

if we are able to establish by physical proofs, that the first fact which the human mind can trace in the history of the heavens is, that '*there was light*, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion, that ere this could take place, 'GOD SAID, *Let there be light.*' " \*

This theory of the condensation of nebular matter into suns and worlds, marvellous as it may appear, will be found on due reflection to offer the only rational explanation of the phenomena observable in the sidereal heavens, and in our own globe; and its beautiful simplicity is in correspondence with the unity of design so manifest throughout the works of the Eternal.

23. GASEOUS STATE OF THE EARTH.—Though an unscientific inquirer may find it difficult to comprehend that our planet once existed in a gaseous state, this difficulty will vanish upon considering the nature of the changes that all the materials of which the earth is composed must constantly undergo. Water offers a familiar example of a substance existing on the surface of the globe, in the separate states of rock, fluid, and vapour; for water consolidated into ice is as much a rock as granite or the adamant, and, as we shall hereafter have occasion to remark, has the power of preserving for an indefinite period the animals and vegetables that may be therein imbedded. Yet, upon an increase of temperature, the glaciers of

\* Professor Whewell.