

All these various exhalations however may be considered as foreign to the constitution of the air, being neither constantly nor necessarily present anywhere; all, with the exception of that aqueous vapour which is continually rising from the surface of the earth, as well as of the ocean and every lake and river. But, in addition to this aqueous vapour, the air is also charged to a variable extent with light and heat and electricity: of which the two first are so obviously adapted to the wants of man as to demand immediate attention. Electricity is probably of equal importance in its relation to man: but the true character of that relation has not yet been sufficiently developed to call for a distinct consideration on the present occasion.

SECT. II.

Light.

The metaphorical expressions of all ages and nations, with respect to light, sufficiently evince the value in which that inestimable gift is held. In the sacred Scriptures indeed, not only are temporal blessings compared to light, and temporal evils to darkness; but holy deeds are frequently described under the character of the former; and unholy deeds under the character of the latter: and, with respect either to classical or oriental literature, a thousand instances might easily be adduced illustrative of the same metaphorical use of the terms in question.