

"Frantic Chance!" The contemplation is a terrible one, that we may be poor helpless orphans tossed on the boisterous and uncertain sea of chance, with no compass to steer by, no pilot to guide, and no chart of the ocean on which we are drifting so recklessly and so mercilessly. Looking at the bare possibility of such a state of things we are led to cry out in the language of Wordsworth:

Great God! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
So that, standing on some pleasant lea,
I might have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.

But the question before us is whether this unlovely system be true or false. And my business is to prove it utterly false, neither conformable to science, reason or philosophy, and opposed to all sound thought.

Theism asserts that there is a God, and as far as I am concerned I do this in the most positive manner. I do not say I think there is a God, or I believe there is a God, but, there is a God, or in other words God exists. The Atheist says there is no God. And do not let me be told here that Atheists do not deny the existence of God, for I can show you if necessary that many of them have done so in the most dogmatic fashion.* The more moderate form of unbelief, however, is content to say that there may be a God, but that sufficient evidence of His existence is not to be had. This is in reality not Atheism, but Agnosticism. Nevertheless it will answer equally well for my purpose on this occasion. Theism is as I will show you capable of furnishing a rational theory of the Universe, harmonious and complete as a whole and therefore satisfactory from a philosophic standpoint, and we demand of Atheism that it shall do the same, and if it fail, as it most assuredly will, then we must pronounce it unphilosophic and false. You will find as a rule that the Atheist will take refuge behind a negation, saying that as he affirms nothing he cannot be expected to prove a negative, and hence by this means he seeks to avoid all argu-

*Vide Appendix A.