

and moon performed their journeys, chased through the sky by ravenous wolves, that ever sought to devour them. Such was the wild dream of our Scandinavian ancestors,—a dream, however, that occupied as prominent a place in their Edda as any of their other religious beliefs, and which, with the first dawn of science, would not only have fallen itself, but would have also dragged down the others along with it.

Now this physical department has ever proved the vulnerable portion of false religions,—the portion which, if I may use the metaphor, their originators could not dip in the infernal river. The ability of drawing the line, in the early and ignorant ages of the world, between what man can of himself discover and what he cannot, is an ability which man cannot possibly possess. The ancient Chaldeans, who first watched the motions of the planets, could not possibly have foreseen, that while on the one hand men would be one day able of themselves to measure and weigh these bodies, and to determine their distances from the earth and from each other, men might never be able of themselves to demonstrate the fact of their authorship, or to discover the true character of their Author. Nay, if they could have at all thought on the subject, the latter would have seemed to them by much the simpler discovery of the two. To know at such a time what was in reality discoverable and what was not, would be to know by anticipation what is not yet known,—the limits of all human knowledge. It would be to trace a line non-existent at the period, and untraceable, in the nature of things, until the history of the human race shall be completed. It was held by even the sagacious Socrates, that men cannot arrive at any certainty in questions respecting the form or motion of the earth, or the mechanism of the heavens ; and so he set himself to elucidate what he deemed much simpler matters,—to prove, for instance, as we find in the Phedon, that human souls existed ere they came to inhabit their mortal bodies,