

any impression : the simple imagery of Scripture is instinct with life, and touches every chord of feeling.

But it not the less plainly follows, that it is our duty to *understand* all such passages in modes which shall be worthy of the dignity of God ; and so to *interpret* them as to deprive the contemners of revelation of a pretext for censuring and rejecting it. Possibly some Christian may say, 'I will not follow this course : I will take the words of Scripture in their immediate and obvious sense, and let difficulties alone, persuaded that all is true and right, however contrary to my understanding.' If this language proceed from piety, I honour its motive ; but I cannot regard the course which it takes as wise and good. If you do indeed resolve to take up the figurative language of Scripture as if it were literally true, look well to yourself. Think what consequences you are plunging into ; what conceptions of the Infinite Majesty you are cherishing in your mind and propagating around you ; what effects they are likely to have upon other persons,—yes, your own children, especially in the well educated and inquiring classes of society ; and what vantage-ground you are surrendering to the impugnors of the Bible, thus giving your aid for undermining the faith of probably the dearest to you in this world.—Know ye not the universal rule of language, that the figurative is always to be explained by the simple ; the obscure by the perspicuous ? Are ye inattentive to the plain declarations of the sacred word, upon the spirituality, the omniscience, the unchangeableness of the One Living and True God ? Or, if ye will not accept of this method of reconciling the apparent discrepance between the two classes of passages, a method fair and reasonable, and consonant to all the use of language ; are you provided with any other ? Are