

creasing and fading, &c. ; whether any smell of fire was perceptible, and if sulphureous, metallic, or such as would arise merely from substances scorched by the flash, &c. ; whether we felt any shock, stroke, or peculiar sensation, or experienced any strange taste in our mouths.

Then, besides detailing the effects of the stroke, all the circumstances which might in any degree seem likely to attract, produce or modify it, such as the presence of conductors, neighboring objects, the state of the atmosphere, the barometer, thermometer, &c., and the disposition of the clouds, should be noted ; and after all this particularity, the question *how the house came to be struck?* might ultimately depend on the fact that a flash of lightning twenty miles off passed at that particular moment *from the ground to the clouds*, by an effect of what has been termed the returning stroke.

(113.) A writer in the Edinburgh Philosophical Journal* states himself to have been led into a series of investigations on the chemical nature of a peculiar acid, by noticing, accidentally, a bitter taste in a liquid about to be thrown away. Chemistry is full of such incidents.

(114.) In transient phenomena, if the number of particulars be great, and the time to observe them short, we must consult our memory before they have had time to fade, or refresh it by placing ourselves as nearly as possible in the same circumstances again ; go back to the spot, for instance, and try the words of our statement by appeal to all remaining indications, &c. This is most especially necessary where we have not observed ourselves, but only collect and record the observations of others, particularly of illiterate or prejudiced persons, on any rare phenomenon, such as the passing of a great meteor,—the fall of a stone from the sky,—the shock of an earthquake,—an extraordinary hail-storm, &c.

(115.) In all cases which admit of numeration or measurement, it is of the utmost consequence to obtain precise numerical statements, whether in the measure of time, space, or quantity of any kind. To omit this, is,

* Ed. Phil. Journ.. 1819, vol. i. p. 8.