

poses we have assigned to the comets, we are happy to have the sanction of the immortal Newton in respect of them.— If we recollect aright, Sir Isaac Newton has said that one of the motions of the heavenly bodies could not be continued without the direct interposition of the Deity; and we have also to add, that a like most important result will follow, if our theory of the sun's formation be ultimately adopted by the scientific world, namely, that we shall have proved the necessity of the existence of a continual and present act of creation of elementary matter by the "Great First Cause," which act of present creation must be totally independent of the existing laws of nature; and we have now to refer the reader of the present edition to the Appendix, containing its extra matter at the end of the work, for our explanation of this important subject.

Since writing the above, I have been favoured with the sight of that most valuable work called *Cosmos*, or a Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe, by Alex. Von Humboldt, from which I am happy to give an extract confirming Arago's discovery of the physical nature of the sun, first noticed in our fourth edition. For this extract, see page 29 of Appendix No. II., sixth edition.

I now conclude the preface to the sixth edition of this work, with my acknowledgements to the Canadian public for the patronage bestowed by them on the former editions; and as our System is now carried out into a more extended sphere, I trust the present edition may be found equally worthy of public favour; and as the following extract from the *Cosmos* contains a powerful display of the advantages of scientific information, I beg leave to present it to the public:—

"I take pleasure in persuading myself that it is possible for scientific subjects to be presented in language grave, dignified, and yet animated, and that those who are able to escape occasionally from the restricted circle of the ordinary duties of life, and regret to find that they have so long remained strangers to nature, may have opened to them access to one of the noblest enjoyments which the activity of the rational faculties can afford to man. The study of general natural knowledge awakens in