

læ and stars, and the rich vegetable mantle that covers the soil in the climate of palms, can not surely fail to produce on the minds of these laborious observers of nature an impression more imposing and more worthy of the majesty of creation than on those who are unaccustomed to investigate the great mutual relations of phenomena. I can not, therefore, agree with Burke when he says, "it is our ignorance of natural things that causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions."

While the illusion of the senses would make the stars stationary in the vault of heaven, Astronomy, by her aspiring labors, has assigned indefinite bounds to space; and if she have set limits to the great nebula to which our solar system belongs, it has only been to show us in those remote regions of space, which appear to expand in proportion to the increase of our optic powers, islet on islet of scattered nebulae. The feeling of the sublime, so far as it arises from a contemplation of the distance of the stars, of their greatness and physical extent, reflects itself in the feeling of the infinite, which belongs to another sphere of ideas included in the domain of mind. The solemn and imposing impressions excited by this sentiment are owing to the combination of which we have spoken, and to the analogous character of the enjoyment and emotions awakened in us, whether we float on the surface of the great deep, stand on some lonely mountain summit enveloped in the half-transparent vapory vail of the atmosphere, or by the aid of powerful optical instruments scan the regions of space, and see the remote nebulous mass resolve itself into worlds of stars.

The mere accumulation of unconnected observations of details, devoid of generalization of ideas, may doubtlessly have tended to create and foster the deeply-rooted prejudice, that the study of the exact sciences must necessarily chill the feelings, and diminish the nobler enjoyments attendant upon a contemplation of nature. Those who still cherish such erroneous views in the present age, and amid the progress of public opinion, and the advancement of all branches of knowledge, fail in duly appreciating the value of every enlargement of the sphere of intellect, and the importance of the detail of isolated facts in leading us on to general results. The fear of sacrificing the free enjoyment of nature, under the influence of scientific reasoning, is often associated with an apprehension that every mind may not be capable of grasping the truths of the philosophy of nature. It is certainly true that in the midst of the universal fluctuation of phenomena and vital