

sions, like the nebulae and comets; speculations which appear to be gradually changing into probable *inferences* by the progress of modern astronomy. For the examination of these obscure bodies, with powerful telescopes, has shown them to be of extremely various characters, so as to offer many points in illustration of the supposed process of condensation and arrangement.

The progress yet made in chemical philosophy is perhaps not such as to enable us to discover the single condition on which the elements, now so firmly united, could exist separately, in a free gaseous expansion; yet, since chemical combinations are known to be subject to temperature, liable to be altered and even reversed with a change of this condition, may we not suggest, as the least improbable view, that the nebulous condition of a planet may be due to intense heat existing among its particles; that, in fact, a great heat prevents their combination, and maintains them *all together* in a gaseous state, as it is known to be capable of doing, for most of them singly, and several of them together? In mixed or combined gases metallic matters are frequently present (as arseniuretted hydrogen), and the atmosphere of our planet is believed by several philosophers to contain so large a proportion of the substances existing in the superficial parts of the globe, as to give origin to the meteoric stones.