

to the commencement of the Egyptian civil year, and not to the precession of the equinoxes, this fancied discrepancy also vanished : and now, when both biblical interpretation and astronomy are better understood, every one confesses, not only that the science is in harmony with revelation, but that it affords some of the most splendid illustrations of religion to be found in the whole circle of learning.

When, at the beginning of the present century, the great discovery was announced, that the principal part of the solid materials of the earth had been oxidized, or in popular language had been burned, both the baptized and the unbaptized infidel at once declared, that the final destruction of the earth, as described by Peter, was impossible, since it is no longer combustible ; and since the apostle had thus erred, because not acquainted with modern chemistry, the idea of his inspiration must be given up. It was ere long found, however, that the apostle's language had been misunderstood, through the influence of the false opinion, still widely entertained, that to burn a substance is to destroy or annihilate it. But when chemistry showed that combustion only changes the form of substances, and cannot annihilate a particle, the apostle's meaning was found perfectly to correspond to such an idea : and it is now obvious, that he meant to teach simply, that whatever upon or within the earth is combustible, will be burned, and the whole mass of the globe be melted. So that now the tables are completely turned ; and we find, not only no contradiction between his language and chemistry, but a striking proof of its inspired origin, in the fact, that though written when chemistry was not known, it should be found in perfect harmony with the researches of that science. And the same remark may be applied to the whole Scriptures in their relation to all science. The most eagle-eyed sagacity