

ON
ASTRONOMY
AND
GENERAL PHYSICS.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

Object of the Present Treatise.

THE examination of the material world brings before us a number of things and relations of things which suggest to most minds the belief of a creating and presiding Intelligence. And this impression, which arises with the most vague and superficial consideration of the objects by which we are surrounded, is, we conceive, confirmed and expanded by a more exact and profound study of external nature. Many works have been written at different times with the view of showing how our knowledge of the elements and their operation, of plants and animals and their construction, may serve to nourish and unfold our idea of a Creator and Governor of the world. But though this is the case, a new work on the same subject may still have its use. Our views of the Creator and Governor of the world, as collected from or combined with our views of the world itself, undergo modifications, as we are led by new discoveries, new generalizations, to regard nature in a new light. The conceptions concerning the Deity, his mode of effecting his purposes, the scheme of his