

The power of natural evaporation possessed by the atmosphere is very surprising. From experiments made in Europe, it appears that the quantity of water evaporated from the surface of Great Britain amounts to 32 inches, or 142 thousand millions (141,832,558,752) of tons annually, while the quantity of rain that falls is 36 inches, or 160 thousand millions of tons, (159,561,628,596.) *

In order to prevent universal stagnation and death, it was necessary that the atmospheric elements should be allowed some degree of motion. But the limits of their oscillations must be very narrow, or desolation would follow their movements. And how perfectly is this object accomplished, though seemingly impossible ! for when Eolus has once escaped from his cave, who shall bind him again ? Almighty wisdom and power are alone adequate ; and though occasional ruin follows the elemental strife, yet security is the law, and desolation the infrequent exception.

In advancing to those sciences that relate to the animate part of creation, anatomy and physiology, the first of which treats of the structure, and the latter of the functions, of organized beings, first arrest our attention ; and they so abound with wonders, that the remaining time which your patience will allow me might be all profitably devoted to them. But so many familiar and popular works have been published upon anatomy and physiology, that I may fairly presume every person of good education has some acquaintance with many of the most striking facts in these sciences. Who, for instance, has not some knowledge of the structure of that most exquisite of all organic contrivances the eye ? Who cannot tell something of the mechanism of

* Thomson on Heat and Electricity, p. 267. Turner's Sacred History, Vol. I. p. 32.