(38.) The number of comets whose periodical return has been calculated is pretty considerable. Altogether about 36; and of these there are 5 which revolve in periods of from 70 to 80 years, and several of the rest in short periods from 3 to 7 years; and it is a very remarkable feature in their history that *all* the comets of short period, and three out of the five of those of the larger ones specified, revolve in the *same* direction round the sun as the planets, and have their orbits inclined at no very large angles to the ecliptic.

(39.) Of comets not periodical, I have already mentioned that most remarkable one of 1680, but several others deserve special notice. That of 1744 was a truly wonderful object. It is described, and has been depicted, with six tails spread out like an immense fan—extending 30° from the head—which is fully the extent of the tail of the comet of 1858; and the appearance of its head when viewed through a telescope exhibited the same sort of jets of luminous smoke, the same curved envelopes and arches as I have already described, showing the same kind of excitement by the sun's heat, and the same action driving the vapour back into the tail.

(40.) The comet of 1843 was still more remarkable. Many of my hearers, I dare say, remember its immense

been conspicuously visible—but without success! giving rise to the strangest theories. At all events it seems to have fairly disappeared, and that without any such excuse as in the case of Lexell's, the preponderant attraction of some great planet. Can it have come into contact or exceedingly close approach to some asteroid as yet undiscovered; or, peradventure, plunged into and got bewildered among the ring of meteorolites, which astronomers more than suspect?