

acquiesce in any dispiriting prospects of either the present or future destinies of mankind; while, on the other hand, the boundless views of intellectual and moral as well as material relations, which open on him on all hands in the course of these pursuits, the knowledge of the trivial place he occupies in the scale of creation, and the sense continually pressed upon him of his own weakness and incapacity to suspend or modify the slightest movement of the vast machinery he sees in action around him, must effectually convince him that humility of pretension, no less than confidence of hope, is what best becomes his character.

(6.) But while we thus vindicate the study of natural philosophy from a charge at one time formidable from the pertinacity and acrimony with which it was urged, and still occasionally brought forward to the distress and disgust of every well constituted mind, we must take care that the testimony afforded by science to religion, be its extent or value what it may, shall be at least independent, unbiased, and spontaneous. We do not here allude to such reasoners as would make all nature bend to their narrow interpretations of obscure and difficult passages in the sacred writings: such a course might well become the persecutors of Galileo and the other bigots of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but can only be adopted by dreamers in the present age. But, without going these lengths, it is no uncommon thing to find persons earnestly attached to science, and anxious for its promotion, who yet manifest a morbid sensibility on points of this kind,—who exult and applaud when any fact starts up explanatory (as they suppose) of some scriptural allusion, and who feel pained and disappointed when the general course of discovery in any department of science runs wide of the notions with which particular passages in the Bible may have impressed themselves. To persons of such a frame of mind it ought to suffice to remark, on the one hand, that truth can never be opposed to truth, and, on the other, that error is only to be effectually confounded by searching deep and tracing it to its source. . Never-