

is usually employed in speculating on these phenomena ; and to their speculations they give the form of direct revelation. Thus almost all the false religions of the old world,—not grafted, like Mohammedanism, on the true one,—have their pretended revelations regarding the form, structure, and origin of the earth, the mechanism of the heavens, the electric and meteoric phenomena, and even the arrangement of oceans and continents on the surface of our planet.

The old extinct forms of heathenism,—Etrurian, Egyptian, Phœnician, and Babylonian,—had all their cosmogonies.* In the wild mythology of ancient Scandinavia, of which we find such distinct traces in the languages and superstitions of northern Europe, and which even in our own country continues to give the names of its uncouth deities to the days of our week, there is a strange genesis of not only the heavens and the earth, but of the gods also. It has besides, its scheme of the universe in its great mundane tree of three vast roots,—celestial, terrestrial, and infernal,—which supports the land, the sea, the sky, and all things. The leading religions of the East which still survive, such as Buddhism, Brahminism, and Parseeism, have all their astronomy, geography, meteorology, and geology, existing as component parts of their several systems. Nor have there been wanting ingenious men who, though little tolerant of the various attempts made to reconcile the Mosaic account of creation with the discoveries of modern science, have looked with a favourable eye on the wild science of the false religions, and professed to detect in it at least striking analogies with the deductions of both the geologist and the astronomer. When the sceptical wits of the last century wished to produce, by way of foil, a morality vastly superior, as they said, to that of Chris-

* For a brief but masterly view of these ancient cosmogonies see the Rev. D. Macdonald's "Creation and the Fall." Edinburgh : Constable & Co.