

envelopes nature—grasping and arresting in their course the most subtle of her elements and the swiftest—traversing the regions of boundless space—exploring worlds beyond the solar way—giving out the law which binds the universe in eternal order! He rests, as by an inevitable necessity, upon the contemplation of the great First Cause, and holds it his highest glory to have made the evidence of his existence, and the dispensations of his power and of his wisdom better understood by men.”*

If then it is admitted to be the high and peculiar privilege of our human nature, and a devotional exercise of our most exalted faculties, to extend our thoughts towards Immensity and into Eternity, to gaze on the marvellous Beauty that pervades the material world, and to comprehend that Witness of himself, which the Author of the Universe has set before us in the visible works of his Creation; it is clear that next to the study of those distant worlds which engage the contemplation of the Astronomer, the largest and most sublime subject of physical enquiry which can occupy the mind of Man, and by far the most interesting, from the personal concern we have in it, is the history of the formation and structure of the Planet on which we dwell, of the many and wonderful revolutions through which it has

* Lord Brougham's Discourse of Natural Theology, 1 Ed. p. 194.