of strength, firm and inviolable. Now it totters as things totter around it. Grace is dead and a cold broods over us wider than the Danube. The high place of the popes is given over to destruction; they have become misers. Spread, spread destruction abroad, while your necks are yet safe, ye false teachers.

O evil age, the chasuble of the pontiff is sold, the chasuble is sold and this commerce goes unrebuked. The ring is sold and hence Romulus increases his

gains. Overflowing Rome is dead now. When will she rise again? Rome overflowed and collapsed in her affluence, withering in her fulness. Rome gives all things to all who give all things to Rome.

A voice that is gone and a distant tale pursue thee.
Rome, thou art a wobbling wheel, a foul enough
mark brands thee,

Thou art a deep whirlpool, a devouring receptacle,
a deep pool.

'Tis right for me to write, to say, 'Thou hast perished.'

'Tis right for me to say, to write, 'Thou wast.'

'Tis right for me to say, to write, 'Thou art fallen.'

STANZA LVIII.

This interesting stanza, enunciating the doctrine of "eternal recurrence" so familiar to readers of Nietzsche, admirably serves to fix the time of the poet. For the doctrine of eternal recurrence was a striking teaching of Siger of Brabant and his school of Averroistic Aristotelians. Siger had a vision of Time truly poetical. He believed in cyclic evolution — that is to say, he believed that the ideas of an epoch, the laws, civilization, religions, would return again to the point of departure. But as the series of variations which formed a cycle were infinitely long, men were unable to perceive the transitions or even to retain the memory of the changes. Nevertheless, he held that these great æons succeeded one another, the long series of evolutions and transitions ultimately getting around in a circle to the beginning again. See Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant*, p. 171.

STANZA LXII.

. . . antiquo more sacrorum
Ecclesia munificat mortalis muta salute,
Quæ bene et eximie quamvis disposita ferantur,
Longe sunt tamen a vera ratione repulsa.
Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur amantque,
Inversis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt,
Veraque constituunt quæ belle tangere possunt
Auris et lepido quæ sunt fucata sonore.

After immemorial ritual the Church, with inexpressible blessing, sifts down her grace upon mortals. All which things, well and beautifully as they are manifested, yet are widely removed from true reason. For fools admire and like all the more things which they perceive to be concealed under involved language, and think things to be true which are glossed over with finely sounding phrases, the sonorous rhythm of which pleases the ear. Cf. Lucretius II. 606-28, description of the gorgeous processional and mysteries of the worship of Magna Mater.

The principle of the æsthetic function in worship, so sharply condemned in these lines, is eloquently set forth by James, *The varieties of religious experience*, pp. 458-60:

"It enriches our bare piety to carry these exalted and mysterious verbal additions just as it enriches a church to have an organ and old brasses, marbles and frescoes and stained windows. Epithets lend an atmosphere and overtones to our devotion. They are like a hymn of praise and service of glory, and may sound the more sublime for being incomprehensible. . . . Although some persons aim most at intellectual purity and simplification, for others *richness* is the supreme imaginative requirement."

Ruskin, *Stones of Venice* [St. Mark's, sec. xx], enumerates the rich "assemblage of those sources of influence which address themselves to the commonest instincts of the human mind: . . . darkness and mystery, confused recesses of buildings, artificial light employed in small quantity, but maintained with a constancy which seems to give it a kind of sacredness, preciousness of material easily comprehended by the vulgar eye, close air loaded with a sweet and peculiar odour associated only with religious services, solemn music and tangible idols or images having popular legends attached to them."

STANZA LXIII.

I have borrowed this last line from Matthew Arnold's famous sonnet, for it quite exactly translates the Latin:

Sed mage pacata posse omnia mente tueri.

STANZA LXV.

Nec vero superstitione tollenda religio tollitur, wrote Cicero, *De divinatione*, II. 72, 148.—“True religion is raised by the destruction of superstition.” The materialism, the grossness, the bigotry, the ignorance—in a word, the superstition which pervaded mediæval faith found one of its strongest manifestations in the veneration of relics. The Iconoclastic Controversy in the eighth century was a revolt against the abuses of the practice. The more intelligent and the deeper spiritual natures of the Middle Age protested in vain against the worship of relics. Guibert de Nogent, born 1053, in the diocese of Beauvais, wrote a famous treatise, *De pignoribus sanctorum*, which he dedicated to Eudes, abbot of St. Symphorian de Beauvais. See Le Franc, *Le traité des reliques de Guibert de Nogent*, in *Etudes du moyen-âge dédiées à Gabriel Monod*, pp. 285-306. Possibly this cry of outraged intelligence of more than a century before him was known to the poet.

