

NEBULA HYPOTHESIS.

Everybody has heard the phrase, the nebula hypothesis, but what is it?

In a few words this is the meaning of "nebula hypothesis." That the sun, the planets and all that is in them were at one time in the inconceivably remote past a vast mass of chaotic, incandescent gas all jumbled together in an enormous nebula, or cloud.

To begin with, the first conception that science has dared to make, however, takes us one step further back. Without mentioning the origin of matter itself science conceives that in the beginning all matter was uniformly distributed throughout space—that there were no stars, no planets, no satellites, but that all space was filled with the matter we now have divided up into very fine particles some distance apart. The consistency of such material was performed very thin indeed, much more rarefied than the highest vacuum we can obtain now by air pumps. From this state to the nebulous state the theory has a missing link, one that can only be satisfied by supposing divine command, for it assumes, in the words of Professor Todd, that "gradually centers of attraction formed and these centers pulled in toward themselves other particles. As a result of the inward falling of matter toward these centers, the collision of its particles and their friction upon each other the material masses grew hotter and hotter. Nebulae seeming to fill the entire heavens were formed—luminous fire mist, like the filmy objects still seen in the sky, though vaster and exceedingly numerous."

This process is supposed to have gone on for countless ages, faster in some regions than in others. Many million nebulae were formed and set in rotation around their own axes. This happily can be explained by science. Whenever particles are attracted toward a center and are kept from falling directly to this center a whirlpool is formed, rotating in one direction. An example of this, though humble and not exactly analogous, is the rotation of water in a basin when the stopper is pulled out of the bottom. Gravity attracts the water immediately above the hole, which starts filling out, thus leaving a space to be filled. The rest of the water rushes in from all sides to do this, and the whirlpool is the result.

Now each of these whirling nebulae became exceedingly hot, and each formed what is known as a star or sun, our sun being one. The earth and other planets had not then come into separate existence, of course, as it is supposed that they were thrown off later from the sun.

Our sun in its nebulous form and rotating swiftly on its axis gradually flattened at its poles on account of centrifugal motion. This phenomenon is entirely familiar to those who have seen a ball of clay on a potter's wheel gradually flatten. The motion was so swift and the mass so nebulous that the sun to be took the shape of a disk. As time went on the outer part became cool and somewhat rigid, while the inner part continued its cooling and contracting. Thus the inner part drew away from the outer, leaving a ring of matter whirling around on the outside. This breaking off of the ring is supposed to be hastened by the inability of the outside to keep up the swift motion of the central mass, both on account of the slight cohesion and of the centrifugal force. But this particular part of the argument has nothing to stand on if the first law of motion is true.

In the successive stages of the sun's contraction this process was repeated over and over again, until several rings were whirling around the central orb. They would necessarily be in the same plane. Now, these rings, not being uniform in mass or thickness, would each gradually accumulate toward the densest portion until they, too, would form a ball which would subsequently flatten, and if the substance continued nebulous and the ball was large enough they would also slough rings.

Of course the rings the sun discarded have become the planets, which, as required by the theory, are all very nearly in the same plane. The rings that the planets formed have become moons or satellites. So we are driven to conclude that our sun at one time filled all the space from his present position to the farthest planet in the solar system.

From this theory there is another thing that we have to believe, and that is that every star in the heavens has gone through this same process and has a family of planets sailing around it, just as our sun has. It would be impossible to see these planets, of course, for it is impossible to see a star, even with the greatest telescope, except as a mere point of light.

As regards the proving of this nebula hypothesis, of course it cannot be done. But everything points to its accuracy. Many nebulae are seen even now among the stars that seem to be going through the delayed process of world forming. Around one of the planets of our own solar system, Saturn, are three rings, which are probably destined in time to become moons, in the opinion of some scholars.—A. T. Hodge in New York Tribune.

Rather the Other. "Don't you know that tune? I forget the name of it, but it goes like this." And he whistled it.

After he had finished his friend turned to him with a sigh. "I wish to goodness you had remembered the name and not the tune," he said.—Lippincott's.

Paganry Appeals to the Negro's Tropical Imagination.

Once upon a time a Philadelphia lawyer came south. He had a pair of big spectacles, an inquisitive mind, and he wanted to know, says Harris Dickson in Success Magazine. With his southern friend he was hurrying to the courthouse. A negro parade blocked the street—negroes in carriages, on horseback, on foot; negroes with swords and axes, stumpy negroes with Masonic banners, lean negroes with Pythian devices, fat negroes with Odd Fellows' insignia, miscellaneous negroes with miscellaneous emblems.

The Philadelphian pushed through the crowd and ran back in great excitement. "What's it all about? What are they doing?"

