and the effect would have been darkness, more or less complete. From the rapid melting also of the snow, on the least exposure to heat and light, we should have been constantly liable to inundations. Thus the whole of the Polar regions of the earth, would have been one dark and dreary void, inaccessible to organic life. But by the present arrangement, all these consequences are obviated. The white snow absorbs a certain portion of light and of heat, (by a beautiful provision more, as the angle of incidence increases?) while so much light is reflected as is useful, and no more.\* Thus the adjustment of the colours of bodies to the circumstances in which they are placed, constitutes an example of the expedients for obviating those minor incongruities necessarily incidental to the primary distribution of heat and light;

• The reader will observe that, under ordinary circumstances, white reflects most, and of course absorbs and radiates least, solar heat and light; but if the above remarks on light be well founded, the absorption of light (and heat?) by white bodies increases with the angle of incidence. Now, as nothing of this sort is known, or can be well conceived to happen, with respect to radiation, the doubt expressed at the beginning of this section arises, viz., whether, under all circumstances, the radiating and absorbing powers of bodies obey similar laws, even as far as the solar rays are concerned. The absorption and radiation of heat of low intensity, and unaccompanied by light, seem to depend more upon the nature of the surface than upon colour. It must be admitted, however, that at present a great deal of obscurity hangs over the whole of this subject.