

At certain times a giant shows himself on the summit of the Brocken (the loftiest of the Hartz Mountains), to the astonishment of the inhabitants and of travelers. This prodigy had been for many years the source of the most marvelous tales, when M. Haue, who was desirous of examining into the matter, was fortunate enough to witness it. While he was looking at the giant, his hat was almost carried away by a violent gust of wind; he suddenly raised his hand to his head to protect his hat, and the colossal figure did the same; he immediately made another movement by bending his body, an action which was repeated by the spectral figure. M. Haue then called the landlord of the inn to participate in his discovery, when they jointly repeated his experiments, with the same results. The wonder was thus solved, and was found to be an optical phenomenon. When the rising sun (and, according to analogy, the case will be the same at the setting sun) throws his rays over the Brocken upon the body of a man standing opposite to fine light clouds, floating around or hovering past him, he needs only to fix his eyes steadfastly upon them, and, in all probability, he will see the singular spectacle of his own shadow extending to the length of five or six hundred feet, at the distance of about two miles before him.

Brewster, in the work already referred to, has related similar phenomena as occurring in Westmoreland and other mountainous countries. Troops of cavaliers, armies marching backwards and forwards, have been seen in the air, arising from the reflection of horses and peaceful travelers who were placed on the opposite mountains.

King Theodoric, blinded by jealousy, and yielding to the evil suggestions of his courtesans, ordered the senator Lymmachus, one of the most virtuous men of his time, to be put to death. Scarcely was this cruel order executed, when the king was seized with remorse, and perpetually reproached himself with his crime. One day a new kind of fish was placed upon his table, when he suddenly uttered a cry of alarm, for the head of the fish appeared to him like that of the unfortunate Lymmachus. This vision plunged him into a deep melancholy, which lasted for the remainder of his life.

Bessus, surrounded by his guests, and giving himself up to the pleasures of the feast, ceased to pay attention to his flatterers. He listened attentively to a conversation that no one else heard, when suddenly, in a transport of rage, he rushed from his couch, seized his sword, and running to the nest of some swallows, he struck the poor birds, and killed them. "Imagine," he said, "the insolence of those birds, which dared to reproach me with the murder of my father!" Surprised at this sight, the parasites slunk away. Some time after it was known that Bessus was really guilty, and that this action arose from the reproaches of his conscience.

History has recorded numerous instances in which illusions of sight and hearing have occurred in the form of an epidemic. One of the most familiar