

this. And did anything similar happen in 1843? And is not, at any rate this magnetic storm - of which I had not heard - a very curious indication? Must we not fall back upon either electricity - or some unknown force - as the "vera causa" of Comets' Envelopes & tails? And if there is no alternative, will not the ordinary rules of philosophy require us to adopt the known rather than the unknown solution? One may believe anything of so incomprehensible a force as electricity = magnetism - in treating of which, by the way - it always seems to me that there is a vast deal very quietly ignored - in the middle of a dust of volts & ohms & Farads. (my compliments to the "~~whole~~ whole boiling" of them, as I think they say in Leicestershire) But I suppose any big man feeling about the foundations would get broken skins on knuckles - & I don't think they would like such a risk. Reputations cost more than money!

Barnham has just sent me Vol. 1 Publications of Washburn Observatory - by which it appears that what they call the Great Comet of 1881 - i.e. the 1<sup>st</sup> of the two comets visible at once - had at one time a Double Nucleus - like our present friend - so I think Donati, Feste Cassell - a smaller comet. These things want collection & discussion. - But then, where's the centre of Gravity? And if the centre of gravity

is not the centre of figure, where's our place - & where's our orbit? -

You'll think me a profusion of Bottemation, as I once called a pupil of my father's (but in that case I added "and bad Spelling with, to my father's great amusement.)

What has become of Schmidt's Comet?

What of Erel's deceptive stars of reference?

What could have been the marvellous meteor of Friday - described in 2 letters in yesterday's Times? (with a jolly erratum in each) -

What is Langley at, turning the Spectrum bottom uppermost? -

What is Webb at, writing a letter so full of nonsense? -

I thought I had done - but whatever has Barnham been about in publishing such extra villainous figures of a most interesting object (more like 1861 than possibly he may be aware of).

and what is Drudeh about, when he says that not only the Sodium but other bright bands were displaced by the motion of the Nucleus - & then never tells us what said other bright bands belonged to - which he must have known - or he could not have told their right places. (And he was not in his right place.)