

large fire-ball, which moved from S.E. to N.W., was seen at one o'clock in the afternoon at Alençon, Falaise, and Caen, while the sky was quite clear. Some moments afterward there was heard near Aigle (Dép. de L'Orne) an explosion in a small, dark, almost motionless cloud, lasting for five or six minutes, which was followed three or four times by a noise like a cannon and a rattle of muskets, mixed with a number of drums. At each explosion, parts of the vapor, of which the cloud consisted, were removed. No appearance of light was visible in this instance. There fell at the same time upon an elliptical surface, whose major axis, from S.E. to N.W., had a length of six miles, a great number of meteoric stones, the largest of which weighed only $17\frac{1}{2}$ pounds. They were hot but not red,* smoked visibly, and, what is very strik-

tailed fire-ball. The terrible noise in the *meteoric cloud* is here represented as the thunder accompanying the lightning (?). Anghiera himself received in Spain a fragment, the size of a fist (*ex frustris disruptorum saxorum*), and showed it to King Ferdinand the Catholic, in the presence of the famous warrior Gonzalo de Cordova. His letter ends with the words, "Mira super hisce prodigiis conscripta fanaticæ, physicæ, theologicæ ad nos missa sunt ex Italia. Quid portendant, quomodoque gignantur, tibi utraque servo, si aliquando ad nos veneris." "From these prodigies Italy has furnished us with many a marvel of superstition, physic, and theology; what they portend, and how they are to come to pass, you will learn whenever you come to us." (Written from Burgos to Fagiardus.) Cardanus (*Opera*, ed. Lugd., 1663, tom. iii., lib. xv., cap. lxxii., p. 279) affirms, still more accurately, that 1200 aërolites fell among them, one of 120 pounds' weight, iron gray, of great density. The noise is said to have lasted two hours: "ut mirum sit, tamtam molem in aëre sustineri potuisse;" "it is marvelous that such a mass could be supported in the air." He considered the tailed fire-ball to be a comet, and errs in the date of the phenomenon by a year: "Vidimus anno 1510." Cardanus was at that time nine or ten years old.

* Recently, on the occasion of the fall of aërolites at Braunau (July 14th, 1847), the fallen masses of stone were so hot, that after six hours they could not be touched without causing a burn. I have already treated (*Asie Centrale*, tom. i., p. 408) of the analogy which the Scythian *myth of sacred gold* presents with a fall of meteors. "5. As the Scythians say, theirs is the most recent of all nations; and it arose in the following manner. The first man that appeared in this country, which was a wilderness, was named Targitaus: they say that the parents of this Targitaus, in my opinion relating what is incredible—they say, however, that they were Jupiter and a daughter of the River Borysthenes; that such was the origin of Targitaus; and that he had three sons, who went by the names of Lipoxais, Apoxais, and the youngest, Colaxais; that during their reign a plow, a yoke, an ax, and a bowl of golden workmanship dropping down from heaven, fell on the Scythian territory; that the eldest, seeing them first, approached, intending to take them up, but as he came near, the gold began to burn; when he had retired the second went up, and it did the same again; according