

in travelling by night, to mistake a bush which is at hand for a tree at a distance, or a tree at a distance for a bush which is at hand. In like manner, if we cannot distinguish objects by their figure we cannot judge of distance or size. In this case a fly, passing with rapidity before our eyes, will appear to be a bird at a considerable distance; and an horse standing in the middle of a plain will appear no bigger than a sheep till we have discovered that it is a horse, and then we shall recognize it to be as large as life.

Whenever, therefore, we find ourselves benighted in an unknown place, where upon account of the darkness no judgment is to be formed of distance, or figures of the objects that may present themselves, we are every moment in danger of being misled with respect to our ideas of such objects. Hence proceeds that internal fear and dread which most men experience from the obscurity of night, and of those strange and hideous spectres and gigantic figures which so many persons tell us they have seen. Though such figures, it is commonly asserted, exist solely in the imagination, yet they may appear literally to the eye, and be in every respect seen as described to us; for when

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