

process of induction, without which no true theory can arise concerning the works of nature, was not at all, or imperfectly followed out.

There has been, moreover, from early times, in consequence, perhaps, of an imperfect apprehension of the nature and object of revealed religion, as compared with the physical truths which are left to the discovery of human reason, a singular propensity to supply the deficiency of philosophical research by arbitrary appeals to the authority of scripture. The danger to religion of such a reckless course is too well understood by the enlightened theologians of this age to render more than a passing remark necessary; though, even in the nineteenth century, it occasionally happens that astronomical truth is questioned, because the scriptures, addressed to an unlearned people, speak popularly of the sun "standing still;" and the established inferences of the successive revolutions in the state of the globe, which are not mentioned by Moses, but which invest with new interest the study of the ancient earth, are thrown aside in favour of some physical and theological absurdity, such as that which makes the stratified crust of the earth the effect of one tumultuous flood, and turns the "fountains of the great deep" into submarine volcanos, or hides a world of waters within the globe.

The mention of these unhappy errors would be painful, could we believe that the progress of pure religion or sound philosophy could be checked by their influence. Let it be remembered that the Bible teaches no physical science, and that philosophy has made little progress in physical truth, if it does not recognise among all the multiform changes of the universe the power and the will of ONE SUPREME. From this highest point of true philosophy, as from a sure foundation, a pure religious faith must spring. Of the importance and independence of physical truth none of the distinguished ornaments of the Christian faith, from St. Augustin to Boyle and Chalmers, have been ignorant; and to their