

many cylinders of water, which fell from the clouds, although by the reflection of the columns which descend, or by the drops which detach themselves from the water they contain, it sometimes seems, especially when we are at some distance, that the water is drawn up from the sea. To render a reason for this phenomena we may suppose that the clouds being collected in one part by opposite winds, they force them by pressing them with violence to condense and descend in this manner."

There still remain many facts to be acquired before we can give a complete explanation of these phenomena; it appears to me, that if there are under the waters of the sea, at particular places, soils mixed with sulphur, bitumen, and minerals, these matters may be inflamed and produce a great quantity of air, which being newly generated and prodigiously rarefied, ascends with rapidity, and may raise these water-spouts from the sea to the sky; so likewise if, by inflammation, the sulphurous matters which a cloud contains, a current of air is formed, which descends perpendicularly from the clouds towards the sea, all its water may follow the current of air, and form a water-spout which will fall from the sky upon
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