

bodies, unfortunately extended to the heads of men and animals; it augmented their passions; it deprived man of his innocence, and the brute creation of part of their intelligence; all creatures, excepting fish, who inhabited a colder element, felt the effects of this heat, became criminal and merited death. It therefore came, and this universal death happened on Wednesday the 28th of November, by a terrible deluge of forty days and forty nights, and was caused by the tail of another comet which encountered the earth in returning from its perihelion.

The tail of a comet is the lightest part of its atmosphere; it is a transparent mist, a subtile vapour, which the heat of the sun exhales from the body of the comet: this vapour, composed of extremely rarefied aqueous and aerial particles, follows the comet when it descends to its perihelion, and precedes it when it re-ascends, so that it is always situated opposite to the sun, as if it sought to be in the shade, and avoid the too great heat of that luminary. The column which this vapour forms is often of an immense length, and the more a comet approaches the sun, the longer and more extended is its tail, and, as many comets descend below the annual orb of the earth, it is not sur-