

you able, upon any better grounds, to protect the faith of the gospel, and to disarm its opponents ?*

Nor ought we to forget, in the pride of our philosophy, that our own best conceptions of God, and our most chastised manners of expression, are likewise formed upon resemblances and analogies. In this way only can we have any conceptions of the Infinite One. The difference between us and the ruder children of nature lies only in the degree.

III. We have now to consider the manner in which this characteristic style of the Scriptures speaks of *natural phenomena*. The field of this kind which it opens for investigation is very extensive ; but we must content ourselves with a small number of instances.

1. With regard to the figure of the Earth, its relation to the heavenly bodies, and its motion or immobility.

So far as I have been able to ascertain, direct information does not occur in the Scriptures, upon these subjects. But there are many passages which, in the way of incidental mention, seem capable of affording us abundant satisfaction. As this is a topic of much interest in itself,

* The Anthropomorphites of the fourth and fifth centuries furnish an example of the danger of adhering to the literal understanding of the passages of the Old Testament which describe the Deity under the analogies of human forms and passions. Upon them, the modern master of Ecclesiastical History, Dr. Neander, (Prof. Theol. Berlin,) has this observation : "The coarse and carnal ideas, which attribute human passions to the Divine Nature, were derived by carnally minded Jews and ignorant Christians, cleaving to the letter, from certain misunderstood passages of the Old Testament. Thus occasion was afforded to Marcion to represent the God of the Old Testament as in reality such a being as those persons had pictured him." (Allgemeine Gesch. d. Chr. Relig. vol. I. p. 968.) There are some unhappy people, in our own times, who maintain that God is really a being having the shape, limbs, and functions, of a man ; the disciples of an Irishman, Alexander Campbell, an emigrant to Virginia. A large account of them is in the American Biblical Repository for Jan. and April, 1839.