

nution or increase of heat ; on the one hand, the natural process of animal decomposition arrested by its abstraction, so that the imbedded mammoth remains at this moment in the same state that it was four thousand years ago ; and in which, under the same circumstances, it undoubtedly would be, four thousand or four million years hence ; on the other hand, the possibility of the dissipation of all the constituent parts of matter, or their fixation in the state of glass, resulting from the agency of indefinitely increased heat : or, lastly, let us consider the tremendous effects of condensed electricity in the form of lightning :—and we shall necessarily acknowledge that though in their usual state the constituents of the atmosphere are among the most tranquil agents of nature, yet, when their power is concentrated, they are the most awfully energetic.

In the *mineral kingdom* the most characteristic property of the several species appears to be a disposition to a peculiar mode of mutual attraction among the particles composing the individuals belonging to them ; from which attraction, when exerted under the most favourable circumstances, result that symmetry and regularity of form, to which the term *crystal* has been applied. The transparency and degree of hardness of crystals are various, and depend much upon external circumstances. The form is funda-