THE HAMILTON ASSOCIATION.

"Oft shall thou see, 'ere brooding storms arise, Star after star glide headlong down the skies; And where they shot, long trails of lingering light Sweep far behind, and gild the shades of night."

To this day we often hear it said, that the wind will blow tomorrow from a certain quarter, as the stars fall in that direction.

In some old volumes of the "Gentleman's Magazine," especially those of 1793 and 1776, are some curious notions respecting shooting stars, and quite a controversy on a gelatinous or jelly-like substance they were supposed to deposit on the grass or trees, where they fell, called by the writers "star shot" or "star jelly," and explained by Withering as "tramella nostoc."

One other anecdote of ignorance in this direction. The great November meteoric shower of 1833 was witnessed by a female servant, a new arrival from Erin, in South Carolina. Rising early to fodder cattle, she saw thousands of these meteors, till daylight stopped the display, but thought nothing remarkable of it, stating when talked to afterwards about it, that she paid no heed to it, as she thought that was perhaps the way the stars were put out every morning in this country."

The phenomenon of shooting or falling stars, or meteors, as they are more generally styled, is now acknowledged to have existed since the formation of the solar system, long anterior to the existence of man. On any clear evening, it is estimated a watchful observer may see on an average two shooting stars every five minutes, and at certain periods of the year in such abundance as to have obtained the name of "meteoric showers." These apparently emanate from a certain constellation, or from a point of space known as a "radiant" represented by some certain constellation, whilst single meteors appear to come from no particular point, but move in all directions, and from every part of the sky. These are styled "sporadic." In their normal condition these wandering bodies, before they reach our vision, are known as "meteoroids," and in their own proper orbit are never visible from the earth. They are then regular circumsolar bodies, obeying the laws of motion and gravitation as rigidly as the planets. Striking, or rather entering, our atmosphere at a speed of 48 miles per second, they at once become self-luminous from the heat engendered by friction with the tmospheric medium, and the arrested motion producing a sudden

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