STANZA LXVI.

Aurea tempora primaque robora præterierunt;
Aurea gens fuit, et simul hæc ruit, illa ruerunt.
Pristina sæcula non nisi regula nota regabat;
Sæcula pristina non nisi pagina viva docebat.
Quæ modo marmore qualibet arbore templa
struebant;
Quæ sculptibus atria cultibus expoliebant.

The golden age and its primeval strength have gone. Golden the race was, and when it fell they fell. The primitive age governed only by rules that were known. The primitive age taught only from the living page. The temples now built of marble they built of any tree; the halls now adorned with sculpture they adorned with devotion.

STANZA LXVII.

The lines of the original here seem to be an amplification of Horace's line in the *Ars Poetica* [line 309]:
Rem tibi Socraticæ poterunt ostendere chartæ,

and possibly reminiscent of Cicero's "errare mehercule malo cum Platone . . . quam cum istis vera sentire."—*Tusc. Disp.*, I. 17, 39.

STANZA LXIX.

The religious mysticism here reflected was a favorite teaching of the votaries of paganism in the fourth century A.D. and implicit in the belief of Julian.

"The myths are all the expressions of God and of the goodness of God; but they follow the usual method of divine revelation, to wit, mystery, and allegory. The myths state clearly the one tremendous fact that the Gods *are*; that is what Julian cared about and the Christians denied: *what* they are the myths reveal only to those who have understanding."

Sir Gilbert Murray, *Four stages of Greek religion*, p. 158.

The most famous exponent and populizer of the doctrine was Euemerus, a Greek mythographer who lived in the second half of the fourth century B.C. "In a kind of philosophical romance, Euemerus declared that he had sailed to some No-Man's Land, Panchæa, where he found the verity about mythical times engraved on pillars of bronze. This truth he published in the *Sacra Historia* ['Iera' Anagraphé], where he rationalised the fables, averring the gods had been men, and that the myths were exaggerated and distorted records of facts."—Andrew Lang, *Myth, ritual and religion*, I. 15.

The dying paganism of the fourth and fifth centuries believed that "Greek philosophy was the relic of a primeval relation."—Mark Pattison, *Life of Isaac Casaubon*, p. 440. Even Dante leaned somewhat towards this belief. Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century believed that inspiration was relative, not absolute, and so far qualified the current teaching of the absolute and sole divine inspiration of the scriptures by holding that the ancient philosophers had been partially inspired.

"God illuminated their minds," he writes, "to desire and perceive the truths of philosophy. He even

disclosed the truth to them. The study of wisdom may always increase in this life because nothing is perfect in human discoveries. Therefore we later men ought to supplement the defects of the ancients, since we have entered into their labors, through which, unless we are asses, we may be incited to improve upon them. It is a disgrace to keep using merely what has been attained, and never reach further for one's self."—Taylor, *The Mediaeval Mind*, II. p. 492.

"The subtle transcendentalism of the Greek fathers was foreign to Latin Christianity; the characteristics of Roman life as reflected in Roman worship are plainly visible in the Latin fathers. From Minucius Felix onwards, the Christians who wrote in Latin, so far from being imaginative and dreamy, are one and all matter-of-fact; historical, abounding in illustration of life and conduct; ethical rather than speculative; legal in their cast of thought rather than philosophical; rhetorical in their manner of expression rather than fervent or poetical."—W. Warde Fowler, *Roman religious experience*, p. 458.

For the influence of Roman legal and institutional forms on the disappearance of myth, see Harnack, *History of Dogma*, bk. V. ch. 2.

In his *Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche holds a passionate brief for the "master-morality" of ancient paganism. He believes that Christianity, by reason of its authority, its constraint of the spirit, its dogmatism, its institutionalization, has exercised a deterrent and inhibiting influence upon the progress of civilization.

