

THE FINAL SMASH UP

MANY PREDICTIONS CONCERNING THE END OF THE WORLD.

These Prophecies Have Startled the Inhabitants of This Old Earth From as Far Back as the Year 1000—The Fear of Comets.

In 1521 Jean Stoffer, a German, plunged Europe into terror by predicting a universal deluge in 1524 "owing to the conjunction of several planets in a watery sign"—the watery signs are Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces. At his ominous words thousands fled to the mountains, and others took refuge in boats. Avignon, a doctor of law and canon of Toulouse, even built a sort of ark on four pillars as a haven of refuge. There was no need of such excitement. No flood came. On the contrary, the season was even calmer and drier than usual. Stoffer had, indeed, made a serious blunder and one for which many of his fellow astrologers, including Cardan, never pardoned him.

Stoffer, however, is only one in a long list of prophets whose predictions in regard to the end of the world have proved utterly false. As far back as the year 1000 many communities in Europe were driven half distracted by rumors that the day of judgment was close at hand, and again, in 1186, whole cities were paralyzed with fright for the same reason. Now and again during the latter part of the middle ages the same extraordinary phenomenon was witnessed, though in a lesser degree, and ever since the modern revival of occultism there have not been wanting erratic prophets of the Jean Stoffer type.

Years ago a Mr. Baxter created a sensation in England by his prediction that the world would certainly come to an end in 1887. Thousands believed in him, and great was their surprise when they discovered that he was mistaken. Yet such is the credulity of human nature that their faith in him remained unshaken, and, no matter what year he selected as the final one of the world's existence, they accepted his prediction as gospel truth.

Equally bold, though doubtless not as popular as Baxter, is the Abbe Dupin, curé of the village of Dion, in France, and author of a book with the following extraordinary title: "The grand coup or universal cataclysm will ravage the world between the 13th and 21st of September, 1896, according to the Scriptures. The prophecies of the Old and New Testaments compare with those of the fathers and with the secrets of La Salette, in which is foretold the great war which will destroy nine-tenths of the human race, the coming of antichrist and his reign, after which the church will triumph over her enemies and the reign of Christ begin on earth." The author fixed September, 1896, as the time when the great "coup," as he called it, would take place, but he added that if it did not take place then it would certainly occur before the close of 1899.

The appearance of comets has frequently given rise to similar predictions. This was the case when the famous comet of 1880 appeared. Whiston ascribed the deluge to its former appearance, and such an excitement did it cause among all classes of the people that Bayle wrote a treatise to prove the absurdity of belief founded on these portents. Mme. de LeVigne, writing at the same time, said:

"We have a comet of enormous size. Its tail is the most beautiful object conceivable. Every person of note is alarmed and believes that heaven, interested in their fate, sends them a warning in this comet. They say that the courtiers of Cardinal Mazarin, who is despaired of by his physicians, believe this prodigy is in honor of his passing away and tell him of the terror with which it has inspired them. He had the sense to laugh at them and to reply facetiously that the comet did him too much honor."

M. Camille Flammarion, the distinguished French astronomer, says on the same subject: "In this century predictions concerning the end of the world have several times been associated with comets. It was announced that the comet of Biela, for example, would intersect the world's orbit on Oct. 29, 1832, which did as predicted. There was great excitement. Once more the end of things was declared at hand. Humanity was threatened. What was going to happen? The orb—that is to say, the path of the earth—had been confounded with the comet itself. The latter was not to reach that point of its orbit traversed by the comet until Nov. 30, more than a month after the comet's passage, and the latter was at no time to be within 20,000,000 leagues of us. Once more we got off with a good fright."

In his entertaining book, "La Fin du Monde," M. Flammarion gives a graphic description of a collision between the earth and a comet which is to take place some time in the twenty-fifth century. "These two heavenly bodies, the earth and the comet," he writes, "will meet like two trains rushing headlong upon each other with resistless momentum, as if impelled to mutual destruction by an insatiable rage. But in the present instance the velocity of shock will be 865 times greater than that of two express trains having each a speed of 100 kilometers per hour."—New York Herald.

Undisputed.
First Lawyer—You are a cheat and a swindler.
Second Lawyer—You are a liar and a blackguard.
The Court (softly)—Come, gentlemen, let's get down to the disputed points of the case.—Philadelphia North American.

THE WINDOW IN THE TENT.

An Old Soldier's Way of Securing Ventilation When in the Field.

