the term from the Greek word (ἄτμος,) which signifies *vapor*. The *Atmosphere* was so named by the Greeks, as being a sphere of vapor; and, undoubtedly, the most general and important of the phenomena which take place in the air, by which the earth is surrounded, are those in which water, of one *consistence* or other (ice, water, or steam,) is concerned. The knowledge which relates to what takes place in the atmosphere has been called *Meteorology*, in its collective form: but such knowledge is, in fact, composed of parts of many different sciences. And it is useful for our purpose to consider separately those portions of Meteorology which have reference to the laws of aqueous vapor, and these we may include under the term Atmology.

The instruments which have been invented for the purpose of measuring the moisture of the air, that is, the quantity of vapor which exists in it, have been termed *Hygrometers;* and the doctrines on which these instruments depend, and to which they lead, have been called *Hygrometry;* but this term has not been used in quite so extensive a sense as that which we intend to affix to *Atmology*.

In treating of Thermotics, we shall first describe the earlier progress of men's views concerning Conduction, Radiation, and the like, and shall then speak of the more recent corrections and extensions, by which they have been brought nearer to theoretical generality.