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ABOUT THE COMET

IS THE TAIL A SOLID?

Is It Only Gas and Fire? Speculations of a Leading Astronomer.

BY PROF. GEORGE DAVIDSON.

It is only when some brilliant, unexpected visitor appears in the heavens or when some predicted bright comet comes to our view that popular interest is aroused. Comets are regarded by millions of people as harbingers of good crops and prosperity in general, though of course they have nothing to do with the affairs of men except as objects of scientific study.

The space of our universe is occupied by the sun and its series of planets and their satellites, and also with hundreds of known asteroids and millions of meteoric bodies such as fall to the earth and reveal their constitution. We may assume that all the planets have solid material, as our earth and the moon and the meteors.

But of what great matter are the great comets composed? Are they essentially of one class of matter, with envelopes of variable character? The appearances differ in size, structure and brightness so much that it may be asserted that no two are alike in their enveloping medium.

The comet of 1858, Donati's, was remarkable for the beautiful curve which it presented, and for its brilliancy. That of 1861 was as straight as a rapier, and in the South it was sometimes called the Sword of the Avenger. It did not match Donati's comet in brilliancy.

The live question now open to the physicist and the astronomer is in regard to the question of the character of the tails of these bodies. Are the tails composed of matter streaming for millions of miles in the wake of the head? Do we see the medium of celestial space, put in wave motion and revealed to us as white matter—for no comet tail has even been reported to us as bearing any color as do the stars? To us it seems inconceivable that it can be matter, as we understand the term.

The tails of some of the great comets are many millions of miles in length. The heads have passed around the sun and close to that body in a very few hours, and so the outermost particles or the tail would have to sweep around the sun at a velocity exceeding the velocity of light, or more than 177,000 miles per second! We cannot believe or imagine matter moving at such a velocity.

We cannot conceive that the tail of a comet is composed of matter. Matter is not needed for the conveying of an impression from any object to the retina of the eye. We have an example of this in the transmission of the tick of a watch through a long plank, the ticking being heard at the end opposite that at which the watch was held. There is certainly no transmission of matter in this instance. The transmission of the force of a great breaking wave through miles of water to a tide-gauge means no transmission of matter, but the force is imparted to the self-registering gauge. Other examples are in the transmission of messages through cable and telegraph lines, and the sending of messages 4,000 miles by wireless telegraph.

In all these cases, force is transmitted from one object to another, but there is no transmission of matter. It is, then, possible that the transmission of force from the sun through the edge of the molten comet may cause the transmission of another form of force to the retina of the eye? We have now in our hands that powerful help to astronomy, the spectroscopic, and while it reveals to us the constituents of the body of the comet, will it reveal to us the character of the tail? On account of the character of the instruments and methods now available to astronomers, we may hope that the present visitors will reveal to us much that is not now known in regard to their constituents and their orbits. The appearance of Halley's comet will lead to a discussion whether its orbit is variable. And if the orbit is variable, has the comet encountered some opaque bodies in its long journey? We know that Jupiter's

ON SANDY RIDGE ROUTE 1.

Rumbling in Flat Shoal Mt. Can Be Heard in That Community—Other News.

Sandy Ridge Route 2, Feb. 28.—Several farmers of this vicinity marketed some tobacco at Winston and Stoneville the past week.

Mr. James Wall is preparing to erect a nice six room house on his premises.

Mr. Lee Martin has nearly completed his residence and Mr. John Price is adding considerable improvements to his dwelling.

Mrs. Laura Shaffer, who has been ill with something like diphtheria, is able to be out again. Mr. Hardin Joyce recently purchased a farm near Ayersville from Mr. John Price.

Mr. A. L. Gunter has added a nice porch and room to his dwelling.

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. John Ferguson recently.

Mr. and Mrs. James Martin spent Saturday and Sunday with Mrs. Martin's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Hutcherson.

Messrs. Jesse Vernon and Lee Joyce expect to go to Bassett, Va., in a few days to seek employment.

Mr. Wallie Joyce has recently purchased an organ from Sears, Roebuck & Co.

Happenings On Walnut Cove Route 1.

Walnut Cove Route 1, Feb. 27.—Owing to the rough weather, the farmers are behind with their work.

Mrs. Cora Johnson and children visited her sister, Mrs. Lilla Tatum, Saturday and Sunday.

Miss Hattie Meadows returned home Friday. She has been visiting her sister, Mrs. Dicie Young, of Winston, for several days.

Mr. R. C. Carroll and family are going to move to High Point this week.

Miss Manie Chapman returned to her home near Wilson's Store, after a stay of about three weeks with her sister, Mrs. Lizzie Smith, near Walnut Cove.

Mr. J. F. Allen visited at Mr. Walter Rieron's Saturday night. Mr. and Mrs. John R. Smith visited their daughter, Mrs. J. W. Young, Sunday.

