

tion of the right of fishery on a particular coast has sometimes been the occasion of involving the most powerful nations in expensive wars: for these fisheries, at the same time that they are a source of immense riches to individuals, constitute as it were a nursery for the hardiest race of sailors; and thus become of the highest importance in a national point of view.

---

CHAP. X.

*Adaptation of the external World to the Exercise of the Intellectual Faculties of Man.*

SECT. I.

*On the Rise and Progress of Human Knowledge.*

IN the preceding part of this treatise the physical character and condition of man were first considered; and, afterwards, the adaptation of external nature to the supply of his bodily wants. It remains for us to consider the adaptation of the various objects of the material world to the exercise of his intellectual faculties.

But, in contemplating the connexion which exists between the external world and the exercise of the mind of man, who shall attempt to describe the nature and boundaries of that yet unmeasured plain of knowledge, in which man is constantly either intellectually expatiating, or practically exerting himself? who, without wandering into the mazes of metaphysical speculation—always amusing in the pursuit, but never,