

Tennyson expresses this :

"For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers
"Where Truth in closest words shall fail
"When Truth embodied in a tale
"Shall enter in at lowly doors."

More particularly is it necessary to realize this when dealing with new or complex problems. In such cases the mind is forced to project itself into regions which at first can only be covered by vague conjectures or loose generalizations. It is not wise to measure the worth of these, merely by their accuracy of definition, but rather a certain value should be assigned to even the crudest effort of the imagination,—for so understanding is gained. As illustrative of this will our matter-of-fact friend follow me in thought for a few moments.

There are few words in more common use today than that of "electricity." It is derived, as he knows, from the Greek word *ἤλεκτρον*—amber, the first electrical phenomena having been observed in connection with this substance. How came the Greeks to give that particular name to amber? This takes us back to a very old story, according to which Phaeton persuaded his father Helios to permit him to drive his chariot across the sky. Having won his consent he set out upon his journey but soon lost control of his horses and, driving too near the earth, scorched it. Mountains were set on fire, rivers and seas dried up, Lybia became a desert and the inhabitants of Æthiopia were blackened by the heat. To save the earth from absolute destruction Zeus hurled him from the chariot with a thunder-bolt. His dead body fell to earth into the river Eridanus. His disconsolate sisters were turned into poplar trees along its banks, and their tears became amber.

What thinks he of such statements as these? That they are arrant nonsense? They may indeed seem so. When first made acquainted with these myths our dominant thought was naturally one of wonder that rational men and women could ever have constructed such improbable and often objectionable tales. But, we are beginning to realize, that in some forms of nonsense there may be embodied an appreciable perception of truth. In the first place we must not assume that they are as senseless as we may be tempted to consider them. Did they serve no useful purpose and possess no veritable significance when they were first told and in the telling enslaved the attention and gained the assent of their hearers? We can only imperfectly project ourselves backward to the time when our ancestors framed them. When they conceived of everything about them, even the most abstract phenomena, such as the heat of the sun, the light of