

nize the Bible with nature, it is assuredly one of those cases where science must be allowed to modify our exegesis of Scripture. In the view of sound philosophy, such modification at once disarms scepticism of its cavils.

With two remarks of a practical character, I close the discussion of this subject.

First. The history of opinions respecting the Noachian deluge furnishes a salutary lesson to those employed in the examination of analogous subjects. We have seen these opinions assume almost every possible shape; yet, until recently they have all been maintained with the most positive and dogmatic assurance; and each particular theory has been regarded as involving the essence of the Bible, as being the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*, and whoever denied it virtually denied the Bible. But all reasonable and truly scientific men are fast coming to the conclusion, that the deluge has had very little to do with the present configuration of the globe, and that it is doubtful whether any trace of its occurrence will ever be found in nature; so that, on the one hand, all the alarms and denunciations of misguided Christians on this subject might have been spared; and, on the other hand, if the hasty exultation of the infidel, in his supposed discovery of discrepancy between nature and Moses, had been suppressed until the subject was understood, he would not have experienced the mortification of entire defeat.

It is, indeed, very humiliating to human nature to find so many of the wise, the talented, and the religious so confident and zealous, yet so erroneous. But it is a salutary lesson. It shows us the vast importance of being thoroughly acquainted with a subject before we dogmatize upon it. It should not, indeed, discourage us, and produce a universal scepticism on all subjects not admitting a mathematical demonstration; but it should make us cautious in examining the grounds of our conclusions, and modest in maintaining them.

Secondly. It is interesting to observe how, amid all the diversities and fluctuations of opinion on this subject, the Bible has remained unaffected.

The infidel felt confident that the arrows which he drew from this quiver would certainly pierce Christianity to the heart. But they rebounded from her adamant breastplate, blunted and broken; and no one will have the courage to pick them up