

We mortals stalk, like horses in a mill,  
 Impassive media of Atomic will.  
 Ye stare ! then truth's broad talisman discern,  
 'Tis Demonstration speaks—attend and learn.

From floating elements in chaos hurled,  
 Self-formed of Atoms sprang the infant world.  
 No great FIRST CAUSE inspired the happy plot ;  
 But all was matter, and no matter what.  
 Atoms, attracted by some law occult,  
 Settling in spheres, the globe was the result.  
 Pure child of Chance, which still directs the ball,  
 As rotatory atoms rise or fall.  
 In æther launched, the peopled bubble floats  
 A mass of particles and confluent motes,  
 So nicely poised that, if one atom flings  
 Its weight away, aloft the planet springs,  
 And wings its course thro' realms of boundless space,  
 Outstripping comets in eccentric race.  
 Add but one atom more, it sinks outright  
 Down to the realms of Tartarus and night.  
 What waters melt or scorching fires consume  
 In different forms their being re-assume ;  
 Hence can no change arise, except in name,  
 For weight and substance ever are the same.

Thus with the flames that from old Drury rise  
 Its elements primeval sought the skies ;  
 There pendulous to wait the happy hour  
 When new attractions should restore their power ;  
 So in this procreant theatre elate  
 Echoes unborn their future life await :  
 Here embryo sounds in æther lie coisecaled,  
 Like words in northern atmosphere congealed ;  
 Here many a foetus-laugh and half-encore  
 Clings to the roof or creeps along the floor.  
 By puffs concipient some in æther flit,  
 And soar in bravos from the thundering pit ;  
 Some forth on ticket nights from tradesman break  
 To mar the actor they design to make ;  
 While some this mortal life abortive miss,  
 Crushed by a groan or strangled by a hiss.  
 So when "dog's meat" re-echoes through the streets,  
 Rush symathetic dogs from their retreats,  
 Beam with bright blaze their supplicating eyes,  
 Sink their hind legs, ascend their joyful cries ;