

CAUSES OF THESE CONTRADICTIONS.

How then can such opposing facts occur in the results of those who have started with the same first principles to resolve the same problem?

Must it not be that the terms of the problem have not *all* been thoroughly considered; which has left it to this day undetermined, though capable of many solutions, all equally plausible when this or that condition is overlooked; all equally unworthy of adoption when a new condition arises, or when attention is arrested by some well-known but neglected fact.

THE NATURE AND TERMS OF THE PROBLEM.

To quit the language of mathematics, we will say that nearly all the authors of these systems, having only regarded certain difficulties which opposed them more forcibly than others, have solved them in a manner more or less plausible, and have thrown aside others as numerous and important. One, for instance, has only contemplated the difficulty of changing the level of the sea; another, that of dissolving all terrestrial substances in one and the same liquid; a third, that of accounting for the existence of animals in the frigid zone, which he supposed could only live in the torrid zone. Exhausting on these points the whole powers of their imagination, they thought they had effected all in devising a means of answering them. Besides, in neglecting other phenomena, they did not always think of determining precisely the measure and limits of those which they attempted to explain.

This is particularly true in reference to the se-