

of those portions of my discourses which have been preserved by the industry of certain attentive auditors. With the exception of the first forty pages, the whole of the present work was written, for the first time, in the years 1843 and 1844.

A character of unity, freshness, and animation must, I think, be derived from an association with some definite epoch, where the object of the writer is to delineate the present condition of knowledge and opinions. Since the additions constantly made to the latter give rise to fundamental changes in pre-existing views, my lectures and the *Cosmos* have nothing in common beyond the succession in which the various facts are treated. The first portion of my work contains introductory considerations regarding the diversity in the degrees of enjoyment to be derived from nature, and the knowledge of the laws by which the universe is governed; it also considers the limitation and scientific mode of treating a physical description of the universe, and gives a general picture of nature which contains a view of all the phenomena comprised in the *Cosmos*.

This general picture of nature, which embraces within its wide scope the remotest nebulous spots, and the revolving double stars in the regions of space, no less than the telluric phenomena included under the department of the geography of organic forms (such as plants, animals, and races of men), comprises all that I deem most specially important with regard to the connection existing between generalities and specialities, while it moreover exemplifies, by the form and style of the composition, the mode of treatment pursued in the selection of the results obtained from experimental knowledge. The two succeeding volumes will contain a consideration of the particular means of incitement toward the study of nature (consisting in animated delineations, landscape painting, and the arrangement and cultivation of exotic vegetable forms), of the history of the contemplation of the universe, or the gradual development of the reciprocal action of natural forces constituting one natural whole; and, lastly, of the spe-