

and dislocations of its crust which have taken place, and are still going on—all refer to such an origin, and to such a constitution of our planet, as that contemplated by the nebular theory. The elevatory process is not peculiar to the earth; for, as we have elsewhere remarked, Venus, Mercury, the Moon, and perhaps the Sun itself, exhibit evidence of a similar action.\* In a philosophical point of view, the present physical epoch of the earth “is that of the fluidity of water, which is the nebulous bed or stratum last condensed, and which exerts mechanical and chemical action upon the previously consolidated materials.” †

25. METEORITES.—Intimately connected with this division of our subject, is the remarkable fact of the fall of foreign bodies, called meteorites, or meteoric stones, on our earth. The specimen before me, for which I am indebted to my kind and distinguished friend, Professor Silliman, of Yale College, Newhaven, Connecticut, is a fragment of the mass which fell at Nanjenoy, in Maryland, in North America, a few years since. The following description by an eye-witness of its descent, will serve to illustrate the ordinary phenomena which attend the appearance of these mysterious visitors. ‡

“On the 10th of February, between the hours of

\* This subject is treated at large in Mr. De la Beche's “Researches in Theoretical Geology.”

† Dr. Nichol.

‡ American Journal of Science.