There will be a quarterly meeting at Palmyra next Saturday and Sunday.

Miss Katherine Smith visited Miss Hattie Meadows Sunday.

Mr. J. B. Chapman has been on the sick list, but is some better.

Mr. and Mrs. Bud Montgomery visited their daughter, Mrs. Minnie Chapman, Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. W. I. Smith visited his father, Mr. S. A. Smith, Saturday night and Sunday.

Mr. S. L. Smith visited Mr. J. B. Chapman's Sunday.

ERA.

King.

King, Feb. 28.—Mr. and Mrs. Lat Rutledge spent Saturday and Sunday with his parents.

Mr. and Mrs. James Caudle are spending a few days in Greensboro with their daughter Mrs. Lillie Boyles.

Miss Mamie Newsom spent Saturday and Sunday with friends at King.

Mrs. Laura Newsom died Feb. 23. Her remains were laid to rest at the Baptist cemetery. She leaves a husband and eight children and a host of friends to mourn their loss.

Miss Mary Early passed away at her home Feb. 27.

Mr. Charlie Boles returned home Saturday from a flying trip. Mrs. Tanie Caudle visited her sister Sunday, Mrs. Fannie Gunter.

Walnut Cove Route 4.

Walnut Cove Route 4, Feb. 28.—Mr. James Middleton has been very sick with rheumatism, but is improving now.

Mr. Marshall Strader visited at Dennis last Sunday. Mrs. Melba Baker is visiting her relatives near Dennis.

The school at Sully Blossom will be out in a short while. Guess the scholars won't care much.

TWO BROWN EYED CHIEFS.

SMALL POX OVER

SAYS COUNTY PHYSICIAN

Meadows School Out This Week—The Sick Improving—Mr. C. E. Neal Moves.

Meadows, March 1.—Mrs. Amer Neal, who has been in poor health for several weeks, has improved some, but is still feeble.

Mrs. J. A. Neal and children, of Spencer, are visiting relatives at Meadows.

Mr. C. E. Neal, who has been living in Winston several years, is having a rough time moving his things from Walnut Cove through so much mud. He moved his family last week. His wife's sister, who has been visiting them, has returned home.

Mrs. Kate Neal, who has been ill a few weeks, is up again.

The free school conducted by Miss Lula Tuttle will be out this week, but she will continue to teach another month.

Misses Jessie Pepper and Grace Taylor, of Danbury, who had been visiting friends at Mt. Airy, stopped here Monday out of a rain storm to wait for the tide to fall so they could get home.

Dr. Neal, County Supt. of Health, reports smallpox crisis over unless new cases keep hopping in from Winston.

Pinnacle.

Pinnacle, Feb. 28.

Dear Reporter:

Rev. A. L. Hunter filled his regular appointment on last Sunday at 11 a. m. The congregation was small as the weather was so rough.

Measles is all you can hear at present, there is several cases of it in this place, but seem to be taking it easy.

Mrs. Permelia Spainhower passed away on last Tuesday morning at 2 o'clock and was buried at Mt Pleasant Cemetery Thursday at 11 a. m.

An entertainment was given on Washington's birthday by the P. H. S. girls club society. A large crowd was present and a good program was given.

The High School boys debating society is progressing nicely. They gave a public debate on the 18th of this month. The boys will give another public debate soon.

Rev. A. L. Hunter began a singing school on last Saturday evening. Thirty-two members were there.

Miss Nannie Watson's school was out at Flat Rock near Mt. Airy. She has now entered school here.

The high school is progressing fine, new students entering every week. We now have near 140 students. We also have good teachers.

Germanton.

Germanton, Feb. 27.—Choppings are all the go these days.

Mr. W. Y. Gordon and daughter went to Winston Wednesday.

Mrs. Baker is improving some, we are glad to note.

Flat Shoal school will close March 26th with an old-time exhibition. Everybody cordially invited to attend. Further notice and program will be given later.

Mr. L. B. Neal was a visitor in our school Thursday.

Mr. John Covington is seen in these parts quite often.

Mr. Carlis Davis spent Sunday at his home near Danbury.

Everybody is behind in their farm work in this section. "Farm Boy" will have to come again. He certainly gave the teachers a bone to gnaw. There are too many such animals like "Farm Boy" at large now.

NANCY.

Mr. B. F. Pulliam, of King, spent Tuesday night here.

Dan river was higher Monday than it has been in quite a while.

Mr. E. B. Voss, of Walnut Cove, was here today.

GERMANTON NEWS

JOHN W. KURFEES ILL

Has Been Suffering With Rheumatism But Is Now Much Improved. Other Personal and News Items.

