

son and in every climate, present like enjoyments. Thus, in the dreary regions of the north, man is deprived for a long period of the year of the spectacle presented by the activity of the productive forces of organic nature; and if the mind be directed to one sole class of objects, the most animated narratives of voyages in distant lands will fail to interest and attract us, if they do not touch upon the subjects to which we are most partial.

As the history of nations—if it were always able to trace events to their true causes—might solve the ever-recurring enigma of the oscillations experienced by the alternately progressive and retrograde movement of human society, so might also the physical description of the world, the science of the *Cosmos*, if it were grasped by a powerful intellect, and based upon a knowledge of all the results of discovery up to a given period, succeed in dispelling a portion of the contradictions which, at first sight, appear to arise from the complication of phenomena and the multitude of the perturbations simultaneously manifested.

The knowledge of the laws of nature, whether we can trace them in the alternate ebb and flow of the ocean, in the measured path of comets, or in the mutual attractions of multiple stars, alike increases our sense of the calm of nature, while the chimera so long cherished by the human mind in its early and intuitive contemplations, the belief in a “discord of the elements,” seems gradually to vanish in proportion as science extends her empire. General views lead us habitually to consider each organism as a part of the entire creation, and to recognize in the plant or the animal not merely an isolated species, but a form linked in the chain of being to other forms either living or extinct. They aid us in comprehending the relations that exist between the most recent discoveries and those which have prepared the way for them. Although fixed to one point of space, we eagerly grasp at a knowledge of that which has been observed in different and far-distant regions. We delight in tracking the course of the bold mariner through seas of polar ice, or in following him to the summit of that volcano of the antarctic pole, whose fires may be seen from afar, even at mid-day. It is by an acquaintance with the results of distant voyages that we may learn to comprehend some of the marvels of terrestrial magnetism, and be thus led to appreciate the importance of the establishments of the numerous observatories which in the present day cover both hemispheres, and are designed to note