"I never pull down the window at the top to let in a little fresh air when I go to bed," said the old soldier, "without thinking of how we used to open the window in the tents in the army in wartimes. An A tent, seven feet square at the base and running up, wedge shaped, to a ridgepole seven feet above the ground, made comfortable enough quarters for four men if you could leave the tent open, which was equivalent to leaving off the front of the house, but if it were cold or rainy and the wind blew on the front of the tent so that you had to close it, why then you wanted ventilation somewhere, and you got it by making an opening in the back of the tent.

"There was a seam, overlapped, running down the middle of the back of the tent from the ridge pole to the ground, and we used to cut the stitches along that seam, up near the top of the tent, and spread the sides apart by putting in a stick six or eight inches long across the middle, making there a diamond shaped opening about a foot long, which served the purpose admirably.

"The men's guns stood at that end of the tent, butts resting on a piece of cracker box, the barrels held in some sort of a holder secured to the tent pole. If the wind changed on some rainy night and came around to blow against the back of the tent, the rain would come in on the guns and on us, and then somebody would get up and shut the window—that is, take the stick out and let the canvas come together again there and then open the tent a little at the other end, at the front.

"This all used to seem kind of strange, then somehow, though practically it was just what I would have done in the old house at home and just what I'd do here now."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

CECIL RHODES' IDEA.

His Reason For Declining A Drink In The Early Days at Kimberley.

In connection with the foundation of Cecil Rhodes' colossal wealth, there is a story told by an old fellow miner, himself lately a colonial minister of finance, which illustrates at least one trait in the character of the great South African financier and politician.

During the early days of the Kimberley diggings it was the custom when a miner found a particularly fine gem to invite those about him to the ceremony of "wetting the stone"—i. e., drinking champagne at the finder's expense, with the idea that it would bring good luck in the discovery of another treasure. In the adjoining claim to that first taken up by Mr. Rhodes, in the very center of the crater holding the precious blue dirt, this invitation had upon a certain occasion gone forth, and the men were going their way up to the hotel when it was noticed that Rhodes stood aloof.

"Hello! Come on Rhodes!" shouted the lucky finder of the gem. "Aren't you coming up to 'wet the stone' for good luck?" To which, however, Cecil Rhodes only shook his head.

"I say, come on, there's a good fellow," persisted his neighbor.

"What are you going to do?" asked Rhodes, looking up.

"Wet the stone with champagne, of course."

"Well," replied the future magnate, decisively, "I did not come out here to drink champagne, but to make money," and then went on with his work.

That Mr. Rhodes has succeeded in that purpose, probably beyond all flights of his imagination, is now a matter of history.—New York Sun.

Both Afflicted.

There came to a young doctor an uncommonly clean infant, borne in the arms of a mother whose face showed the same abhorrence of soap. Looking down upon the child for a moment, the doctor solemnly said:

"It seems to be suffering from 'hydrophobic hydrophobia.'"

"Oh, doctor, is it as bad as that?" cried the mother. "That's a big sickness for such a mite. Whatever shall I do for the child?"

"Wash its face, madam," replied the doctor. "The disease will go off with the dirt."

"Wash its face—wash its face, indeed!" exclaimed the mother, losing her temper. "What next, I'd like to know!"

"Wash your own, madam—wash your own," was the rejoinder.—Buffalo Enquirer.

Worse Off Than He Thought.

Shadbolt—Well, I'm \$50 worse off than I was yesterday morning.

Dingus—How's that?

Shadbolt—I was held up by footpads on my way home last night and robbed.

Dingus—I'm sorry for you, old man. But they didn't get the \$5 I borrowed of you before you started home, anyhow.

Shadbolt—That's so. I forgot that. I'm \$55 worse off than I was yesterday morning.—Chicago Tribune.

Conceded Fitness.

"This 'Gatos Ajar' design is a handsome one," said the tombstone man.

"It is just what I want," said the widow. "He never shut a door in all our married life without being told."—Indianapolis Journal.

In battle red uniforms attract the eye most readily, and 12 men wearing that color are killed to 7 in rifle green, or 6 in blue or 5 in either brown, blue gray or gray.

Pleasure is very seldom found where it is sought. Our brightest blazes of gladness are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks.—Johnson.

THE BRAIN IN SLEEP.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CAUSES THAT PRODUCE DREAMS.

The Influence on the Nerves by the Stomach and the Food That It Contains—Events That Occur in a Fraction of a Second.

Dreams are generally a repetition of thoughts unguided by reason. Those caused by internal action or brought about by action within the body are due entirely to the action and state of the stomach, which in turn is affected by the quantity and quality of food consumed.

