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ASTRONOMER PORTA SAYS WORLD IS COMING TO END

What is the use of repining over the shortage of wood and coal at this time anyway, when along about next Wednesday, December 17, all our trials and tribulations are to come to a sudden end, according to the fine prognostications of one Professor Albert F. Porta, an American astronomer.

At that time, says the learned professor, a shudder of the solar system will wobble all the planets, and this old world of ours will be crowded out to nothingness in the shuffle.

This "cheerful" prediction came some time ago from the above gentleman, whose microscopic observations have evidently led him to the mysterious realms beyond. Inasmuch as he still maintains that his deductions are correct, and that he seems to have attained the actions of "Old Man Winter" to a nicety to give added color to his predictions, some people are beginning to take him seriously.

Thus it has been ordained by Mr. Porta that on December 17 there will be a grouping of six planets that will tug with irresistible force at the furnace of the sun. And these conspirators of the heavens will be Neptune, Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Venus and Mercury. From the spleen of their intrigue the hapless earth, not in any sense a party to the plot, will be bombarded with such weather as has never heretofore been known.

He says that the most terrific weather cataclysm experienced since human history began will result. It will be caused by the biggest sun spot on record—a sun spot that will be visible to the naked eye. It will be a gigantic explosion of flaming gases leaping hundreds of thousands of miles into space. It will have a crater large enough to engulf the earth as Vesuvius might engulf a football.

There will be hurricanes, lightning, colossal rains. There will be gigantic lava eruptions, great earthquakes, to say nothing of floods and fearful cold.

The earth will be in direct position to receive almost the full force of the monster electrical disturbances as it leaps into activity on what, to us, will be the eastern horizon of the sun's disc.

And now comes other renowned scientists that differ with Porta's dark and gruesome predictions. They say that his reckonings are correct, but that his deductions are away off. And in refuting his statements these scientists have told the world not to worry. This gladsome news comes from astronomers of the United States naval observatory and the Lowell astronomical observatory, whence come practically all of the straight tips ament celestial happenings, present or in prospect.

"There is no trace of a scientific cause for alarm," they say. "The entire prophecy is a sickening travesty on the majestic science of astronomy. It has already caused widely spread mental suffering here and in Europe. This is the limit of limits.

"Calm all fears—the planets will not be anywhere near their straight line in December, and if they should be, and originate huge spots on the sun, and the spots and adjacent explosions occur, then the earth will be far and away from their central line of concentrated pull on gravitation.

"Time and again groupings of planets have arranged themselves as they will on December 17 without producing unusual disturbances on the earth. A grouping very similar occurred during last May, without untoward effect. The world had as much reason at that time to expect the worst as it has now, if there is anything in Professor Porta's theory.

"True, in May of the present year there was a sunspot visible on the orb of day, and there was an electrical storm on the earth, but that coincidence was irrelevant, as sunspots fully as large and electrical storms fully as lively have occurred in other years when no two planets were in conjunction.

"On August 1 of this year Mercury, Venus and the earth were grouped in less than 30 degrees on

one side of the sun, and Mars, Neptune and Jupiter were similarly arranged on the other side, and the six planets so arrayed produced hardly any perceptible 'pull.'

"If the combined electro-magnetic forces of planets in conjunction could bring about solar and terrestrial storms, such storms should have been observed in giant intensity during May and August, when, according to the theory advanced by Professor Porta, the situation was equally ripe for trouble."

The vast wound in the side of the sun, predicted by Professor Porta, whence the electro-magnetic forces of the planets are to draw flaming catastrophe into space, these scientists claim is nothing particularly new, as similar solar wounds have frequently been observed, while all was serene on earth.

Taken to Hospital

On Monday Mrs. Isabel Kennedy was taken to Pendleton by Deputy Sheriff Joe Blakeley on complaint that she was mentally unbalanced. After being examined on arrival there she was committed to the state hospital near that place.

