

Modern Science Meets the Canon

Post by "Cassius" of June 3, 2019 at 5:11 PM

Yes that is what I am thinking Joshua. And in what I read of Frances Wright's personal history, she was definitely a "Doer" and a "reformer" as much as a "thinker" and those characteristics strike me as more transcendentalist than Epicurean. So I am thinking that she may have happily attached her name to a book that someone else was too afraid to publish (especially in England) under their own name.

In fact there is an aside within AFDIA where the author takes to task a particular English professor for essentially embracing Epicurean ideas but denouncing Epicurus himself, and pointing out how hypocritical that was. I sometimes wonder if that isn't itself a link to someone else who was involved in the book.

I've read through the rest of the books of Diogenes Laertius and I can see that most of the details that are in AFDIA could be gained from reading that single book. But the final effect is just so well done, it strikes me as the result of some much older and more mature woman or man.

According to wikipedia AFDIA was released in London in 1822 and if that is correct presumably it was ready for publication maybe a year before that(?) Frances write was born 9/6/1795, so in 1822 she was 27 years old. In fact, wikipedia says she wrote this by age 18!

Is it possible that she was so dynamic that she was able to get all that done? Certainly. But I also see on wikipedia -- "In 1813, when Wright was sixteen, she returned to Scotland to live with her great-uncle, [James Mylne](#), a philosophy professor at Glasgow College." and in fact her father was a correspondent of Adam Smith and a political radical in his own right. She at that time in her life she was moving in a circle of people of whom any or many could have been interested in the same material.

At any rate, just useless speculation, other than to the extent that it leads us to the discovery of other old books on Epicurus which have dropped out of sight but which may still exist somewhere.