

**ON THE EXPECTED RETURN  
OF THE GREAT COMET OF  
1264 AND 1556**

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On the expected return of the great comet of 1264 and 1556 by J. R. Hind

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**J. R. HIND**

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ON THE  
EXPECTED RETURN  
OF  
THE GREAT COMET  
OF  
1264 AND 1556;  
WITH  
A HISTORY OF FORMER APPEARANCES,  
COMPILED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS  
AND  
EPHEMERIDES  
FOR FACILITATING ITS RE-DISCOVERY.

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BY J. R. HIND,

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PARIS, HONORARY MEMBER OF THE LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL  
SOCIETY AT MANCHESTER, ETC. ETC.

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## PREFACE.

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THE interest attaching to the probable re-appearance of a great Comet revolving round the sun in the long period of nearly three hundred years has induced me to draw up, in as popular a style as possible, a general account of its former appearances, and an explanation of the grounds on which astronomers have considered themselves justified in anticipating the return of the Comet about the present year, as an event of at least fair probability. This little work contains, I believe, nearly all that is known on the subject, from the writings of ancient historians, chroniclers, and cometographers. The reader will therefore have before him the whole data on which the identity of the Comets of 1264 and 1556 has been inferred; and I trust the particulars are given with sufficient clearness to enable him to judge for himself, without much trouble, what degree

of confidence is to be placed on its expected return about the present time. The ephemerides will, no doubt, suffice for all practical purposes, and may possibly lead to the re-discovery of the Comet soon after it is visible in our telescopes. The positions for any date, on different hypotheses, for the time of arrival at perihelion, may be laid down on a chart, and the "sweeping-line" in which the Comet will probably be found can thus be ascertained.

The time of re-appearance is, I conceive, very uncertain; and the importance of recognising the Comet, should it again visit us, requires that strict watch be kept on the neighbourhood where it is most likely to shew itself, and that this examination of the heavens be continued until there is no longer any probability of its return.

My calculations relating to the Comet have been pretty extensive, and I have not omitted to examine closely all the circumstances recorded respecting it. The conclusion at which I have arrived is this,—that there is a *very high probability* in favour of the supposed identity of the Comets of 1264 and



1556. This opinion is not hastily offered, as will be seen from the details of my investigation, given in the following pages. At the same time, I am aware that it would be *possible* to represent the facts mentioned by historians in 1264, with elements differing materially from those of the Comet of 1556. The reader will not fail to bear in mind, in forming his decision, that in the year 975, a Comet is recorded, which has great analogy to the one in question.

J. R. HIND.

*London, May, 1848.*



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