For several weeks the lady had been acting queerly, and her wanderings and utterances had irritated people on the West Side, where she lived with her husband and family a couple of doors west of the Auditorium building. She had hallucinations that she was some sort of a Messiah, but seemed to be harmless. Her mental condition seemed, however, to have taken on a tragic aspect Sunday evening, for on going on one of her little visits to a nearby house in order to tell the occupants who she was and what was going to happen, she drew from the folds of her dress a huge butcher-knife and made a pass or two at one of the occupants who had excommunicated with her and asked her to leave. After flourishing this deadly weapon for a moment or so, she took her departure. The next morning a complaint was filed with Justice of the Peace Dodd, and later she was taken away by the deputy.

The case is a sad one, for it leaves three small children minus a mother's care and love. The Kennedy's have been here for some months, during which time Mr. Kennedy has worked on the section.

COUNTY TREASURER PAYS OUT RECORD SUM

From the treasury of Umatilla county was paid out last Saturday the largest sum in its history during the month of November, when warrants totaling \$372,038.33 were drawn. The largest item was \$199,555.80 from the county road bond fund for work on the Oregon-Washington highway between Pendleton and the state line and for the old Oregon Trail between Rieth and the Morrow county line. The state highway commission drew about \$150,000 and \$40,000 went to the road to the east end.

The second half of the state tax, which amounted to \$88,159.80, was transmitted to the state treasurer by County Treasurer Grace Gilliam, this being the second largest item paid. The Teel irrigation district moneys were disbursed in the sum of \$27,663.06, and county school districts took \$23,804.45 out of the county school fund.

Mixing Poison

Under the leadership of J. D. Watson a quantity of poison has been mixed this week for use in the extermination of the troublesome and destructive jackrabbit. On Monday and Tuesday all farmers who signed up to take active part in the campaign brought into the city sacks of alfalfa for mixture with the poison. The completed preparation was then taken home, and placing it on the ground around haystacks and under flumes began. With the snow on the ground it is said the time is opportune for the carrying of the good work. Next week data should be available on the results obtained up to that time in the extermination movement of the festive jack.

Warnings Enough



PROCLAMATION

Extreme cold weather and shortage of fuel in the City of Hermiston and vicinity necessitates an order for strict economy in the use of fuel. All persons who are out of fuel are directed to report to the undersigned at once, and all of those who have a supply for present needs are directed to report at once the amount on hand and the amount, if any, available for the use of the needy and suffering.

No coal or wood will be sold except under order of the Mayor.

A full appreciation of the patriotism of our citizens in both town and country makes further explanation unnecessary at this time.

Given under my hand this 11th day of December, 1919.

F. C. MCKENZIE, MAYOR

FUEL SITUATION IS BE- COMING ACUTE LOCALLY

Along with other communities throughout the country, this part of the Umatilla project is beginning to feel the effects of coal and wood shortage. This became the more apparent when the managers of both fuel concerns in this city—the Tum-a-Lum Lumber Co. and Inland Empire Lumber Co.—disclosed the fact at the Commercial Club luncheon at the Oregon Cafe Tuesday that they had little hope of receiving but very scanty quantities of either coal or wood for some time to come.

In the general discussion of the fuel situation that ensued it was shown that not much over one-tenth of the people on the project had heeded the warning last summer of the fuel administration of the state to fill their coal bins on account of an expected shortage this winter.

Many schemes to alleviate the ever worse growing situation were broached, but all but one fell by the wayside—that one being that it was the consensus of opinion of the Club that the fuel situation be placed under control of the city council, together with three men selected from different parts of the project to work in conjunction with a committee of the council. It was pointed out that in this way it could be ascertained who were actually in need of fuel, who had an oversupply and who should receive first aid when a car of wood or coal should happen to come in. This joint committee will also use their influences

with the government to secure fuel for the local dealers.

