

glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work ;" and should not every rational and intelligent creature join in that majestic hymn, in celebrating the praises of the founder of worlds ?

The scenes of nature contribute powerfully to inspire that serenity which heightens their beauties, and is necessary to the full enjoyment of them. By a sacred sympathy, the soul catches the harmony which she contemplates ; and the frame within assimilates itself to that without. In this state of sweet composure, we become susceptible of virtuous impressions from almost every surrounding object. The patient ox is viewed with generous complacency, the guileless sheep with pity ; and the playful lamb with emotions of tenderness and love. We rejoice with the horse in his liberty and exemption from toil, while he ranges at large through enamelled pastures. We are charmed with the song of birds, soothed with the burr of insects, and pleased with the sportive motions of fishes. But a taste for natural beauty is subservient to higher purposes ; the cultivation of it not only refines and humanises, but dignifies and exalts the affections. It elevates them to admiration and love of that Being, who is the grand author of all that is fair, sublime, and good, in the visible creation.

The characters of grandeur and magnificence are so legibly inscribed upon the face of nature, that the most untaught eye cannot fail to read them. Let the great powers of nature be brought into action, and still more sublime and awful appearances rise to our view. Let woods and forests

wave before the stormy winds ; let ocean heave from his extended bed, and roll his threatening billows to the sky ; let volcanoes pour pillars of smoke and melted torrents from their fiery caverns ; let lightnings dart their vivid fires through the sky, whilst thunders roar among the bursting clouds ; what imagination shall remain unimpressed with emotions of admiration, mingled with terror ! Let it now be observed, that the book of nature may be read with peculiar advantage, when we hold in our hand, at the same time, the sacred volume of Divine Revelation, and view it in this highly polished mirror.

Philosophy is no natural enemy to religion ; but a mighty incentive to it, when properly used. We find the inspired writers directing our attention to the works of nature. To illustrate the greatness of his power, our God is represented as measuring the waters in the hollow of his hand, as comprehending the dust of the earth in a measure, and as weighing the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. "The heavens declare his glory" in silent, but forcible language: a language which may be heard and understood throughout all the earth, by men of every colour, and of every tongue. When the prophets would exhibit and illustrate those infinite resources of wisdom and knowledge that guide the conduct of the Eternal Jehovah, they tell us that "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts." To point out in energetic language, and to paint in glowing colours, the mighty efficacy of the