

temperature passing below 212° , the invisible steam began to become visible vapor.

This was a grand juncture in the history of the world. I have often pictured it. I have often wished I might have beheld the scene. I think, could I have been present, I should have witnessed something like this: The forming vapor in the upper air reveals its presence in a thin and gauzy haze, like that which overspread the sky when the ashes of *Krakat'o-a* were floated round the world. The veil grows thicker from age to age. It is now a "cirrus" sheet of cloudy vapor like that which the anti-trades drive up from our southwestern horizon. The contour of the round sun is blurred; the intensity of his ancient ray is softened. Indeed, his light is dimmed; the haze is becoming a cloud. A twilight approaches; the shade deepens. The world is enveloped in a cloudy pall; the lurid light of the decaying fires of the crust reddens the overarching canopy. The sun is quenched; the world hangs in shadow which forms the first night which ever visited its surface. "In the beginning" there was "light;" now "darkness is upon the face of the deep," and a denser darkness impends.

The burdened clouds drop rain. The o'erburdened clouds discharge a storm of rain. The drops descend into the lower and heated strata of the atmosphere, and are dissipated into vapor which rises to the clouds to be again condensed. Continual rains descend; but the hot air dries them up and sends them back to the bosom of the clouds. There is a battle in mid-air between the powers of water marshaled above, and the powers of heat intrenched behind the rocky ramparts below. I think of the battle over the Catalaunian plains, waged at night, in mid-air between the spirits of the slain Romans and those of the hordes of Attila. But the powers of water are destined to prevail. The forces of fire are perpetually carried captive with returning vapors, and retired beyond the ranks of the clouds.

Meantime the equilibrium of the electricities is disturbed. The friction of ascending vapors and descending rains develops