It is surprising to note how many there are on the project who are out and on the verge of being out of coal and wood, a good insight to this being the number of applications being made daily for the past week to the dealers from persons residing in both the town and country. In the country the farmers have a little shade the best of the city folks, for when it comes to a showdown they can fall back on the much mangled but at present honored sagebrush. City people are not averse to the use of this, and while there is still some of this commodity adjacent to the town there is not near enough to supply any great demand. Therefore, should the worst happen, it is likely that curtailment of the fuel supply will be resorted to by the stoppage of all public amusements and gatherings of whatsoever nature where much fuel is used, so that essentials like hotels, business places, schools and hospitals may the longer operate. Already the public library has been closed.

There was a communication from the Civic Club, in which it asked the cooperation of the Commercial Club in fencing the cemetery on account of depredations by sheep and cattle that are allowed to roam over it during grazing periods. The Civic Club will furnish the wire and posts for the fencing of the ten acres, and the Commercial Club agreed to take care of the building part.

OH, JOY! THE COAL MINERS' STRIKE ENDS

The coal miners' strike was brought to an end Wednesday, and the membership of 4000 locals of the United Mine Workers of America has returned to work. It has been a little over five weeks since the strike began. As a result of inactivity in the coal industry the country was fast approaching a shutdown and widespread suffering among its 100,000,000 people.

President Wilson was instrumental in bringing about a settlement, and later on a full agreement of the wage controversy is to be effected by a commission.

It is predicted a complete resumption of the coal output will begin today, so by good luck the shortage here should be relieved inside of a couple or three weeks.

Lacks 37 Names

The Red Cross membership drive resulted in obtaining 540 members, which number is just 37 short of that reached last year. In other words, 37 more names are needed to give percentage of 100, and it is hoped that that number will volunteer with their dollars to bring the membership up to the required mark. In percentage Hermiston stands second in the county, Umatilla being first with over 100 per cent. The list is still open, and those who have not been solicited may leave their dollars with the Hermiston Produce & Supply Co. and receive their buttons.

Standard High School

The city of Umatilla is to have a four year standard high school, this having been brought about at a school election held there Monday.

Get useful Calendar at Sappers.

WORST SNOWSTORM SINCE HARD WINTER OF 1915-16

This No Place for Wobblers

That Hermiston is not a healthy place for any I. W. W.'s was demonstrated Wednesday, when members of the local post of the American Legion, upon learning that there were several transient wobblers in the city, proceeded to run two of them out and had two more arrested. One of these, a boy of about 18 years of age, proved to be the son of a rancher near Cold Springs, and after receiving a lecture from Justice of the Peace E. P. Dodd, was let go. But the other, a cook, who, besides being an I. W. W. or an ardent sympathizer with them, had committed an unprintable crime of which evidence showed him guilty, was immediately bound over to the circuit court by the justice and taken to Pendleton by James Todd, who had been deputized to deliver him to the sheriff in that city.

The American Legion boys vow they will tolerate none of the I. W. W. ilk in Hermiston.

Celebration Postponed

Just as several auto loads of Hermiston Commercial Club members had made preparation to go to Echo to attend the celebration in honor of the Teel irrigation district project which was scheduled to take place in that city Wednesday, word was received that the big event had been postponed indefinitely. This, it was learned, was brought about through the disrupted condition of almost everything by reason of the big snowstorm then prevailing all over the country. It is probable the celebration will be held in the spring under more congenial circumstances than at present.

Bakery Opening Deferred

The date of the opening of the new bakery establishment, which was to have been put in operation this month by Raymond W. Hamm, proprietor of the Oregon Cafe, has been postponed for the time being on account of inability to get either coal or wood. Mr. Hamm promises the public, however, that just as soon as the fuel situation clears up so he can get an adequate sufficiency, the bakery will be put in operation to its full capacity.

PUT NOT YOUR MONEY IN RURAL ROUTE BOXES

A communication has been received by Postmaster Skinner from the postal department at Washington, D. C., calling attention to the fact that there is a growing habit among patrons of rural routes throughout the country to deposit money in their mail boxes for the carrier to buy money orders for them. The department desires this practice discontinued in order to safeguard against its loss, as there has been several complaints of theft of money so left forwarded to the postal authorities of late from various parts of the country.

