

VERSES

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Verses by Sir Robert Rawlinson

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SIR ROBERT RAWLINSON

VERSES

V E R S E S :

Composed and Written

BY

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C.B., 1864; Knight Bachelor, 1885; K.C.B., 1889.

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CREATION.

(FROM "THOUGHTS MEDITATIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE.")

ALMIGHTY GOD!—Eternal, just, and true,—
Grant me a portion of thy spirit's power!
Humbly before thy Throne I stand and sue—
On me an earnest student's faith down shower;
That, ere my transient life pass as a flower
Of frailest texture, blooming for a day,
I may not, shrinking, in this vain life cower,
But, scanning Nature's mysteries, catch a ray
Of thine immortal glories, veil'd from human clay.

Father of Spirits!—holy faith I crave,
In all sincerity to worship thee,
That I may look in life beyond the grave,
From grovelling pride and vanity set free,
And thy great boundless goodness feel and see.
My swelling heart would lift itself to know
The true in Nature;—not false Theory,
Built up of vain imaginings, and so
Causing the Blind to lead the Blind from truth to woe.

" In the beginning " He made Heaven and Earth ;
 Creation, govern'd by the hand of God,
 He will'd, and Systems, smiling, rose to birth,
 Matter was stamp'd and moulded at his nod.
 He stretched forth his all-creating rod,
 And massive Orbs form in their changing spheres ;
 The circling planets adamantine shod,
 Thronged with life-producing life, appear :
 Suns, Worlds, and Comets: having their appointed years.

How dare we say " Nature has hoary grown,"
 When we know nothing of her age or birth ?
 Or speak of her with confidence of tone,
 As first producing Life from sterile dearth,
 In rul'd progression, 'plenshing this Earth,
 Making a Maggot father of the Man ?
 Such speculations prove of nothing worth ;
 They satisfy the one-ey'd Charlatan,
 But fit not with the scheme of God's eternal plan.

Proud reason strives, but ever strives in vain,
 To fathom those deep secrets so profound,
 Mere theorists would make so clear and plain !
 Though to the Angels mysteries abound.
 Pure spirits!—traversing those depths around
 The massive Globes of fire, whose mighty Spheres
 Are points of light to human eyes, the round
 Bright dust of telescopic light appears
 Complete; as Orb on Orb its pond'rous bulk uprears.

In the past scenes of nature, who shall tell,
 What combinations grac'd this verdant Earth?
 Since back old Chaos crept within his cell,
 How many forms harmonious have had birth?
 The chequer'd land has known no sterile dearth.
 The Ocean swarm'd with Life most strange and rare,
 Huge denizens of Earth to prey roam'd forth,
 And mighty Monsters in the deep there were,
 With myriad lesser forms of life—their Maker's care.

Nature, in unity, is ever one:
 An Atom, World, System, or Galaxy,
 Are parts of a great perfect whole, which on,
 From countless ages must wax, wane, and change;
 One universal round of destiny,
 Which law holds all this vast progressing mass
 In change; for naught is permanent we see,
 Or feel, or know; but change, and change, alas!
 Brings Worlds to certain death, as Time's great shadows
 pass.

This Planet lives in beauty, strong and fair,
 Though nought is permanent, we touch or see:
 "The everlasting Hills," and Rocks, are heir,
 To onward change. Nature's great destiny
 Sweeps its broad wing o'er all. There's nothing free
 From death. A sparrow falls,—but not by chance.
 The God who made its little life to be,
 Looks at all nature with a single glance:
 The least escapeth not his care and sustenance.

What is that power mysterious, called Life!
Go ask the Chemist! Can he tell you? No!
Its absence loosens Nature into strife
With forms harmonious. They fade: and so
The majesty of pride is brought full low.
The records of all Nature speak of Death,
Sweeping his icy hand o'er all below.
The great Creator will'd it! and he saith
It is the gate of life to all of human breath.

Have you not seen that tender plant which blows
And perishes of age within a day?
Or the ephemera, which waking, throws
Its feeble life off in an hour? They say
This World's duration is but as a ray,—
A point of time,—a second of that hour
Which sure and certain marks the onward way
Of all things: nothing to escape hath power:
Cycles of ages pass, as doth an April shower.

THE OCEAN.

(FROM "THOUGHTS MEDITATIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE.")

DREAD, mighty Ocean, early born of time,
 Nothing is fixed and permanent with thee :
 To waste and mould has been thy play sublime.
 Fretting thy shores, thou dashest wild and free,
 And this while time may last thy task shall be.
 Grave of dead Worlds ! thou also givest birth,
 When the Almighty sends forth His decree,
 To other lands and shores. Thou knowest no death
 Of change. Cradle of life ! thou nourishest the Earth.

Old Ocean ! who shall read aright thy page
 In aught but as relates to thee ? Thy seal
 Is stamp'd o'er all the Earth ; but in thy age
 The wreck of Worlds is all thou wilt reveal.
 This peopled Earth thou put'st through thy ordeal,
 And razest out the fairest lines of life
 In jealousy, as onward thou dost steal
 Over the verdant lawn, in beauty rife,
 Subjecting all of nature to thy restless strife.