

if white had prevailed in the tropical climates, almost all the solar heat and light, instead of being absorbed, would have been reflected. The consequence of this reflection would have been, that the accumulation of heat, and the glare of light, in the lower regions of the atmosphere, near the surface of the earth, would have been intolerable; and would have rendered these regions quite uninhabitable, at least by the present races of beings. The surface of the earth, also, though it would have been heated slowly, would have been overheated in time; and at length would probably have become so very hot, from its comparatively low radiating powers, that the heat could not have been borne. As it is, from the dark colour of objects near the equator, the heat and light of the sun, there, are readily absorbed, and are as freely given off again by radiation; or perhaps the heat, like the light, is decomposed; and thus the whole is preserved in that comparatively moderate and nicely balanced state, which renders even the hottest parts of the earth's surface inhabitable.

On the other hand, let us consider for a moment what would have been the consequences, if snow had been black; or in other words, if blackness had prevailed in the Polar regions. In this case, all the little light and heat that reach them, would have been absorbed;