

distance from the head being then only about 13,000,000 miles, and more than one observer having noticed and been much struck with an unusual and general brightness, like an auroral light not confined to the neighbourhood of the comet, but spreading over the whole sky. The most remarkable peculiarity of this comet, however, consisted in the enormous length which one side of its tail attained between the 2d and the 4th of July, extending in a *perfectly straight* but feeble ray from near the star Alpha in the Great Bear, to and beyond that designated by the same letter in Ophiuchus, or over 75 degrees in angular measure, contrasting strikingly with the stunted development and *bushy* aspect of the opposite branch. Its head, when viewed with good telescopes, exhibited the same general phænomena of luminous jets and crescent-like emanations as its predecessor, but much less complex and varied. Owing to the great inclination of its orbit, this comet, coming to us from the southern side of the ecliptic, soared high above it on the northern side and remained long and conspicuously visible as a *circumpolar* object, the whole of its diurnal course being above our horizon. Not so its successor of 1862, whose orbit being but slightly inclined to our own, its motion retrograde (or meeting the earth), its perihelion distance almost exactly equal to our distance from the sun, and its passage through the perihelion occurring at a time when the earth was not very remote from that point, it passed us closely and swiftly, swelling into importance, and dying away with unusual rapidity. The phænomena exhibited by its nucleus and head were on this account