We can ascertain by measurement the enormous, wonder-
ful, and wholly planetary velocity of shooting stars, fire-balls,
and meteoric stones, and we can gain a knowledge of what is
the general and uniform character of the phenomenon, but
not of the genetically cosmical process and the results of the
metamorphoses. If meteoric stones while revolving in space
are already consolidated into dense masses,* less dense, how-

nius even ventured to deride the geognostic myth of the blocks and
stones. The Lygian field of stones was, however, very naturally and
well described by the ancients. The district is now known as *La Crau*.
(See Guerin, *Mesures Barométriques dans les Alpes, et Météorologie
d'Avignon*, 1829, chap. xii., p. 115.)

* The specific weight of aërolites varies from 1·9 (Alais) to 4·3
(Tabor). Their general density may be set down as 3, water being 1.
As to what has been said in the text of the actual diameters of fire-balls,
we must remark, that the numbers have been taken from the few
measurements that can be relied upon as correct. These give for the
fire-ball of Weston, Connecticut (14th December, 1807), only 500; for
that observed by Le Roi (10th July, 1771) about 1000, and for that
estimated by Sir Charles Blagden (18th January, 1783) 2600 feet in
diameter. Brandes (*Unterhaltungen*, bd. i., s. 42) ascribes a diameter
varying from 80 to 120 feet to shooting stars, and a luminous train ex-
tending from 12 to 16 miles. There are, however, ample optical caus-
es for supposing that the apparent diameter of fire-balls and shooting
stars has been very much overrated. The volume of the largest fire-
ball yet observed can not be compared with that of Ceres, estimating
this planet to have a diameter of only 70 English miles. (See the
generally so exact and admirable treatise, *On the Connection of the
Physical Sciences*, 1835, p. 411.) With the view of elucidating what
has been stated in the text regarding the large aërolite that fell into
the bed of the River Narni, but has not again been found, I will give
the passage made known by Pertz, from the *Chronicon Benedicti, Mon-
achi Sancti Andreæ in Monte Soracte*, a MS. belonging to the tenth
century, and preserved in the Chigi Library at Rome. The barbarous
Latin of that age has been left unchanged. "*Anno 921, temporibus
domini Johannis Decimi pape, in anno pontificatus illius 7 visa sunt sig-
na. Nam juxta urbem Romam lapides plurimi de cœlo cadere visi sunt.
In civitate quæ vocatur Narnia tam diri ac tetri, ut nihil aliud credatur,
quam de infernalibus locis deducti essent. Nam ita ex illis lapidibus
unus omnium maximus est, ut decidens in flumen Narnus, ad mensuram
unius cubiti super aquas fluminis usque hodie videretur. Nam et ignitæ
faculæ de cœlo plurimæ omnibus in hac civitate Romani populi visæ sunt,
ita ut pene terra contingeret. Aliæ cadentes*," &c. (Pertz, *Monum.
Germ. Hist. Scriptores*, t. iii., p. 715.) On the aërolites of Ægos Pota-
mos, which fell, according to the Parian Chronicle, in the 78 1 Olym-
piad, see Böckh, *Corp. Inscr. Graec.*, t. ii., p. 302, 320, 340; also Aris-
tot., *Meteor.*, i., 7 (Ideler's *Comm.*, t. i., p. 404–407); Stob., *Ecl. Phys.*,
i., 25, p. 508 (Heeren); Plut., *Lys.*, c. 12; Diog. Laert., ii., 10; and
see, also, subsequent notes in this work. According to a Mongolian
tradition, a black fragment of a rock, forty feet in height, fell from
heaven on a plain near the source of the Great Yellow River in West-
ern China. (Abel Rémusat, in Lamétherie, *Jour. de Phys.*, 1819, Mai
p. 264.)