

Egypt, and the disinterred relics of Nineveh. Why, then, should not the testimony of science be employed to elucidate the meaning of Scripture, especially when it opens archives a thousand times more ancient, and no less distinct, than those of Egypt and Nineveh? No reasonable philosopher asks that science should be allowed to set aside or modify any thing which God hath spoken, but only that it should be employed to ascertain what he has spoken; for without the aid of science men have sometimes been unable to understand aright the language of Scripture — as in the rising and the setting of the sun, and the immobility of the earth, described in the Bible. Before astronomy had ascertained the earth's true diurnal and annual motions, the scriptural statements were not, and could not be, understood aright. And the same may be true in respect to phenomena dependent upon other sciences.

A second principle of this creed — if it be not too obvious, and too generally acknowledged, to require a formal statement — takes the ground, that as a means of moral reformation and regulation of human affairs philosophy has little power, and is not to be brought into comparison with theology. Both reason and experience have given so many striking illustrations of this truth that it seems strange any should wish to repeat the experiment. But it is done every few years; nay, at all times we find men zealous in advocating some new philosophic scheme for reforming and perfecting human society, whose essential element is something different from the method pointed out in the Bible. The new system may have some principle in common with Christianity; but the author of it relies rather on the differences which he has superadded than on the agreement. Yet what multitudes of such schemes, after an ephemeral excitement, become the byword of the world,