

in the form of vapour, only a certain finite quantity of water. When charged to its utmost capacity, evaporation must cease. It is probable the atmosphere is at all times nearly charged to its utmost capacity, because the extent of water, which is the material, and the sun the agent, are constantly the same, and constantly employed in maintaining that utmost charge. The continual changes in the atmosphere, only prove, that an infinitely various distribution of nearly an equal quantity of vapour is taking place, every where and at all times. Some regions of the atmosphere are receiving water, while from other regions it is returning. This is not made less probable by the long continuance of clear weather, since the atmosphere often acquires a condition which refuses evaporation. The long duration of clear, dry weather, at times, when the same causes of evaporation are in force that loaded the atmosphere with vapour, furnishes a sufficient proof. For two, three, or more weeks, the sky often continues calm and clear, and free from dew, beneath a vertical sun. It follows, that at those periods the atmosphere refuses the vapour constantly offered by the action of the sun; or, what seems more probable from the above-recited experiments, the sun, in regard to very large bodies of water, is little employed in evaporation, but chiefly in dilating their volume.

The gentle evaporation that may take place from the oceans does not affect their height. They being co-extensive with the atmosphere, whatever quantities of water the atmosphere may acquire in the form of vapour, by the action of the sun, in some places, are in other places returned into the oceans, directly in the form of rain, or indirect-