

## Astronomical, Chronological, &amp;c.

## A CONTEMPLATIVE VIEW OF THE HEAVENS.

WHEN the shades of night have spread a veil over the azure plains, the firmament discovers to our view its magnificence. The sparkling gems with which it is sown, are so many SUNS, which the ALMIGHTY has suspended in the immense space thereof, to give light and heat to the worlds which roll around them. "The HEAVENS declare the glory of GOD, and the firmament showeth his handy work."

If the view of the celestial system could draw forth such an ejaculation from the ROYAL PSALMIST at his time, what effect ought it to have now. The HEAVENS, as known to THALES and HIPPARCHUS, were but little understood, compared with the discoveries of modern ASTRONOMERS, especially since the invention of *telescopes*.

Crude and uncertain as were the opinions and prognostications of the ancients from their observances of the celestial bodies, yet they had the sanction of many coincident circumstances to justify their conclusions, as to the effects of certain appearances and combinations of the heavenly aspects, connected with the changes that successively occurred in terrestrial affairs. The uniformity of events with appearances among the *constellations* influenced the learned to conclude, that such coincidences must arise from the effects of certain conjunctions and positions of the PLANETS, and of the starry firmament, then visible to their observation; and, therefore, they named the signs, or divisions of the STARS, according to those incidental circumstances.

How vague their calculations must have been will appear from the fact, that several *new comets*, *planets*, and thousands of *fixed stars*, have since been discovered, of whose influences they could have no idea, as they were not aware of the existence of such bodies,

The *stars* discernible in the *signs of the ZODIAC*, by the help of telescopes, are found to be so numerous, as to alter the figure and structure of the whole; and to show how chimerical any hypothesis on that subject must have been—a long time, and even to this day, curious notions were, and still are, entertained among the vulgar, relative to the influence of the MOON upon our GLOBE, its changes of weather, diseases of *body* and *mind*, and regulation of mundane affairs; and though many of those notions have been exploded, much of error and superstition yet remain on this subject.\*

Undoubtedly, in the structure and economy of the UNIVERSE every thing has its use; and each separate part is independent upon the whole, and acts its designed purpose, as a portion of the grand MACHINE, that is to effect the end intended by the Di-

\*See page 11, on the Influence of the Moon on the Weather.