

and Mohammedism, were first made known through the various Caucasian branches. The race has not only been chosen, in the providence of God, as the fittest for receiving and disseminating his eternal truths, but it has also given rise to all other religious creeds which rest on a moral and philosophical basis. It has developed government, laws, arts, sciences, languages, literature, has discovered and subjugated the latent forces of nature, has gone often beyond the earth, and measured the stars in their courses, and only paused on the brink of that awful infinity which is the veil covering the countenance of God.

#### THE LAST ENEMY.

Death is the disturber of every man's felicity; an ugly shadow that darkens the brightest noon; a frost that defies swaddling cloths and the glow of summer. It is the great horror of every fancy, the great agony of every heart. A pitiless, pursuing, tireless and unsated hungerer, whose maw expands as it feeds, and whose thirst grows with the rush of the fountain that slakes it. A discord shuffling between all our harmonies; a cloud black and baneful in the sky; a wind bitter and fierce over the waters; a thick, slimy mist in the air, and a sand-waste on the earth, wherever we turn. No submission for bribe, no flattery nor ovation, no prayer nor threatening can avert him. He knows no time, no ceremony, no fear and no remorse. The king and the beggar, the rich and the poor, the tyrant and the slave, have his favor alike. Sleepers on velvet cushions, in dungeons, and upon the rack, clamor the roll-call of death. He carries a lantern, whose taper wick is fed by the light of souls struggling through pale faces toward eternity. He is in the air, in the earth, in the sea, on the gleam of the sword, and in the foam that sparkles the rim of the wine-cup! The winged Mercury of all "leprous distillments"—poison, murder, plague and famine. The extinction of races is his inheritance, the wail of the world his music, its agony his banquet. He has his pastime strangling infants, idiots, dwarf and grown men, but his holidays

are held on battle-fields, in massacres, and he delights in inquisitions, heads-men's blocks, and fandangoes under the gallows.

Death is the genius of graveyards, the god of worms. He snatches the king from his crown, the victor from his wreath, the judge from his ermine, and the bishop from his mitre. The hearth is made desolate by him, and the altar reft of its worshippers. Lovers, parents and children, and friends are parted at his nod. Even the poor miser, who has pined and suffered a lifetime, he robs from his gold. There is no expectancy he will not cut off, no honour he leaves undisputed, no seal unbroken. He envies even the fool the carriage of his carcass. Yet death has some good points. His indiscriminacy is not without merit. He takes the whip from the tyrant, and the chain from the oppressed. He relieves the beggar of his rags, the sufferer of his pain, and the weeper of his grief. He opens dungeon doors, breaks down prison walls, and lets the captive go free. He is the avenger of innocence, the protector of weakness, and the rebuker of injustice. He teaches the peasant the true value of his fields, the merchant of his goods, the money-lender of his gold. He rights the wrong, wipes out the distinctions of blood, and proves the equality of men.

Death is a sterling Democrat, a leveler, without stint or measure, and withal a righteous, impartial, and unflinching judge. He stands by to ward off dishonor, the lash, and all worse infirmities and inflictions than himself. While he is a tyrant, he is also a drudge and a slave. We can force our burdens upon him, and he cannot escape. He is bound to serve the beggar as well as the prince. He cannot choose a moment's leisure, but round and round, with wain cheeks, pursues his task, the pack-horse of mankind. He feels no ferocity, for he has no will—commits no atrocity, because he is a tool. His office is negative, his term bounded, his end annihilation. Death is no grim gaunt fiend. He saves as many buds as he blights flowers, and he does either from obedience rather than instinct. Why should we fear him more than any other servant of God?