Germanton, Feb. 22.—Mr. Jno. W. Kurfees, representative of the J. F. Kurfees Paint Co., who returned home last week suffering from an attack of rheumatism, is much better and left this morning for Va. to continue his work.

The many friends of Mrs. Kurfees are glad to see her out after a two week's illness of lagrippe.

Oscar, the little son of Capt. Pegrum, has been quite ill with pneumonia, but is improving.

Miss Mary Matthews, who has been attending the State Normal and Industrial College, is at home very sick with tonsillitis.

Mr. Tom Rieron, the accommodating young clerk of the firm of Hampton & Charles, went to Winston yesterday on business.

Mrs. N. D. Sullivan, of Walkertown, is spending the week with her sister, Miss Carrie Poindexter.

Mrs. Geo. W. Phoenix and children, of Atlanta, Ga., arrived last week and will probably spend the winter with her mother, Mrs. Vaughn.

Mr. Cleve Crews, conductor on the Southern railroad between Winston and Sanford, is visiting his mother, Mrs. J. E. Crews.

Mr. J. H. Hampton has purchased L. M. McKenzie's blacksmith shop and fixtures and proposes to run the same.

Mr. Geo. Charles is remodeling one of his houses for Prof. J. C. Carson, who has been boarding, but will go to housekeeping soon.

S. M.

In Memoriam.

Celia Davis, (M. S. Ward) was born Nov. 5, 1868, and died Feb. 23, 1910, aged 41 years, 4 months and 26 days. She was converted early in life, and joined the Methodist church at Bethesda where she was a faithful member until her death. She bore her sickness patiently, and expressed a great desire to get well. While all that loving hands could do was done, yet it was the will of our Saviour to take her away. She leaves a husband and nine children, one sister, Mrs. G. W. Hester, of Winston, and an aged mother, and a host of relatives to mourn their loss and we believe her eternal gain.

"A precious one from us is gone, A voice we loved is still, A vacant place is in our home, That can never be filled."

A FRIEND.

In Reply to Two School Girls.

Sandy Ridge Route 2, Feb. 28.—We can say if any of our scholars were kicked over the school room last winter, it was done when we were not present, and when the stove was knocked to one side, it was done on account of one of the scholars not obeying the teacher, and trying to outdo him, when he tried to punish him.

You stated in your reply that there has been no such conduct in our Buffalo school as reported. We haven't reported anything only what we saw and knew to be true. There has even been a hole out in the partition to slip notes through. We are sure it is there to show for itself. More than that, all we have reported we can prove it to be true.

THEM THAT KNOWS.

Referee Suit In Progress.

A referee case in which J. C. Wall is defendant and the other heirs of the late Wm. Wall are plaintiffs was begun here yesterday. The case is being heard before Messrs. I. G. Ross, J. W. Neal and L. S. Grabe, referees. Quite a number of witnesses are in attendance. Attorneys W. W. King and N. O. Petree are representing the defendant, while W. M. Hendren and J. D. Humphreys are appearing for the plaintiffs. The suit was continued this afternoon without day or date, on account of the absence of certain important witnesses.

County Organizer O. W. Ghedwell, of the Farmers' Co-operative Union, addressed an audience in the court house here last night.

MUCH BUILDING GOING ON.

People On Sandy Ridge Route 1 Fixing Up—Mrs. Laura Shaffer Better.

Sandy Ridge Route 1, Feb. 28.—Farmers have not burnt much plant land on account of the bad weather.

Our school closed at Delta Saturday Feb. 26. It was the best school we have ever had. It was taught by Mr. J. A. Leake and Miss Lilla Hawkins.

A large crowd visited at Mr. E. K. Vernon's Saturday evening.

Among those who visited at Mr. J. M. Nunn's Sunday were: Messrs. Sam Terrell, Lester Ward, Sam Carter and Miss Millie Ward and Bettie Francis.

Miss Sarah Ward, who has been ill for several months, is not much improved, we are sorry to know.

There was not very many attended Sunday school Sunday on account of the bad weather.

Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Kallam visited their parents Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Hawkins Saturday and Sunday.

Among those who visited at Mr. W. T. Ward's Sunday were the following: Messrs. Sam Carter, J. L. Ward, Sam Terrell, J. M. Hawkins, J. N. Ward and Miss Bettie Francis.

The rumbling in Flat Shoal mountain can be heard in this community.

E. AND M.

Box Party and Supper On Danbury Route 1.

Danbury Route 1, March 1.—The box supper and party given by our teacher, Mr. O. M. Bennett, last Friday night, proved a success. Think all that were present enjoyed the occasion. The good music made by W. V. Bennett and D. C. Nelson and others was enjoyed by all that were present.

The auctioneers were W. R. Bennett and L. Fordrell.

