

so, than many of the preceding elementary principles:

*Of the noble Metals.*—(48) *Silver*, and (49) *Gold*, and their uses, are too familiar to require enumeration. They are both met with in the metallic state; but silver also occurs mineralized. So unimportant a part do they seem to perform in the economy of nature; that if they were annihilated, it is probable that the world would go on, just as well without them. How different in these respects from iron; and how much less therefore intrinsically valuable! Independently of their beauty; the only really valuable properties of silver and gold, are the difficulty with which they are acted on by heat, and other extraneous agents; properties, which if they were more abundant, would render them well adapted, for a great many useful purposes.

(50) *Platinum*, (51) *Palladium*, (52) *Rhodium*, (53) *Iridium*, and (54) *Osmium*, are metallic substances usually found associated in small quantities, chiefly in certain districts of South America; but recently also, in the old world. Platinum, the most abundant and important of them, is the heaviest body in nature. It is acted on with difficulty by most ordinary agents; but it may be welded by heat—properties which render it exceedingly valuable for many purposes; and make us regret, that it is not more