

# THE DAILY PILOT

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### Not Aurora Australis.

Having recently seen in the papers an explanation given of the recent lights appearing just after sunset, and just before sunrise, by calling them the Aurora Australis, I think it will be interesting to your readers to correct this opinion, and give a true statement of the cause. The Aurora Australis has never been seen further north than Cuzco in Peru, and that at a height of 11,000 feet above the level of the sea, and if it should be seen on this side of the equator, it would be "Borealis" and not "Australis." The light we see is what is called the "Zodiacal light," a faint, nebulous Aurora, which accompanies the sun. It was first noticed by Kepler, but first described and named by Dominic Cassini, and is always best seen in the months of May and October; the reason of this is, that its form is elliptical and exceedingly eccentric, the major axis being many times greater than the minor. At these periods of the year the major axis being nearly perpendicular to the horizon, it is seen long after sunset, and before sunrise; but when the minor axis is perpendicular to the horizon, it cannot be seen. Cassini thought it might proceed from the blended light from an innumerable multitude of little planets circulating about the sun, as the Milky Way owes its appearance to the light of agglomerated myriads of stars. Euler endeavored to prove that it proceeds from the same cause as the tails of comets. Kepler and others attribute it to the solar atmosphere; but Laplace, the great French astronomer, proved this to be impossible because it extends far beyond the orbit of Mercury, and the form of the solar atmosphere could not correspond with the lenticular appearance of the Zodiacal light. Sir John Herschel says "it may be conjectured to be no other than the denser part of that medium,

which as we have reason to believe, resists the motion of comets; loaded perhaps with the actual materials of the tails of millions of these bodies of which they have been stripped in their successive perihelion passages, and which may be slowly subsiding into the sun." This light has long been well known to astronomers, and appears now more bright perhaps on account of the condition of the atmosphere.—A. S. A. in Marietta Journal.

### The Sunken Rails.

Of the railroad iron for the C. F. & Y. V. Railroad which was submerged in Cape Fear river a short time since on its way up to Fayetteville, the Wilmington Star speaks as follows:

"The work of recovering the steel rails from the sunken flat near Point Peter, which was snagged at that point a week or two ago, while in tow of the steamer Wave, was commenced yesterday, the first haul having been brought to the surface at half-past two o'clock. The work of recovering the rails is under the direction of Messrs. Watson & Eckel, who have a diving apparatus, steam engine, flats, &c., on the spot."

Another horrid case of wholesale murdering has just occurred in the North, this time in New Hampshire. A man, woman and child were foully murdered and bodies saturated with kerosene and then set on fire. The scoundrel was caught. This makes the third case of the kind—a whole family being slaughtered—that has occurred in the North within some two weeks.

The liquor dealers of Greenville, S. C., have removed the screens from the front of their bars—one man having been fined \$200 for selling whiskey behind a screen. The next step is to close them up.

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