

**THE ORIGIN OF  
EVIL: A  
CELESTIAL DRAMA**

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The Origin of Evil: A Celestial Drama by William Honyman Gillespie

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**WILLIAM HONYMAN GILLESPIE**

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THE  
ORIGIN OF EVIL:  
A  
CELESTIAL DRAMA.

BY  
TER. TISANTHOPE.



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*How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!*

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## THE PREFACE.

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A GENERAL observation as to the flow of Time, in connection with the successive scenes in the "Celestial Drama," may be desirable, as tending to prevent false conceptions on a material point. Time as yet was not in any strict sense, or in the sense in which we speak of Time when man is in view. As yet, no planets—no solar system—nor ought to measure Time by, as we now measure it. No diurnal revolution—no much more prolonged movement of an earth in an elliptic orbit round a central body. Still, there was the very same succession in Duration itself: the measures, or the standards of sequence—these only were not the same. On the contrary, they were exceedingly different. What the Angels had, in a positive way, to guide them in calculating Time, is not so clear. It is certain, however, that, to an Angel's mind, there was *before* and *after*, or the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*. Whether the Angels

measured Duration by the movements of any of the stars,—with which they appear to have been familiar enough; this is by no means evident. But if they had no better standard of successions, they had at least that motion of the fixed stars: and thus they could always count Time, and its flow on and on.

Thus much as to Angelic Time, or Duration in general. As to Time, in particular connection with the Acts and the Scenes of our *Drama*, one remark should be steadily kept in mind. The intervals between the Acts—and possibly between (some, at least, of) the Scenes—may be held to represent long periods; in several instances, even æons. For instance, the interval between the time of Act II. and that of Act III., may be supposed to have been a long one. Again, in one of his speeches, Lucifer, become the Devil, alludes to a circumstance—which *apparently* took place not long before (as we rate elapses of Duration),—alludes to it, we say, as having happened “long time ago”: that is, according to the



celestial, or, at any rate, the infernal method of reckoning. (See Scene V. in Act V.) The same sort of observation is necessary to be remembered in going through the piece.

Another point ought to be carefully kept in view. It relates to the position—*standpoint*, we might call it—of the Angels, and *dramatis personæ* generally. They antedate all Earthly Time, and so all associations taken from, or in connection with, earthly matters. The range, therefore, of subjects, or materials, from which to select comparisons, and figures generally, is exceedingly limited. An Angel, speaking before the foundations of the Earth were laid, could not draw his metaphors, or reflections, or allusions of any kind, from post-mundane objects or events. Hence, great allowance must be made for the author of this piece. Lenient judgments must be passed on him for the paucity of the actually used materials of his storehouse. Let it be weighed that, without a gross violation of consistency, and

all propriety, no reference could be made, by any of the interlocutors, to those quarters to which we are accustomed to repair, as to a perennial fountain, from which to draw the abundant materials of comparing, contrasting, and judging in every way. Set, now, the necessity for such limitation over against the amplitude of the resources open to the writer who has ever in his eye the things furnished by the current *annus mundi*. An exhaustless field is available to the poet, who speaks in his own person as narrator, and whose subject relates, or can be forced to relate, in any mode, to the years, and the transactions, of our own world. England's unrivalled Epic Poet laid Time, and History, and all Nature, and all sources of knowledge whatever, under contribution. But all such possibilities of boundless resource were denied to the author of the *Celestial Drama*, who was not permitted to violate grossly the requirements of Time, and Place, and Person. In short, he needs (and he expects) every indulgent reflection to be exercised, seeing he laboured under so great

disadvantages from the peculiar necessity of his case. He feels assured that this well-founded appeal to the benevolent consideration of his readers will not be disregarded.

In every work there must be a plan, or plot, capable of being discerned, and made the subject of a distinct examination. And much depends on the plan of a composition. If the plan be bad, the piece cannot be perfect in aught but the details, and, as a whole, it must be the subject of an unfavourable verdict. But the plot being faultless, a primary underlying advantage, of great importance, is secured. Whether or no the plot or plan upon which the *Celestial Drama* is constructed be a good one, is not for the author of it to pronounce. But, certain it is, the plan is susceptible of being separately exhibited, and the reader must be regarded as the proper (if he be at all a competent) judge as to the point in question. The following analysis may be thought to represent, with tolerable