such small bodies from the larger planets, there is a *possibility* —supposing a meeting of these comets to occur in October— that the inhabitants of the Earth may witness the extraordinary spectacle of an encounter between two cosmical bodies, and possibly of their reciprocal penetration and amalgamation, or of their destruction by means of exhausting emanations. Events of this nature, resulting either from deflection occasioned by disturbing masses or primevally intersecting orbits, must have been of frequent occurrence in the course of millions of years in the immeasurable regions of ethereal space; but they must be regarded as isolated occurrences, exercising no more general or alterative effects on cosmical relations than the breaking forth or extinction of a volcano within the limited sphere of our Earth.

A third interior comet, having likewise a short period of revolution, was discovered by Faye on the 22d of November, 1843, at the Observatory at Paris. Its elliptic path, which approaches much more nearly to a circle than that of any other known comet, is included within the orbits of Mars and Saturn. This comet, therefore, which, according to Goldschmidt, passes beyond the orbit of Jupiter, is one of the few whose perihelia are beyond Mars. Its period of revolution is $7\frac{29}{100}$ years, and it is not improbable that the form of its present orbit may be owing to its great approximation to Jupiter at the close of the year 1839.

If we consider the comets in their inclosed elliptic orbits as members of our solar system, and with respect to the length of their major axes, the amount of their eccentricity, and their periods of revolution, we shall probably find that the three planetary comets of Encke, Biela, and Faye are most nearly approached in these respects, first, by the comet discovered in 1766 by Messier, and which is regarded by Clausen as identical with the third comet of 1819; and, next, by the fourth comet of the last-mentioned year, discovered by Blaupain, but considered by Clausen as identical with that of the year 1743, and whose orbit appears, like that of Lexell's comet, to have suffered great variations from the proximity and attraction of Jupiter. The two last-named comets would likewise seem to have a period of revolution not exceeding five or six years, and their aphelia are in the vicinity of Jupiter's orbit. Among the comets that have a period of revolution of from seventy to

comet of 1819, see *Astr. Nachr.*, 1833, No. 239; and on the identity of the comet of 1743 and the fourth comet of 1819, see No. 237 of the last mentioned work.