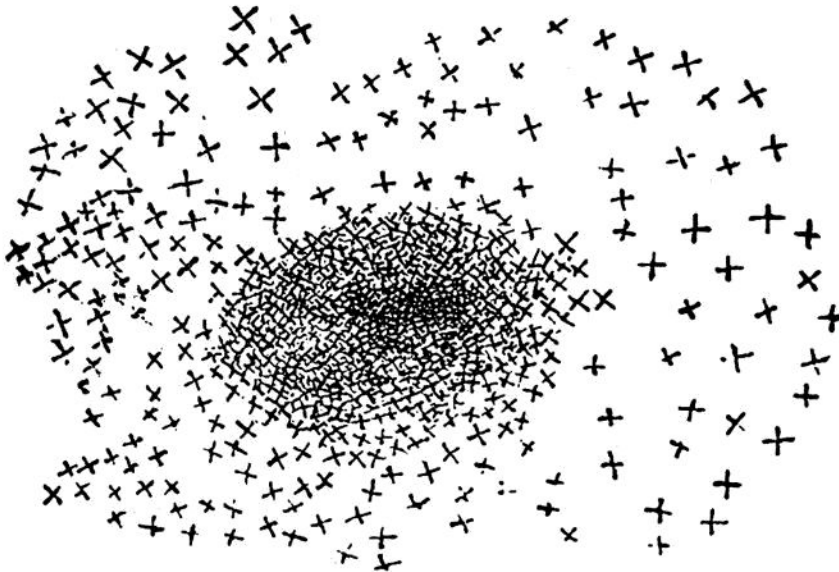


entirely changed, by its proximity to the planets. That which appeared in 1770, revolving in a moderate ellipse, in a period of about five years, passed among the satellites of Jupiter; and was so affected by the planet itself, that it was thrown out of its path, and afterward revolved in a much larger orbit. To the same cause we may often attribute the gradual dissipation of the tail of a comet, and its retardation in its orbit, though, at other times, the latter effect may be attributed to the resistance it suffers in passing through a rare ethereal medium in the regions in which it moves. This cause has been acting upon Encke's comet, the velocity of which has been continually decreasing, and with it consequently the centrifugal force; so that the centripetal force increasing in power, the comet must ultimately fall into the body of the sun if it be not previously dissipated, a circumstance by no means improbable, as it decreases in size at every revolution.

NEBULÆ.

There are appearances in the heavens called *nebulæ*, concerning which we may make a few remarks, although they come less within our objects of inquiry, as they are chiefly telescopic. These *nebulæ* exhibit a variety of appearances, sometimes presenting themselves as globular clusters of stars,



Nebulæ.

and sometimes as diffused nebulosity. Many are, no doubt, stars at so enormous a distance from us that they can only