

mix itself with the warmer air over the water; the moisture in the warmer air is condensed, so as to become mist. Hence the formation of mist differs slightly from that of dew, inasmuch as there is occasionally (not always) an intermixture of air of different temperatures. The reason is thus evident of the fogs and mists so frequently seen over rivers and in valleys; or in other situations, where there is a collection of water. The occurrence of these mists is usually on clear and cold nights,—oftener in autumn, and seldom or never in cloudy weather; the state of the atmosphere having exactly the same influence on these mists, as on the deposition of dew. There cannot be a doubt that these mists, like clouds, produce a great effect in impeding radiation, and in thus mitigating the intensity of cold. Mists are therefore of much importance in the economy of nature. Plants growing in low grounds are by them shielded from the destroying influence of the sudden cold, which would almost certainly be produced, not only by the free radiation of heat in such situations, but by the descent of cold air from the surrounding high grounds.

The fogs which hang over great towns admit of an explanation similar to that of other aqueous fogs. The air of the town being warmer than the air of the surrounding country, and being at the same time charged with moisture nearly to the point of saturation, is, in cold weather, sud-