The southerner couldn't explain, but beckoned to a very intelligent young negro—who, by the way, was a prominent politician—and asked, "Tom, what's the occasion for all this parade?"

The young negro laughed. "Now, judge, you ought to know that a nigger don't need no 'casion for a parade."

Tom had spoken a mouthful. Paganry appeals to the negro's tropical imagination. Churches and lodges furnish most of the social life that he knows. He does not ask why the brass band is playing. He keeps step with the fellow that beats the drum and is happy.

A Scotch Shepherd's Remedy For All Kinds of Maladies.

A highland shepherd, one Donald McAlpin, a famous dancer, was reputed to have cured his mistress of a mysterious malady by means of dancing a reel with her, and this story being passed abroad gained him the reputation of being a successful physician. His humble cottage in Stockmuck, overlooking Strathspey, was besieged with crowds of patients who hoped to get rid of their ailments by a dance with Donald. The shepherd did not hesitate to take advantage of this stroke of good luck and soon had a large and thriving practice.

The treatment adopted was very simple, the main features being as follows: In cases of indigestion moderate doses of medicated "aqua" were taken, followed by the eum shall, or promenade step. For catarrh Donald prescribed in order to produce perspiration a large dose of gruel mixed with honey and butter, followed by eum crask, or highland fling. All the different processes (terminated in the patient being well wrapped up in warm blankets, and the doses of medicine and dancing were repeated, according to the patient's constitution and the nature of his disease.—British Medical Journal.

The Telephone and Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar missed a great deal in not knowing the telephone or at least in not using it if he knew it. One can see the telephone engineer attached to the Roman postoffice endeavoring, but without avail, to get an instrument installed at the capitol and at the palace. "I am instructed by the emperor to say that he does not desire these barbarian novelties, and so Thomas Alva Edison need not call again with his magician's apparatus." A signal blunder! We can imagine what would have happened. "Hello, 2187 Tiber! Is it thou, Artemidorus? I understand thou rangst me up this morning. What? Details of a plot? Go not to the senate today? Beware of Erutus? Go not near Casca? Right, and I thank thee, Artemidorus. I will have an extra guard put on instantly and the conspirators arrested." And so, though Artemidorus was unable to give his warning in the street, he gave it over the telephone, and Caesar's valuable life and with it the fortune of Rome were saved.—St. James' Gazette.

A Gloomy African Pool.

There is a large, deep and mysterious pool in the valley of the upper Kafue river, northwestern Rhodesia. This wonderful pool lies in flat country, and one comes to it quite suddenly, its banks being concealed by dense forest. There is a small native village near the pool, and the inhabitants have a superstitious dread of it. They refuse to drink the water or use it for any purpose whatever. To sit beside this still, pellucid pool of unknown depth, surrounded by precipitous walls in the heart of the tropical forest, would induce a feeling of awe in the breast of even the most civilized man.—London Mail.

A Word For the Tightwad.

In France they have an expressive phrase, "liquid money." It means that part of the family income which is used for the necessities and luxuries of life. It is quite apart from and kept apart from the more serious, substantial part of the income, which is the saved part. In America the entire income is "liquid, and the man who attempts to make part of it solid is called a "tightwad." A "tightwad" is really a man who creates a principal—a capital, in other words—and he is the living example of what every private business must be and of how the country's resources should be handled.—Argonaut.

Voting In Spain.

Voting in Spain is held to be a duty to the community, not merely a privilege of the individual, and neglect of civic obligations carries its own penalty. Male adults of legal age and under seventy, with the exception of priests, notaries and judges, are required to vote in municipal elections. Failure to cast a ballot is punishable by having one's name published as censured for neglect, by having taxes increased 2 per cent, by suffering a deduction of 1 per cent in salary if employed in the public service and for the second offense the loss of right to hold elective or appointive office.

A Pig Tale.

The Southern negro who is not possessed of a pig considers himself poor indeed. This is well known to the white people, so that when an ancient darky approached a white neighbor with the request that he "gib him er half er dollar ter help buy er pig," 'case dat yuther pig Ah had is done daid," the desired amount was promptly forthcoming.

A few days later the white man met the old negro and inquired:

"Did you get another pig, uncle?"

"Deed Ah did, sah, an' hit am a fine shoat, an' Ah sholy am much obleeged to you fer helpin' me, Marse Tom."

"Well, take better care of this one," Marse Tom suggested. "By the way," he added idly, "what did the other pig die of—'choleera?"

The old man pulled his forelock and smiled deprecatingly.

"Now, Marse Tom, whut for yo' all want er dat?" he said. "Foh a matter er fac, dat yuther pig died 'case Ah hit him on de haid wid er axe—he bein' fat an' de wedder jest right, an' me bein' hungry fer fresh meat!"

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