

lasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."* It would seem that there could hardly be any mistake about the meaning of passages of this kind, wherein the consummation of all things and the immortality of man are so plainly set forth that the greater and more noble Revelation of Christianity seems to be almost anticipated. In Hosea, we have the following, the meaning of which would seem to be tolerably clear: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."† And Malachi sounds the final note of alarm with regard to the "great and terrible day of the Lord," which "shall burn as an oven," "and all that do wickedly shall be stubble," to be burnt up; while to those who fear the name of God "shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings."‡

"Let earth dissolve—yon ponderous orb descend
And grind us into dust—the soul is safe!
The man emerges—mounts above the wreck,
As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre."§

2.—The fact of a belief in a future life amongst the ancient Israelites may be inferred from the practice of necromancy, so common amongst them at the time when the Scriptures were written that special prohibitions were again and again put forth with regard to the custom. The term necromancy means to consult with or practise divination by means of the dead, being derived from νεκρος dead, and μαντις divination. It will be at once apparent to the most superficial reasoner that the practice of applying for advice or information to those who were in the grave and in a state of unconsciousness would be absurd in the extreme. Clearly, therefore, the belief must have prevailed, where this practice existed, that the deceased person was in a condition to receive communications, to understand what was said to him, and to respond. I need not here refer to the numerous passages in Scripture in which this practice is mentioned, but may content myself with simply

* Daniel xii., 2, 3.

† Hosea xiii., 14.

‡ Malachi iv.

§ Dr. Young.