

tion, are the greater or less extent of the evaporating surface; and the velocity and degree of saturation of the current of air over that surface. But besides these causes of variation, there are other circumstances which probably have great influence on evaporation; some of which are to us of the utmost interest, as being brought more immediately in contact, as it were, with our existence. The chief of these additional circumstances affecting evaporation which we shall notice are; — circumstances incidental to the water which undergoes evaporation; and circumstances incidental to the air into which the water is evaporated.

In speaking of the circumstances incidental to water, we may remark, in the first place, that the condition of the water as ice, does not, so far as is known, affect in the least degree the rate of evaporation, as might be expected. Thus Howard mentions an instance in the month of January, in a certain year, when the vapour, from a circular area of snow five inches in diameter, amounted to 150 grains between sunset and sunrise; and before the next evening, 50 grains more were added to the amount, the gauge having been exposed to a smart breeze on the housetop. Under like circumstances an acre of snow would, in the course of twenty-four hours, evaporate the enormous quantity of 64,000,000 grains of moisture! Even