

incessant in its operation, which is absolutely essential to the business of this terrestrial world, according to any notion which we can form. The more any one considers its effects, and the more he will find how universally dependent he is upon it, in every action of his life; resting or moving, dealing with objects of art or of nature, with instruments of enjoyment or of action.

2. Now we have to observe concerning this agent, Friction, that we have no ground for asserting it to be a necessary result of other properties of matter, for instance, of their solidity and coherency. Philosophers have not been able to deduce the laws of friction from the other known properties of matter, nor even to explain what we know experimentally of such laws, (which is not much,) without introducing new hypotheses concerning the surfaces of bodies, &c.—hypotheses which are not supplied us by any other set of phenomena. So far as our knowledge goes, friction is a separate property, and may be conceived to have been bestowed upon matter for particular purposes. How well it answers the purpose of fitting matter for the uses of the daily life of man, we have already seen.

We may make suppositions as to the mode in which friction is connected with the texture of bodies; but little can be gained for philosophy, or for speculation of any kind, by such conjectures respecting unknown connexions. If, on the other hand, we consider this property of friction, and find that it prevails there, and there only, where the general functions, analogies, and relations of the universe require it, we shall probably receive a strong impression that it was introduced into the system of the world *for a purpose*.

3. It is very remarkable that this force, which is thus so efficacious and discharges such important offices in all earthly mechanism, disappears altogether when we turn to the mechanism of the heavens. All motions on the earth soon stop;—a machine