"The world grew older and the dream vanished. . . . For this is the manner in which religions are wont to die out: when, under the stern, intelligent eyes of an orthodox dogmatism, the mythical presuppositions of a religion are systematised as a completed sum of historical events, and when one begins apprehensively to defend the credibility of the myth—when accordingly, the feeling of myth dies out and its place is taken by the claims of religion to historical foundations. . . . A people—and for the rest also a man—is worth just as much only as its ability to impress

on its experiences the seal of eternity. . . . The contrary happens when a people begins to comprehend itself historically and to demolish the mythical bulwarks around it; with which there is usually connected a marked secularization, a breach with the unconscious metaphysics of its earlier existence, in all ethical consequences."—*Birth of Tragedy*, pp. 17, 84, 177.

STANZAS LXXIII-IV.

Ipse vocat nostros animos ad sidera mundus.
Nam cum suspicimus magni cælestia mundi
Templa, super stellisque micantibus æthera fixum,—
Luna dies et nox, et noctis signa severa —
Et venit in mentem solis lunæque viarum,
Tunc aliis oppressa malis in pectora stupor,
Ille quoque expergefatum caput erigere infit
Quod forte Dei nobis immensa potestas
Sit, vario motu quæ candida sidera verset.

The very world calls our minds upward to the stars. When we look up at the celestial temples of the world on high, and see the sun and moon and the stars — the moon and the light of day, and the night with its solemn fires — and note the regularity of their motion, we can hardly avoid the thought that it can only be some infinite and divine power which wheels the bright stars in their varied motion.

The sentiment in these lines is a good example of what has been characterized as "the emotion which is roused by sudden revelations of the infinitudes, the silences and eternities that surround us." Aristotle, Lucretius, Seneca, and Kant use almost the same language in contemplating the heavens. Kant found two things in the world still forever wonderful — "The starry heavens above and the moral law within." Aristotle relates that to the question: What made life worth living? Anaxagoras replied: "Contemplating the heavens and the total order of the Cosmos."

STANZA LXXV.

Hæc ego divino cupiam ad sidera flatu
Ferre, nec in turba nec turbæ carmina condam.
Sed in cœlo noscenda canam mirantibus astra.

I would bear my song with divine measure unto the stars. Not in the crowd nor for the crowd will I build my poem. I shall sing secret things unto the heavens; the stars shall hear me and marvel.

STANZA LXXX.

The phrase is from Ruskin, which I have adopted as a translation of the line

Vita brevis nulli superest quin vita valenda.

STANZA LXXXI.

Walter Pater, *Marius the Epicurean*, vol. I, p. 181, has said: "Religion has been always something to be done, rather than something to be thought or believed or loved."

Both Seneca and Martial express the thought embodied in these stanzas:

Quam bene vivas refert, non quamdiu.—Seneca, *Ep.*, xviii. 2.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita.—Martial, xi. 32, 8.

"Only the present," Marcus Aurelius says over and over, "is ours. Neither the past nor the future are ours to dispose of."

All of them, though, are echoing a saying of Epicurus: "We are born once; twice we cannot be born: for eternity we must be non-existent. Yet thou who art not master of to-morrow, puttest off the right time. The life of all of us is ruined by procrastination, and it is on this account that each of us dies before he is ready."

These two stanzas are clear reflections of the influence of the Neo-Stoic philosophy. The Stoics "found in the progress towards virtue a sufficient end of existence"—a philosophy which has had its modern votaries. Rénan said to his wife when he was dying:

"Be calm and resigned. We undergo the laws of nature, of which we are a manifestation. *We* perish,

we disappear, but heaven and earth remain, and the march of time goes forever forward."

So also Sir Leslie Stephen has written:

"We may comfort ourselves, if comfort be needed, by the reflection that though the memory may be transitory, the good done by a noble life and character may last far beyond any horizon which can be realized by our imagination."—*Forgotten Benefactors* [last sentence].

STANZA LXXXIII.

In the original these lines are very sonorous:

Nec pietas ulla est velatum sæpe videri
Vortier ad lapidem, atque omnes accedere ad aras,
Nec procumbere humi prostratum, et pandere palmas.

