

we reflect that whenever we cannot judge of an unknown object but by the angle which it forms in the eye, this object is magnified in proportion to its propinquity; and that if it appears at the distance of twenty or thirty paces to be only a few feet high, when advanced within a short space of it, it will seem to be of considerable magnitude. At this the spectator must naturally be astonished and terrified, till he approaches and knows it by feeling; for in the very instant that he has an actual perception of what it is, the tremendous form it assumed to the eye will diminish, and it will appear in no other than its real and absolute form. If, on the other hand, he is afraid to approach it, and flies from the spot with precipitation, the only idea he can have of it will be that of the image which had been formed in his eye; the image of a figure he had seen, gigantic in its size, and horrible in its form. The prejudice with respect to spectres, therefore, originates from Nature, and depend not, as some philosophers have supposed, solely upon the imagination.

When we cannot form an idea of distance, by the knowledge of the intermediate space between us and any particular object, we endeavour to distinguish the form of that object,