

only feel it at a moderate distance but we shall see the light at a very great one. If we bring our hands by degrees nearer and nearer a body excessively hot, we shall perceive that the heat increases much more in proportion than as the space diminishes; for we may warm ourselves with pleasure at a distance which differs only by a few inches from that at which we should be burnt. Every thing, therefore, appears to indicate, that heat diminishes in a greater ratio than light, in proportion as both are removed from the focus whence they issued.

This might lead us to imagine, that the atoms of light would be very cold when they came to the surface of our atmosphere; but that by traversing the great extent of this transparent mass, they receive a new heat by friction. The infinite velocity with which the particles of light rub against those of the air, must produce a heat so much the stronger as the friction is more multiplied: and it is, probably, for this reason, that the heat of the solar rays is found much stronger in the lower parts of the atmosphere, and that the coldness of the air appears to augment as we are elevated. Perhaps, likewise, as light receives heat only by uniting, a great number of atoms of light is required to constitute a single atom  
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