

Scientific American - v.8, #42, p.333
Saturday, July 2, 1853

Singular Phenomenon.

We have received a letter from Professor A. C. Carnes, of Burritt College, Tenn., with the following account of a singular phenomenon, that was seen by a number of the students, on June 1st., at 4-1/2 A. M., just as the sun was rising :— " Two luminous spots were seen, one about 2 north of the sun, and the other about 30 minutes further in the same direction. When seen, the first had the appearance of a small new moon; the other that of a large star.— The small one soon diminished, and became invisible; the other assumed a globular shape, and then elongated parallel with the horizon. The first then became visible again, and increased rapidly in size, while the other diminished, and the two spots kept changing thus for about half an hour. There was considerable wind at the time, and light fleecy clouds passed by, showing the lights to be confined to one place." The students have asked for an explanation, but neither the President nor Professors are satisfied as to the character of the lights, but think that electricity has something to do with it. The phenomenon was certainly not an electrical one, so far we can judge, and possibly was produced by distant clouds of moisture.