

Ut Sceptrum hoc (dextra sceptrum nam forte gerebat)
 Nunquam fronde levi fundet virgulta neque umbras,
 Cum semel in silvis imo de stirpe recisum.
 Matre caret, posuitque comas et brachia ferro;
 Olim arbos, nunc artificis manus aere decoro
 Inclusit, patribusque dedit gestare Latinis,
 Talibus inter se firmabant foedera dictis.
 Aen., lib. xii., ver. 206-12.

Even as this royal Sceptre (for he bore
 A scepter in his hand) shall never more
 Shoot out in branches, or renew the birth;
 An orphan now, cut from the mother earth
 By the keen axe, dishonor'd of its hair,
 And cased in brass, for Latian kings to bear.
 And thus in public view the peace was tied
 With solemn vows, and sworn on either side.
 Dryden.

When the circumstance of the rod or scepter being used anciently in this way, and the absolute impossibility of its reviviscence so strongly appealed to, is considered, it appears to have been a very proper instrument for the present occasion, for the change that passed on it must be acknowledged as an immediate and incontestable miracle.

Verse 12

Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish - *x'x*xçx x•* (gavaenu) signifies not so much to die simply, as to feel an extreme difficulty of breathing, which, producing suffocation, ends at last in death. See the folly and extravagance of this sinful people. At first, every person might come near to God, for all, they thought, were sufficiently holy, and every way qualified to minister in holy things. Now, no one, in their apprehension, can come near to the tabernacle without being consumed, Numbers 17:13. In both cases they were wrong; some there were who might approach, others there were who might not. God had put the difference. His decision should have been final with them; but sinners are ever running into extremes.