but at present we have to observe the exceeding *utility* of water in this shape. We remark how suitable and indispensable to the well-being of the creation it is, that the fluid should possess the property of assuming such a form under such circumstances.

The *moisture* which floats in the atmosphere is of most essential use to vegetable life.* "The leaves of living plants appear to act upon this vapour in its elastic form, and to absorb it. Some vegetables increase in weight from this cause when suspended in the atmosphere and unconnected with the soil, as the house-leek and the aloe. In very intense heats, and when the soil is dry, the life of plants seems to be preserved by the absorbent power of their leaves." It follows from what has already been said, that, with an increasing heat of the atmosphere, an increasing quantity of vapour will rise into it, if supplied from any quarter. Hence it appears that aqueous vapour is most abundant in the atmosphere when it is most needed for the purposes of life; and that when other sources of moisture are cut off, this is most copious.

4. *Clouds* are produced by aqueous vapour when it returns to the state of water. This process is *condensation*, the reverse of evaporation. When vapour exists in the atmosphere, if in any manner the temperature becomes lower than the *constituent temperature*, requisite for the maintenance of the vapoury state, some of the steam will be condensed and will become water. It is in this manner that the curl of steam from the spout of a boiling tea-kettle becomes visible, being cooled down as it rushes to the air. The steam condenses into a fine watery powder, which is carried about by the little aerial currents. Clouds are of the same nature with such curls, the condensation being generally produced when air, charged with aqueous vapour, is mixed with a colder current, or has its temperature diminished in any other manner.

* Loudon, 1219.