

From these remarks it follows, that the dimensions of the orbit of the earth are absolutely imperceptible when com-



Constellation Orion.

pared with the distance of the stars ; but astronomy offers us no method by which to determine the distance of the nearest fixed star. To such a nicety have the means in our power been applied, that, had any of the stars yet examined possessed an angle amounting to one second, that is, if the earth's orbit subtended an angle amounting to one second, it must have been detected. But, although we cannot determine the distance of the nearest fixed star, we do know that it cannot so little as 19,200,000,000,000 miles