

were covered.’* It is certain, however, that Scripture often uses general language with a restricted signification. We are told† that ‘Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field.’ If we reflect for a moment, we perceive that this statement, when interpreted according to its letter, involves something like an impossibility ; and what need was there to name any animals beyond those which were to serve man, and form the subject of his discourse ? We are informed that in consequence of the murrain ‘all the cattle of Egypt died ;’ and yet some escaped, for it is afterwards mentioned that, by a subsequent plague, the Lord ‘smote all that was in the field, both man and beast.’‡ When it is averred that ‘all countries,’ we can only understand that some countries ‘came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn ;’§ and a limited portion of the habitable world must be intended by that ‘all the earth’|| which sought to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Within a certain vessel Peter could only see some samples, when he is represented to have seen ‘all manner of four-footed beasts of the

* Gen. vii. 19. † Gen. ii. 20. ‡ Exod. ix. 6, 25.

§ Gen. xli. 57. || 1 Kings iv. 34.