

of his [92] extreme old age, he exclaimed of his own accord, in the sentiments of St. Augustine: 'Too late have I come to know you, O God, too late have I come to love you.' I doubt not that his death, which was not long delayed, was precious in God's sight, who for so many years left him in idolatry, and reserved for him so few days for closing his life in so Christian a manner.

"I must not omit here a rather strange circumstance: on the day after his death his relatives, contrary to all usage of this country, burned his body and reduced it entirely to ashes. The cause of this is found in a legend which passes here for truth.

"It is held beyond dispute that this old man's father was a Hare,—an animal which runs over the snow in winter,—and [93] that thus the snow, the Hare, and the old man are of the same village,—that is, are relatives. It is further said that the Hare told his wife that he disapproved of their children's remaining in the depths of the earth, as that did not befit their condition—they being relatives of the snow, whose country is above, toward the Sky; and, if it ever occurred that they were put into the ground after their death, he would pray the snow, his relative, in order to punish the people for this offense, to fall in such quantities and so long that there should be no Spring. And, to confirm this story, it is added that three years ago the brother of our good old man died, in the beginning of the winter; and, after he had been buried in the usual manner, snow fell [94] to such an extent, and the winter was so long, that people despaired of seeing the spring in its season. Meanwhile, all were dying of hunger, and no remedy could be found for this general suffer-