

point—has been surmised from very early times ; but until lately, rather as a matter of occasional remark, agreeing on the whole with the general impressions of casual observers, than as a meteorological law of universal applicability. As such, however, it has now taken its place among ascertained facts ; verified by the registered movements of the wind-vane at every station where continuous observation is made ; and connected by the researches of M. Dove with that great fact which underlies so many other phænomena—the rotation of the earth on its axis.* Nothing apparently can be more capricious than the shifting and veering of a weathercock on a gusty day, and to any one who watches its leaps to and fro for a few hours, it may well be a matter of surprise to be told that with anything like a fair exposure, the preponderance of its movement is sure to be in one direction—if not in a week or two, at all events on the long average, and in a great majority of cases before the expiration of a month. Thus it appears from the record kept at the Observatory at Greenwich, in which every change of the wind's direction is noted by a piece of mechanism attached to the vane and traced on a table by a pencil—that in the thirteen years elapsed from the beginning of 1849 to the end of 1861, the vane made 166 complete revolutions more in the direction

* For the reasoning by which this connexion is made, and for the mode in which any casual advance and retreat of a body of air over an extensive but limited tract of country is transformed by this cause into a relative gyration, the reader is referred to the works already cited in a former note.