



Thunder And Lightning

Camille Flammarion

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1905 Excerpt: ...earth, and science has discovered the cause to be the presence of great quantities of nitrogen and ammonia in the thunder-rain and in hail. Perhaps electricity has a similar effect. In the neighbourhood of Castres, on April 18, 1781, an old poplar was stripped of its bark in several places. Now, shortly afterwards it burst into leaf, although the neighbouring poplars were much later than it. The ravages caused in the fields by the electric meteor to forage and vegetables are sometimes considerable. This h especially so with grass when cut, to haycocks, ricks of straw, barley, etc. We have a collection of records of men or animals who, when leaning against haystacks, were struck. As a rule the haystack is burnt; sometimes, however, the grass is simply scattered and thrown to a distance. In 1888, a very curious occurrence was observed at Vayres (Haute-Vienne). The lightning struck a field of potatoes at the village of Puytreuillard; some of the stalks were burnt to cinders; but most remarkable of all, the potatoes were done to a turn, just as if they had been cooked beneath hot ashes. A belief which was very general in ancient times and derived without doubt from a recollection of the circumstances which were said to accompany the birth of Bacchus, gave the vine the privilege of protecting the neighbourhood from the fatal effects of lightning. But this again is only a legend. The following observation proves it:--On July 10, 1884, at Chanvres (Yonne), fifty vinestocks were frizzled up by lightning. It used to be supposed, too, that the electric fluid held the lily in particular respect. But here is a note which shows us that the white flower is visited by the burning flashes. During a violent thunder-storm on June 15, 1881, at Montmorin (Haute-Garonne) B...

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