In conformity with the above, patrons of the local rural route should discontinue putting money for the purchase of money orders in their mail boxes, and instead give it to the carrier personally or go direct to the postoffice.

Simple Chimney Cleaner

The best way to prevent soot-clogged flues is to burn your old worn out dry cell batteries. This is an easy and very efficient method. Merely get a good hot fire going, knock the pitch out of the top of the batteries (as it may make a cinder), then throw the old batteries on the fire, open the lower draft and the damper in the chimney. This causes the batteries to burn quickly and the zinc and other ingredients used in the cells, having a chemical affinity for carbon dioxide (soot), quickly convert it into gas. If this is done when the batteries are changed on the gas engine, tractor, motor car or telephone, the chimney and pipes of the stove or furnace will be kept practically sootless at no expense. These worn out batteries are good for no other purpose.

This week witnessed one of the heaviest snowfalls that has occurred in this part of Umatilla county since the winter of 1915-16. Unlike the snowfall at that time, which came heavy about two weeks apart, the fall of the beautiful was steady this time, beginning Tuesday night and continuing all day Wednesday, until it had piled up a record of 13 inches on the level.

While there was some hope of a chinook coming along, there don't seem to be much chance for it now, for the mantle of white still remains intact and the cold weather seems to be going to continue.

The snow has not impeded traffic hereabouts to any great extent thus far, but it has been hard for automobiles to negotiate, and has been the cause of many ranchers resorting to "Old Dobbin" to bring them to town when business demands. Sleighing is good now, but there is a scarcity of these vehicles because there hardly ever is a winter here with enough snowfall for their use.

This storm, together with the cold spell that has been with us for over a week, was general all over the western states. Western Oregon seems to have been as hard hit as Eastern Oregon, and Portland especially had a taste of a real blizzard Wednesday, the following day revealing that a total of 13.7 inches of snow covered streets and sidewalks in that city.

Pendleton was in the snow area strong, also, and at the same time was hit by a fuel shortage to such an extent that a closing order on pool halls and other nonessential establishments for certain hours was resorted to by Mayor Vaughan so as to conserve the supply and alleviate suffering among the populace that might follow from such shortage just at this time.

While Hermiston has been experiencing a shortage of fuel also, as yet there has been no especial need of curtailing the hours of business places. But this must be if wood and coal in railroad lots do not soon arrive, for the scarcity of these commodities becomes more apparent with each succeeding day of the cold weather prevailing up to the time we go to press.

Was Here on Visit

Mrs. D. W. Zeller returned to her home in Portland Tuesday after a business and pleasure visit here of several days, during which she was a guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. West. While here the lady made this office a pleasant call and renewed subscription to The Herald for another year. Mr. and Mrs. Zeller were long time residents of Hermiston, and still own considerable residential property in this city.

Will Locate on Project

William Stout arrived here last Saturday from Columbus, Ohio. He is a brother of Mrs. M. E. Holmington and uncle of Mrs. Art Spinning, both of whom he has been visiting. Mr. Stout has about made up his mind to locate here permanently, and in the spring will secure a tract of land and enter the farming game in earnest.

PORTLAND MUS'IC FOR XMAS NIGHT DANCE

A grand ball is to take place in Hermiston Auditorium Christmas night. In securing music for the occasion Manager Harry Kelley has gone the limit. So as to give those who participate something new and classy in dance music he has contracted with Bouker's Orchestra of Portland to furnish the musical thrills on that evening.

And Bouker's Orchestra will do it, too, for with it will be a trap drummer who has a xylophone set that cost \$750, which he will bring along and put into use at the dance. This makes the orchestra an excellent dance institution, of which it is said the symphony is so perfect and soothing that one can go into dreamland while dancing and still keep precise step to it in that subconscious condition.

A dance is to be held in Stanfield Christmas Eve, the above orchestra having been secured for that also.