

cannot be blamed for having adopted that proportion which appears the most plausible from physical reasonings, and at the same time the most probable, as it does not extend too far back the time of the commencement of nature, which we have fixed at 37 or 38,000 years, dating it from the first day.

I nevertheless acknowledge that this time, all considerable as it is, does not appear sufficiently long for certain changes, certain successive alterations, which Natural History demonstrates to have taken place, and which seem to have required a still longer course of centuries; and from which I should be inclined to imagine, that, in reality, this time would be increased perhaps double if every phenomena were completely investigated; but I have confined myself to the least terms, and restrained the limits of time as much as possible, without contradicting facts and experiments.

This theory, perhaps, may be attacked by another objection, which it is right to guard against. It may be told me that I have supposed, after Newton, the heat of boiling water to be three times greater than that of the sun in summer, and iron heated red-hot eight times greater than boiling water, that is, 24 or 25 times greater than that of the actual temperature