

XIV. *A Letter from the Rev. Henry Miles, D.D. and F.R.S. to Henry Baker, F.R.S. concerning an Aurora Borealis seen Jan. 23. 1750-51.*

Dear Sir,

Read Feb. 22.  
1749.

ON Tuesday, 23<sup>d</sup> of January last, I was called out, about Six in the Evening, to see a strange Appearance in the Sky, in the West. Suspecting it to be an ordinary *Aurora*, I did not make great Haste—When I came out, I saw a Cloud (not large) of an obscure red Colour, but much deeper than any I had ever seen before, which, I was informed, rose from the S. W. it was then advancing apace to the N. E. and quickly reached the Zenith, when, it being intercepted by the House, I hastened to the other Front, which regards the N. E. by which time there appeared a luminous Zone, about the Breadth of the Galaxy, its Edges regularly defined, compassing the Hemisphere, from the Horizon in the N. E. to the Zenith, in the same Direction, in which the above-mentioned Cloud had passed (as far as I saw its Course) from the S. W. The Colour was much fainter, and more luminous, resembling the usual Colour of an *Aurora*, and the *Laminae* or Streamers soon appeared—upon this, not being well fenced against the Wind, which blew brisk, I went in, to pursue my Intention of viewing the two beautiful Planets, *Jupiter* and *Venus*, with a reflecting Telescope, made by my ingenious Friend Mr. *Short* of *Surrey-street* (the greatest magnifying Power of which is about 200 Times); and after I had viewed

viewed them to my Satisfaction, and shewed them to some Friends, when I was about to put up the Instrument, a Cloud, of near the Size of the first, but not so deep a Colour, appeared, rising up from the S. W. which proceeded in a Line with the Planets, and, in a little time, surrounded both: *Venus* appearing still, to the naked Eye, in her full Lustre, I immediately viewed her with the Telescope, without altering the *Focus*, and saw her much more distinctly than ever I had done, on that Evening, or on any other, and of the same Opinion were all my Friends as to the Sight they had of her, on that Occasion: We all saw her Spots plain, resembling those in the Moon; which I was never so happy as to have a Sight of before—and this, while the Cloud seemed to surround it, as much as ever: But whether the Vapour might be really rarer near the Planet, than it was at some Distance, no Judgment could be made, because of her too powerful Light.

Many have observed the fixed Stars to appear thro' the Vapour with an undiminished Light oftentimes: And our great Dr. *Halley* tells us, in his Account of that remarkable *Aurora*, which was seen in *March*, 1715-16. that he observed “one of the *Laminae* pass successively over all the Stars of the little Bear, without effacing the smaller ones, in the Tail, of the fifth Magnitude; such was the extreme Rarity and Perspicuity of the Matter whereof it consisted.” *Phil. Transf.* N<sup>o</sup> 347.

I had the Honour this Week to receive a Letter from Dr. *Short* of *Sheffield*, the Author of an Account of several Meteors, in the *Phil. Transf.* N<sup>o</sup> 459. in which he says, “The 23<sup>d</sup> past, at Six at Night, the  
“ Sky

“ Sky being overclouded, all the Clouds over the  
 “ Hemisphere, turned of a sudden to a deep blood-  
 “ red Colour, for fifteen Minutes; then succeeded red  
 “ Streamers for half an Hour.”

Tooting, Feb. 16,  
 1749-50.

*I am your, and the  
 Royal Society's,  
 most obedient Servant,*

H. MILES.

XV. *A Letter from Mr. William Watson, F. R. S. to the Royal Society, declaring that he as well as many others have not been able to make Odours pass thro' Glass by means of Electricity; and giving a particular Account of Professor Bosc at Wittemberg his Experiment of Beatification, or causing a Glory to appear round a Man's Head by Electricity.*

GENTLEMEN,

Read Mar. 1. 1749-50. **T**HE Inquiry into the Nature and Properties of Electricity has been, within these few Years, the Pursuit of many excellent and ingenious Persons; and most of its extraordinary Phænomena, which have been made to appear in one Place, have, with proper Attention to the requisite Circumstances, appeared in others: But there