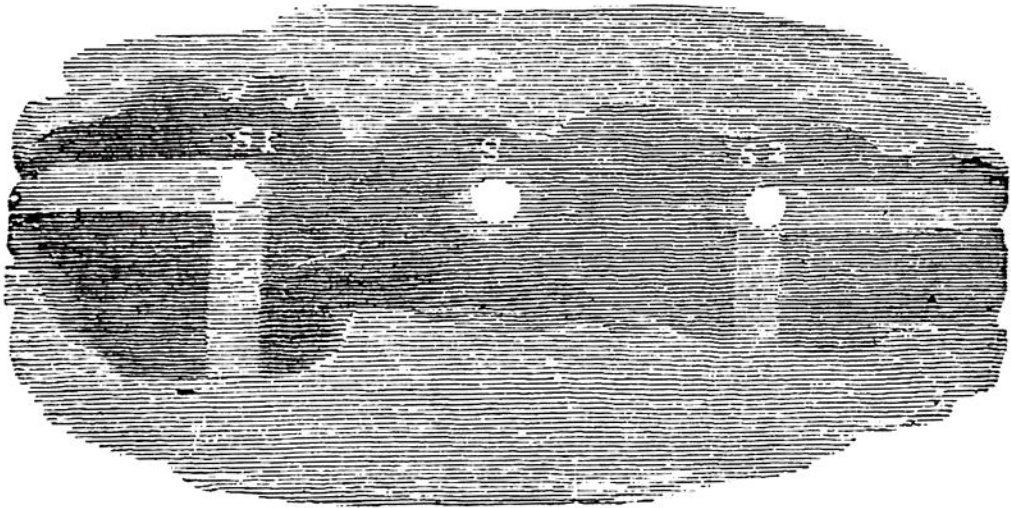


PARHELIA.

Parhelia are images of the sun appearing to be at the same elevation as the sun itself, united by a horizontal circle of light having its pole in the zenith.

Captain Parry states that when he was in the polar regions he observed two parhelia, one of which was very bright and prismatic, being thrown upon a thick cloud; the other scarcely perceptible, having a blue sky at its back-ground. To each of these mock suns, bright yellow bands of light were attached, as shown in the diagram.



Parhelia are most frequent, and their light most intense, when the sun is near the horizon; as it rises towards the meridian, the image invariably dies away, but will sometimes make its appearance again as it descends. Instances of this kind prove that the cause is continuous, and, indeed, it has been usually found, that when these mock suns make their appearance, they are not very rapidly destroyed, but often continue in sight for several hours. From all the accounts we have of the natural phenomena observed in the polar regions, it may be gathered that parhelia are not there very uncommon, but by what means these images of the great luminary are projected upon the vapour, which perhaps the sun itself has raised, as though to mock its shadowed glory, philosophers are by no means agreed; but it is almost certain that the haloes on which they are formed are produced by refraction, whether through liquids or icy particles.

A remarkable instance of the exhibition of parhelia was