

a degree of cold “not greatly inferior to that at which quicksilver becomes solid; and much superior to some degrees of cold which have been produced artificially.”* If such a common temperature do indeed exist throughout space, or at least in our planetary system, it must have no inconsiderable influence upon the temperature of the planets generally; and with respect to our own globe in particular, such a common temperature must operate, by diminishing the intensity of the cold around the poles.

SECTION IV.

Of the Temperature of the Interior of the Earth.

THE attention of philosophers has, for some years past, been a good deal directed to the internal temperature of the earth, at great depths; beyond the influence of the sun, or of any other external cause. From the earliest times, some vague notions of a central heat seem to have existed among mankind; doubtless, arising from their attention being forcibly drawn to the phenomena of volcanoes, and hot springs; but it is not till a comparatively late period, that

* Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy; p. 157.
By Sir J. F. W. Herschel.