The result of the sale was as follows:

Miss Maggie Mabe's box,	\$2.00
" Mattie Nelson "	1.30
" Bettie Mabe "	2.00
" Ellen Nelson "	1.50
Mrs. Maggie Southern "	1.10
Little Necie Bennett "	.20
Miss Sadie Nelson "	1.00
Miss Trudie Hall "	.75
Miss Bessie Hall "	.80
Little Amy Flinchum "	.25
Miss Verder Bennett "	3.25
" Dora "	2.00
" Isabel Fagg "	1.50
" Nettie Bennett "	2.90
" Bessie Mabe "	1.50
" Nannie Bennett "	1.00
" Dora Nelson "	.80
" Bessie Bennett "	2.25
Little Mattie Mabe "	.50

Total amt. of sale \$26.60
A STUDENT.

A Growing Local Union At Smith.

Smith, Feb. 27.

Mr. Editor:

Please allow the Union a little corner in your paper, so we can correspond with one another, and keep ourselves posted as to what is being done all over the county. Collins' Union was organized the 22nd day of December with only eleven members. Our first meeting was not advertised. Bro. Glidewell was just passing through, and we halted him and got out enough to organize. Since that day we have not had any outside help, but every man has put his shoulder to the wheel and worked like a man. We have talked Union in the day time and dreamed Union at night and the result is, we have 89 members on roll, and will reach 100 at our next meeting. Now, if any of you can bear that, we would be glad to hear from you. And if any of you need any help just send for 972.

Some say that our meeting reminded them of an old-time revival meeting.

YOURS IN UNION.

Caught a Fox In Steel Trap.

Mr. W. H. Flinchum, of Piedmont Springs, caught a large gray fox Sunday night. Reynard had been making serious inroads on Mr. Flinchum's chickens and he set a steel trap for him. The fox was not hurt and Mr. Flinchum will probably keep it for a pet.

If it's a good watch you want at a reasonable price see E. P. Newsom, King, N. C.

RAILROAD COMING

THIS TIME SURE THING

The Troublesome Creek & Dan River Traction Company—A Paying Investment.

The Troublesome Creek & Dan River Traction Company is the latest traction company heading this way. It is proposed to start at a point in Rockingham county and traverse the rich valley of the Dan, keeping close to the banks of the stream, so that the grade may not be more than 2 per cent anywhere. The terminus will be Hanging Rock, a point on the Sauratown Mountain.

One original and interesting feature of the new road is that it will operate both by water and rail. Each car will be fitted up as a boat, so that when the rail line is blocked with transportation, or a wreck should occur to disturb traffic, the cars will be transferred to the stream and traffic will go on without hindrance. Moreover, it will then be easy to water the stock. But the main idea in adopting this peculiar feature is to float bonds in case there should be a sinking fund. In this event the authorities of the county may insist upon the bonds being justified.

Another advantage in using the Dan will be the important fisheries obtained, suckers being in great demand by the promoters of the new company.

People are expected to begin work on the road at once—indeed a few are reported to have already been worked. The route will be due west of the starting point. All towns along the line are expected to be taken in—infact, a close residence to the line is not required in order to be taken in. A great industry at the terminus, which is expected to furnish freight, will be rattlesnake skins. Skinning of all kinds will be in order from the start.

The prospectus of the company stipulates that no stockholder will be allowed a free pass. It is inferred from this that the constant assessment plan will be adopted. Property adjacent to the line will go up from the start—that is property of the native stockholders of the road. One striking feature of the constitution and by-laws, which will doubtless meet with wide approval, is that the board of directors will be paid. Hotel keepers may demand this in advance. The motive power of the road will be compressed air.

School Reopens At Dillard—Sick People Much Better.

Dillard, March 1.—School reopened here yesterday with a fairly good attendance. Parents should consider this matter more seriously than they are doing and send the children to school all they possibly can. They will not miss the amount of work the children can do nearly so much as the children will miss their school work. They should go now while they are young.

Miss Lemma Duncan came home Saturday from near Sandy Ridge where she taught this winter. She was accompanied by Miss Kate Moore, who is spending the week.

Mr. Anderson Duncan, who has been with Mr. L. J. Lackey at Madison, is at home for a few days.

Mr. C. A. Mitchell has gone to Danbury today on business. The sick have all gotten much better, except Mrs. J. W. Davis, whose death was reported last week.

We are having plenty of rain of late. The women folks are anxious for it to turn warm so turnip salad will grow.

Mr. L. A. Duncan has gone to Roanoke today.

Board of Education Meets.

The Board of Education for Stokes was in session a few hours at the court house yesterday. Only routine business was transacted, such as paying off claims, etc. The board was to have received the new school building at Sandy Ridge, but the contractor, Mr. Wm. Berger, was not able to get here.

Another session of the board will be held next Monday.

Men's nice pants and waist goods 25c. W.