The first ends or feelers of the nerves are located in the walls of the stomach, and as the food is digested they draw up the nourishment and distribute it throughout the nervous system to replace the waste that has taken place during the day. If the stomach be surcharged with an abundance of heating food, too much nourishment is forced upon the brain, causing an abnormal filling of the channels, thereby expanding them, bringing them in touch with others and causing the matter from one to overflow into or to mix with the fluid of neighboring channels. Whenever the fluid traverses a channel more or less forcibly the thought which originated that passage is reproduced more or less vividly; hence insures the general mixing up of thoughts which originally had no connection with each other.

An overloaded stomach also causes a flow of blood to the brain, sent there by nature to assist in assimilating the extra nourishment, and the overcharged blood vessels, pressing upon the nerve channels near the brain, cause even more turbulent disturbances. This accounts for the advice of so many medical men that no considerable quantity, especially of animal food, should be taken immediately before bedtime. The crossing, recrossing and touching of these thought channels brought about in this way produce the absurd mixtures of fancies that often come to us when we sleep.

The stomach, too, is a mill which keeps on forever grinding, the walls acting as the grindstones. When, therefore, there is nothing between them, or, in other words, when the stomach is empty, one wall grinds upon the other, causing an irritation of the nerves which produces that peculiar sensation of falling from some great height.

To understand how external action will affect the dream of a sleeper it must be borne in mind that those dreams which seem to take hours, and even days, in passing really occupy but a minute fraction of a second. If, therefore, we are awakened by some loud, strident noise, say by the cracking of a whip, then between the time that the sound strikes the ear while we are yet asleep and the time that we are fully awake to realize what has caused the sound a few moments only have elapsed, but those few moments were sufficient to allow of a dream of apparently several hours' duration.

As an example: A milkman, driving up beneath an open bedroom window, cracks his whip smartly. Immediately the thought produced by the sound causes a dream. The sleeper imagines himself a soldier who has fallen into the hands of the enemy. He is led out to be shot. He stands blindfolded, with hands tied, before the platoon of soldiers. He hears the click, click, click as the rifles are cocked. He hears the word given, and the noise of the volley rings out on his ears. Then he awakes with a start, to hear the rumble of the milkman's wagon as he cracked his whip and drove off over some rough cobblestones.

A blow, a cut or a sensation of pain will operate in the same way and awaken certain channels of thought connected with pain just as the noise awakes those connected with sound.

For instance, a sleeper dreams that he is closed up in some close traveling carriage and is being driven rapidly off in an unknown direction by a man who has designs upon his purse and life. He tries to shout, in vain he struggles to get free and in the tussle drives an arm through the glass window of the carriage. The hand is cut and bleeding. It smartens fearfully, and he awakes to find that in his sleep he had carelessly thrown out an arm, and his hand has smashed some fine medicine glass on a stand by the bedside. The whole dream passed between the time that the hand first struck the glass, creating the sensation of pain, and the moment that the sleeper awoke to realize the fact.—Chicago Record.

A Woman's Compliment.

"After you had been at my house the other day," said one woman to another, "my little maid said she thought you were such a pretty woman. I don't like to correct her too often for taking such an interest as she does in every one who calls to see me. The first time Miss Blank called she thought she ought to say something, so she said: 'Isn't Miss Blank a nice lady; she's so quiet.' And you know she isn't that either!"

And silence reigned while the other woman digested it.—New York Sun.

Bisulful Moments.

Hanlon—He assured me he was very sorry that I made myself appear so ridiculous.

Melville—That's all right. There are a great many persons who are never happier than when they are feeling sorry for somebody else.—Boston Transcript.

The gravestone over the burial place of John Foster, almanac maker, in the old burying ground at Dorchester, Mass., bears the inscription, which was dictated by himself, "Still was his wash."

Phillips Brooks is credited with the following words of wisdom: Wao are the men who have succeeded in the best way? Who are the men who have done good work while they lived, and have left their lives like monuments for the inspiration of mankind? They are the men who have at once known themselves in reference to their circumstances, and known their circumstances in reference to themselves; true men, sure of their own individuality, sure of their own distinctness and difference from every other human life, sure that there was never another man just like him since the world began, that, therefore, they had their own duties, their own rights, their own work to do, and why to do it; but men also who questioned the circumstances in which they found themselves, and asked what was the best thing which any man in just those circumstances might set himself to do? These are the men before whom there rises by and by a dream, which later gathers itself into a hope, and at last solidifies into an achievement. It is something which only they can do, because of their distinctness and uniqueness. It is something which even they could not do in any other circumstances than just these in which they do it now.

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Eighteen Cases of Typhoid Fever.

An epidemic of typhoid fever is raging in the western portion of Williamsport. Eighteen cases have been reported from one square and the health authorities are endeavoring to stamp out the disease. The hospital is crowded with typhoid cases and nurses have been advertised for.

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