

cannot admit of degrees, to be made to meet with and shade into the *mortality* which, let us extend the term of previous vitality as we may, must for ever involve the antagonistic idea of final annihilation and the ceasing to be ?

At length creation receives its deputed monarch. For, moulded by God's own finger, and in God's own likeness, man enters upon the scene, an exquisite creature, rich in native faculty, pregnant with the yet undeveloped seeds of all wisdom and knowledge, tender of heart and pure of spirit, formed to hold high communion with his Creator, and to breathe abroad his soul in sympathy over all that the Creator had made. And yet, left to the freedom of his own will, there is a weakness in the flesh that betrays his earthly lineage. It is into the dust of the ground that the living soul has been breathed. The son of the soil, who, like the inferior animals, his subjects, sleeps and wakes, and can feel thirst and hunger, and the weariness of toil, and the sweets of rest, and who comes under the general law, "increase and multiply," promulgated of old to them, stands less firmly than the immaterial spirits stood of old ; and yet even they rebelled against Heaven, and fell. There awakes a grim hope in the sullen lord of the first revolt. Ages beyond tale or reckoning has this temple of creation been in building. Long have its mute prophecies, in fishes and in creeping things, in bird and in beast, told of coming man, its final object and end. And now there needeth but one blow, and the whole edifice is destroyed, God's purposes marred and frustrated, and this new favourite of earth dashed back to the dust out of which he was created, and brought, like the old extinct races, under the eternal law of death. Armed with the experience in evil of unsummed ages, the Tempter plies his work : nor is it to low or ignoble appetites that he appeals : it is to the newly-formed creature's thirst for knowledge ; it is to his love stronger than death. The wiles of the Old