

head, and which sometimes close in and unite at a little distance behind it—sometimes remain distinct for a great part of their course; producing an effect like that of the trains left by some bright meteors; or like the diverging fire of a sky-rocket (only without sparks or perceptible motion.) This is the tail. This splendid appendage occasionally attains an immense apparent length.

The tail is, however, by no means an invariable appendage of Comets. Many of the brightest have been observed to have short and feeble tails, and not a few have been entirely without them. The smaller Comets, such as are visible only in telescopes, or with difficulty by the naked eye, and which are the most numerous, offer frequently no appearance of a tail, and appear only as round or somewhat oval vaporious masses, more dense towards the centre, where, however, they appear to have no distinct nucleus, or anything which seems entitled to be considered a solid body—stars of the smallest magnitudes remaining distinctly visible, though covered by what appears to be the densest portion of their substance; although the same stars would be entirely obliterated by a moderate fog, extending only a few yards from the surface of the earth.

And since it is an observed fact, that even those larger Comets which have presented the appearance of a nucleus, have yet exhibited no phases, though we cannot doubt that they shine by a reflected solar light, it follows that even these can only be regarded as great masses of thin vapour, susceptible of being penetrated through their whole substance by the sunbeams, and reflecting them alike from their interior parts, and from their surfaces. Nor will any one regard this explanation as forced, or feel disposed to resort to a phosphorescent quality in the Comet itself, to account for the phenomena in question, when we consider the enormous magnitude of the space thus illuminated, and the extremely small mass which there is ground to attribute to these bodies. It will then be evident, that the most unsubstantial clouds which float in the highest regions of our atmosphere, and seem at sunset to be drenched in light, and to glow throughout their whole depth as if in actual ignition, without any shadow or dark side, must be looked upon as dense and massive bodies, compared with the filmy and all but spiritual texture of a Comet.

We will now speak of the motions of Comets, and these are apparently most irregular and capricious. Sometimes they remain in sight for only a few days—at others for months; some move with extreme slowness—others with amazing rapidity; while not unfrequently, the two extremes of apparent speed are exhibited by the same Comet, in different parts of its course. The comet of 1472 described an arc in the heavens of 120° in extent in a single day. Some pursue a direct, some a retrograde, and others a tortuous and very irregular course; nor do they confine themselves, like the planets, within any certain region of the heavens, but traverse indifferently every part. Their changes in apparent size, during the time they continue visible, are no less remarkable than those of their velocity; sometimes

they make their first appearance as faint and slow-moving objects, with little or no tail, but by degrees accelerate, enlarge, and throw out from them this appendage, which increases in length and brightness till they approach the sun, and are lost in his beams. After a time they again emerge on the other side, receding from the sun with a velocity at first rapid, but gradually decaying. It is after thus passing the sun, and not till then, that they shine forth in all their splendour, and that their tails acquire their greatest length—thus indicating plainly the action of the sun's rays as the exciting cause of that wonderful emanation.

(For the Odd Fellows' Record.)

#### RECOLLECTIONS OF COPENHAGEN.

No prospect can be more grateful to the traveller who has just crossed the German Ocean, than that which is presented by the shores of Elsinour Sound. The land which he has previously seen, may indeed be some relief to the eye wearied with gazing upon the waste of waters; but it is marked by an appearance of barrenness and desolation. To the South there has been hitherto only the low sandy shore of Holstein, without any appearance of vegetation or human dwelling-place; and to the North the huge monstrosities of the Swedish and Norwegian mountains, tell of a people hardy and independent, but rude, and destitute of the comforts of life. In the Sound the scene changes. The gigantic masses which form the sea-board of Sweden, here give way to a softer outline, and the City of Helsinborg with its roofs and spires, is an agreeable exchange for rugged promontories, and bluff, black, head lands. On the other side, green fields, and a well-wooded country, descend to the very beach, and the foliage mixes itself with the sea, as if the shore were the bank of a river in some alluvial country. Here is Elsinour; there Copenhagen; and as the good ship glides through the fleet, and anchors before the former city, she lowers her topsails in honor of the ancient might of the potent Danish sovereigns, whose especial office it was, to keep in check the piratical spirit of the Northern Sea Kings. What a host of historical recollections crowd upon the mind, while the eye ranges over the prospect before us! This fortress, with its hundred minarets glittering in the sun, is the very castle of Elsinour, on whose platform, 'erewhile, walked the "noble Dane,"—the creation of our own Shakspeare. It was there, too, that one of our own princesses was confined by the tyranny of a jealous husband. Within sight of the anchorage, that wondrous boy, Charles XII., made his first essay of arms; and here, Lord Cathcart landed his troops, when he took possession of Copenhagen, and the Danish flotilla. This very fleet of merchantmen, from all parts of the globe, are at anchor only to pay a tax,—the price stipulated centuries ago, for the protection from robbery accorded to the vessels of the Hanseatic League, by the Kings of Denmark.—We proceed; and new objects, and more stirring associations, strike the eyes, and awaken the imagination. The opening just a-head of us, is the entrance to the harbour of Copenhagen. As we draw near