Nor does religion consist in showing one's self constantly, with veiled face, before a stone, and approaching all the altars, nor in prostrating one's self on the ground and stretching out open hands towards the sanctuaries.

STANZA LXXXIV.

Perque pedes proprios nascentia carmina surgunt.
Per partes ducenda fides, et singula rerum
Sunt gradibus tradenda suis, ut cum omnia certa
Notitia steterint, proprios revocentur ad usus.
Sic mihi cunctanti tantæ succedere moli
Materies primum rerum, ratione remota.
Omnia quando paulatim crescunt.

By measured steps a poem rises and comes to live. I too must learn line by line, step by step, till all things stand sure in knowledge. Even so I, timidly endeavoring a great labor, must first collect the material of the building, letting wait reason's larger plan. For all things grow gradually.

This is thoroughly Aurelian: "Word upon word, every one by itself, must the things that are spoken

be conceived, and understood. And so the things which are done, purpose after purpose, every one by itself likewise."—Casaubon's translation [VII. 4].

STANZA LXXXVI.

Lovers of Tennyson will at once recognize the source of the first line of this stanza. It quite exactly translates the Latin verse of the mediæval poet:

Expetam et omnia comperiam, nil cedere certus.

STANZA LXXXVIII.

Mors via maxima, mors patet ultima linea rerum;
Mors acies rerum, quisquis mortem effugit
Contempserit; timidum quemque consequitur.

Cf. Quintus Curtius, *De rebus gestis Alexandri*,
IV. 14, 25.

STANZA LXXXIX.

Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, bk. II, ch. 9, hits off this same thought:

"Was it not to preach forth this same Higher that Sages and Martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony through life and through death, of the God-like that is in man, and how, in the God-like only has he strength and freedom."

STANZA XC.

Compare Amos iii. 8: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy"; and Hosea xi. 10: "They shall walk after the Lord, who shall roar like a lion."

The lion is the symbol of strength and truth in both pagan and Christian thought. Who does not remember the lion in Nietzsche: *Thus spake Zarathustra* [pt. I. 1]: "The spirit of the lion saith 'I will'."

STANZA XCII.

Like Euripides in the great transition epoch of Greek thought, the poet is resolved to grope his way to God along the line of reason.

Fato et tempore confectus, fessusque labore,
At tantum, pol, quantum animo contendere possum;
Nam neque decipitur ratio, nec decipit umquam.
Etenim alid ex alio clarescet nec mihi cæca
Nox iter eripiet quin ultima naturæ
Pervideam: ita res accendent lumina rebus.

Though worn by time and fate, and weary through toil, yet will I keep on searching and finding all things to the limit of my power. For reason never deceives nor is deceived. For one thing after another will grow clear, and dark night will not rob me of the road or keep me from examining the ultimate things of life. So old things will light the torch for new things.

Compare this stanza with II. 884 f. of the *Trojan Women*:

Base of the world, and o'er the world enthroned,
Whoe'er thou art, Unknown and hard of surmise,
Cause—Chain of Things or Man's own Reason—God
I give thee worship, who by noiseless paths
Of justice leadest all that breathes and dies.

Murray's translation.

So, in the *Agamemnon*, Æschylus says:

"Zeus, who made for man the road to thought."

This tribute to the power of reason is so purely Greek in character that it must have been derived by the poet from Lucretius.

Hugo of St. Victor was born at Hartingam in Saxony in 1096, and died at the monastery of St. Victor, near Paris, in 1141. He was one of the greatest mystics of the Middle Ages. See Haureau, *Hugues de St. Victor*, Paris, 1859; De Wulf, *History of Philosophy*, sec. 204.

STANZA XCIII.

This figure, comparing spiritual pilgrimage to climbing a high mountain, is to be found in Augustine's *Confessions*, bk. VII [last paragraph]:

Et aliud est de silvestri cacumine videre patriam pacis et iter ad eam noninvenire . . . at aliud tenere viam illuc ducentem.

For it is one thing from the mountain's shaggy summit to see the land of peace and to find no way thither . . . and another to keep on the way that that leads thither.

In both instances, perhaps, the metaphor is referable to Deuteronomy xxxii. 49-50.

