

cuted for treason ; yet, while many who had not offended to half the extent were banished to the penal colonies—banished for circulating the works of Barker—he, the author and publisher, strange to say, although evincing the most defiant attitude towards his prosecutors, came off scot free. We cannot make our review so interesting and readable as we could if we were to go into minute details and particulars, which our narrow limits will not admit of.

My purpose in writing this article is to make what occurred to this strong and active-minded man admonitory to others. In doing which I will let him give his own account of his dreary experience of the effects of atheism, in the first place ; and in the second, the bright prospects and ravishing discoveries which a return to Christianity imparted.

Hear him with regard to the former : “ I had reached a sad extreme ; I had lost all trust in a fatherly God, and all hope of a better life. I had come near to the horrors of utter atheism. The universe was an appalling and inexplicable mystery. The world was a dreary habitation, life a weary affair ; and there were times when I wished I had never been born. Life had come to be a burden rather than a blessing, and there were seasons when the dark suggestion came to throw it down.

“ On one occasion a financial panic almost destroyed the value of my property, and put an end to my income. I could once have said, ‘ Although the fig tree shall not blossom, nor shall fruit be on the vines ; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat ; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall ; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.’ But now I had *no* God. The universe had no great fatherly Ruler. The affairs of men were governed by chance, or a hard, grinding necessity : and all good ground for hope and cheerful trust had given place to fear and doubt and sad uncertainty.

“ My youngest son was taken ill—racked with excruciating pain. It seemed as if the agony would drive him to distraction, or cut short his days. And there I stood, watching his agony and distracted with his cries, unable to utter a whisper of a gracious Providence, or to offer up a prayer for help or deliverance.

“ I was called to attend the funeral of a child. The parents were in great distress, and I was anxious to speak to them a word of comfort ; but doubt and unbelief had left me no such word to speak. I remembered a day when I could have said, ‘ Of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ But the happy day was gone, and I was dumb in the presence of the mourners.