

to be overturned by one or a hundred such blows as have hitherto been aimed against it. The true policy is to wait for a time, to see whether we fully understand the new views, and whether they conflict with the letter or the spirit of revelation. Suppose the theologian should take ground which he is compelled afterwards to abandon, and to fall in with the new discovery. With how bad a grace will he come over to the new ground after severely denouncing as infidels those who adopted it ! How likely to lose the public respect, and to make sceptics of those who were before only indifferent ! How mortifying must it have been to the theologians who, one hundred and fifty years ago, denounced astronomy, to see its discoveries at length introduced into the almanac, and testifying of their bigotry to all classes ! Who can doubt that many a man, in despising them, was led to despise the sacred cause which they were appointed to defend ? Yet the theologians honestly believed that to admit the earth's annual and diurnal revolution would overthrow the Bible. But how much better to have waited a little before avowing their convictions !

How little heed, however, do men give to the mistakes of their predecessors ! The same eagerness and hot haste have been manifested in our own day to rush into the conflict with scientific men, as they have brought out new discoveries apparently unfriendly in their bearing upon revelation. Divines, eager for the onset, have not waited till they could study the subject and understand it, but have rushed upon the foe, confident that by abstractions and denunciation, if by no other weapons, they could crush him. Often have they found themselves in conflict with a windmill, and all they have accomplished has been to make themselves ridiculous, as with fallen crest and trailing plumes they have left the field. A little delay would have taught them that sometimes, at least, the better part of valor is discretion.