

Dense mists, or fogs, are frequent in large cities. Those who reside in London are well aware that a winter scarcely, if ever, passes without the occasional appearance of this phenomenon, which is sometimes sufficiently impenetrable to stay the progress of all the enterprise and engagements of the metropolis, though its environs may be at the same time enlivened by an unclouded sky. We have frequently stood upon the hills which surround the mighty city, and command a view of its wide expanse, and have seen it enveloped by a dark cloud, which could only be resembled to that which frequently shrouds a country that has experienced the terrible activity of a volcano. Nor is this confined to London. Fourcroy has described one which, in November, 1797, covered the city of Paris, and was so impenetrable, that men came in contact with each other with torches in their hands, and in Amsterdam, a fog so dense enveloped the city, at the close of the year 1790, that upward of two hundred persons were drowned in the canals, having lost their paths.

M. Defrance states, that these fogs, which usually occur in winter, are to be attributed to the fall of vapours, or, rather, to descending atmospheric currents, which prevent the ascent of smoke. This is a simple, and probably an accurate explanation of the origin of those dense fogs which sometimes hang over large cities.

It is interesting to trace the varied effects of a physical agent, governed or directed by the constitution of the substance upon which it acts, or the circumstances by which it is affected. From the very casual examination of that principle called caloric, which we have made, the reader must have been impressed with this fact. Many of its operations, and phenomena known to be occasioned by its agency, cannot always be accounted for by any of the principles of action which regulate its movements and influence. The science of heat is intimately connected with that of meteorology, but they are both in an imperfect state, and offer tempting inducements to the persevering investigator.