

duces principles of a more arbitrary character; and besides the general relations of thought, takes for granted the inventions of previous speculators; such, for instance, as the then commonly received opinions concerning the frame of the world. From the assertion that motion is eternal, proved in the manner just stated, Aristotle proceeds by a curious train of reasoning, to identify this eternal motion with the diurnal motion of the heavens. "There must," he says, "be something which is the First Mover:"⁹ this follows from the relation of causes and effects. Again, "Motion must go on constantly, and, therefore, must be either continuous or successive. Now what is continuous is more properly said to take place *constantly*, than what is successive. Also the continuous is better; but we always suppose that which is better to take place in nature, if it be possible. The motion of the First Mover will, therefore, be continuous, if such an eternal motion be possible." We here see the vague judgment of *better* and *worse* introduced, as that of *natural* and *unnatural* was before, into physical reasonings.

I proceed with Aristotle's argument.¹⁰ "We have now, therefore, to show that there may be an infinite single, continuous motion, and that this is circular." This is, in fact, proved, as may readily be conceived, from the consideration that a body may go on perpetually revolving uniformly in a circle. And thus we have a demonstration, on the principles of this philosophy, that there is and must be a First Mover, revolving eternally with a uniform circular motion.

Though this kind of philosophy may appear too trifling to deserve being dwelt upon, it is important for our purpose so far as to exemplify it, that we may afterwards advance, confident that we have done it no injustice.

I will now pass from the doctrines relating to the motions of the heavens, to those which concern the material elements of the universe. And here it may be remarked that the tendency (of which we are here tracing the development) to extract speculative opinions from the relations of words, must be very natural to man; for the very widely accepted doctrine of the Four Elements which appears to be founded on the opposition of the adjectives *hot* and *cold*, *wet* and *dry*, is much older than Aristotle, and was probably one of the earliest of philosophical dogmas. The great master of this philosophy, however, puts the opinion in a more systematic manner than his predecessors.

⁹ Physic. Ausc. viii. 6. p. 258.

¹⁰ Ib. viii. 8.