The Christian Philosopher, Or, the Connection of Science and Philosophy with Religion

Dick Thomas
Title: The Christian Philosopher, Or, the Connection of Science and Philosophy with Religion

Author: Dick Thomas
THE

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER

OR,

THE CONNECTION OF

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

WITH

RELIGION.

BY THOMAS DICK,

AUTHOR OF A VARIETY OF LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATIONS
IN NICHOLSON'S PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, THE ANNALS
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EXPLANATION OF THE ENGRAVING.

(Fronting the Title.)

The five figures on the upper part of the plate, marked 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. represent the planets Herschel, Saturn, Jupiter, the Earth, and Moon, in their respective sizes and proportions; together with telescopic views of the belts and rings of Saturn, and the belts of Jupiter. The two figures immediately below, marked 5 and 6, are intended to illustrate the description given of the eye, pp. 88—104. Fig. 5 represents a front view of the human eye. Fig. 6 represents a section of it, exhibiting the three coats and the three humors of which it is composed. Fig. 7 represents a rude view of the appearance which the rings and moons of Saturn will exhibit, in certain cases, as beheld from a point 20 or 30 degrees north from his equator—see pp. 187, 188. The shade on the upper part of the rings represents the shadow of the body of Saturn, as it appears upon the rings about midnight.
TO

DAVID BREWSTER, LL. D.

Fellow of the Royal Society of London; Secretary to the Royal Society of Edinburgh; Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy; Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences; Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Lyons, &c. &c.

THIS VOLUME,

Intended to illustrate the connection of science and philosophy with religion, and with the moral improvement of mankind, is inscribed, as a testimony of respect for the acquisitions which science has derived from his philosophical discoveries and literary labours, by his most obedient, and humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.
PREFACE

TO THIS EDITION.

The following pages were written under the impression that the visible manifestations of the attributes of the Deity are too frequently overlooked by Christians in their views of the great objects of Religion, and in the worship they offer to the Father of their spirits; and are intended to show, that the Teachers of Religion, in imparting instruction either to the old or to the young, ought to embrace a wider range of illustration, in reference to Divine subjects, than that to which they are usually confined.

Throughout the whole of the discussions contained in this work, the Author has pursued his own train of thought; and, in so doing, he trusts that he has been enabled to render some of his illustrations more interesting to the young and untutored mind than if he had adhered rigidly to the sentiments of others, and to the technical language of science. The sketches of the different sciences are not mere extracts, or compilations, but are, for the most part, original composition—in which it has been his main object to embody as many facts as his limits would permit—in order to excite the inquiring mind to further investigations into the different departments of physical science.

It is presumed, that no Christian reader will for once imagine, that the views illustrated in this work are intended to be substituted in place of the peculiar revelations of the Bible. The object of the volume is to illustrate the harmony which subsists between the system of Nature and the system of Revelation; and to show, that the manifestations of God in the material universe ought to be blended with our views of the facts and doctrines recorded in the volume of Inspiration.

It is taken for granted, throughout the whole range of the following illustrations, that the Scriptures contain a
Revelation from Heaven; and, under a firm belief of this
important truth, the Author has embellished his work with
frequent quotations from the energetic and sublime lan-
guage of this Sacred Book. It would, therefore, be unfair
in any critic, who entertains doubts on this point, to find
fault with such quotations, or with the allusions to Bible-
phraseology which occur, unless they can be shown to be
introduced without judgment or discrimination.

The Author has carefully revised every portion of the
present edition, and introduced a variety of corrections and
modifications. He has likewise introduced additional mat-
ter, to the extent of between 40 and 50 pages, and also
several illustrative engravings. In its present form, the
Author trusts, that, independently of the moral reflections
it contains, it will be found to comprise popular descrip-
tions of a greater number of scientific facts than is to be
found in any other volume of the same size.

Various topics, originally intended to be illustrated, have
been unavoidably omitted. Some of these are stated in the
last paragraph of Chapter IV, the illustration of which, in
combination with other kindred topics, would fill a volume
of nearly the same size as the present. This subject (for
which the author has abundance of materials) will be pro-
scribed in another volume, under the title of The Philo-
osophy of Religion; and will comprise, among many
other subjects of discussion, illustrations of the moral rela-
tion of intelligent beings to their Creator, and to one an-
other—the physical and rational grounds of those moral
laws which the Deity has promulgated—the views which
science affords of the incessant energies of Creating Power,
and of the grand and multifarious objects over which
Divine Providence presides—the relation of science to a
future state, and of the aids which the discoveries of science
afford, for enabling us to form a conception of the perpetual
improvement of the celestial inhabitants in knowledge and
felicity. These subjects will be illustrated by a variety of
interesting details of facts, in relation to the system of
nature, the history of nations, and the moral state of Chris-
tian and general society.
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—Recommended by the Sacred writers.