

GREAT COMET NEARS EARTH

REGULAR THREE-QUARTER CENTURY VISIT OF ASTRAL BODY ATTRACTS MUCH ATTENTION FROM SCIENTISTS.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24. — Astronomers at the naval observatory are not paying much attention to the return of Halley's comet, which is now approaching the earth. This comet makes an appearance every 75 years, and is the oldest celestial wanderer known to earth-people, having been observed, according to old records, previous to the beginning of the Christian era. Scientific observations since the inception of the modern science of astronomy show that its orbit varied little and that it may be confidently expected according to schedule time.

While Washington astronomers are not taking observation, several western observatories have made preparations to photograph the comet, and should their efforts develop anything of value, the naval observatory will later take up the comet quest.

With the announcement of every returning comet superstitious people immediately begin to entertain absurd fears of what might happen in case of a collision. While not denying that such a collision is possible, and that conditions might develop which would render it disastrous, most astronomers assert that such a disaster is so remote as to be almost unthinkable.

Some scientists believe that life was extinguished on the earth more than once by fires generated by comets and that the growth of human, animal and vegetable life had to begin all over again and took millions of years to reach its present development.

A comet, in brief, is a bit of some planet which has cracked off and is flying rapidly through space. It is intensely hot. It generates enormous heat by its friction going through the ether. Every such comet, while measuring perhaps thousands of miles in diameter at the head, carries with it a sort of burning atmosphere of its own, which precedes it for some distance and trails out behind it for hundreds of thousands of miles. This forms what is known as the "tail" of the comet.

Some comets have been declared to have tails millions of miles in length which stretch across the heavens.

Meteorites, which are fragments of comets, have destroyed ships at sea and made huge holes in the earth. Many of these have fallen in the southwest, which seems to be a favorite place for meteorites, and the desert of Arizona is pitted with holes which many miners believe were made by such visitors.

The earth came in contact with the tail of a comet on June 30, 1861. The tail was 118 degrees long. Many people thought it caused the Civil War. The comet appeared low down toward the horizon in the Northwest and went over to the Southwest. The whole heavens as we see them are only 180 degrees. So our comet struck across almost the whole heavens.

We were buried into the substance of that comet's tail 300,000 miles. And there was not the slightest thing by which anybody could know what happened. There was not even a haze. The tails of comets are so thin, so tenuous, that it is almost impossible to put it in words. Through the nucleus or head of a comet the light of a fifth magnitude star passes without any diminution.

There are dozens of lost comets known to astronomy. These monsters of the sky have into sight, astonished everybody by their brilliancy and had their orbits calculated and then when the astronomers predicted they were going to reappear they never returned and the astronomers were covered with confusion.

ASSAILS POWDER PUFF.

TAYLORSTOWN, Pa., Sept. 25.—When Rev. J. H. Moore, pastor of the Christian church of this village, attacked card-playing among male members of his church, the girls thought it great fun, but when in last Sunday night's sermon he attacked powder puffs in the same sentence with cards, there was a row which almost blossomed into a riot in church. Today the minister was forced to resign.

The phrase from the pulpit last Sunday night which caused the explosion was:

"I would as lief have a blacksnake in my house as a deck of cards, and I have my own private opinion of any woman who uses a powder puff." The pastor got no further. At

least half a dozen young women were on their feet expostulating against such talk from the pulpit.

"You're a nebbly thing and ought to be ashamed of yourself. You ought to be horsewhipped," said one of the choir-singers to the minister as she left the choir corner with the rest. "At least you should resign."

"I will, sister, just as soon as the congregation can raise the two months' back salary that is due me," said the minister calmly.

"We will see that you get your salary and that you keep your promise to quit," shouted a rather stout

lady of the congregation, who was evidently partial to the powder puff.

And the girls are keeping their promise. They say that they will have enough money soon to force the minister to get out, according to his promise.

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