

WILL THE COMET HIT US?

A Young Nephew Gives His Anxious Auntie Some Hints.

New York, Jan. 24, 1910.
My Dear Auntie:—I have your recent letter, and I feel very much inflated over the fact that you have asked for my opinion relative to Halley's comet coming in contact with this little "green footstool" upon which we reside.

You could hardly have found a person more competent to answer your inquiry than your humble servant, as I think I know a wonderful lot about astronomical matters. I ought to, at any rate, for once I went through an observatory, and of course, I got a heap of information on astronomy then and there. And, on my way out, I fell down a twenty-foot flight of stairs and got a few more points on astronomy. And at another time, in some most mysterious manner, I bumped my head on a policeman's club, and it was upon this eventful occasion that "I looked into the future far as human eye could see," and next morning paid the judge for this lesson in astronomy.

Thus, you see, I should be well versed on the subject, and in fact my astronomical bump is very well developed.

My private and professional opinion is that Halley's comet will hit this little globe of ours. However, from my recent observations, I can assure you that on this corner of the globe we are in no danger. The comet will not hit the United States. At present it is headed for, and will probably hit, about two car-lengths' south of Hohokus, N. J. It is now 567,392,682 zacters (one zacter is equal to 65,387,859 miles) to the seaward, and it is traveling at the rate of—well, I don't like to tell you how fast it is coming, but, according to my latest calculations it should dock at about 12:23 a. m. on February 30th.

Now, do not become alarmed, if you have any friends in the vicinity of Hohokus, as there is a possibility that I have made an error in my figures. Other astronomers have done such things. I remember, many, many years ago, when I was a boy, I had the goldarnest scare of my life on a similar proposition. I heard the older wisecracks talking about a star or planet, (Arcturus I think was the name), that was coming our way at the rate of several hundred thousand million miles per second and was then only some million billion miles away to the horizonward, and, my impression was that it was only a matter of days or weeks when old mother earth and all her cargo would disappear like a snow ball in Hades. That's one of the reasons why I never would study or do anything that wasn't absolutely necessary to sustain life. I said "What's the use when the grand finish is just around the corner?" That was years and years ago, and yet that darned old star has not touched us. It must have had bad weather or broken some of its machinery.

Speaking of being touched by stars: A few nights ago I got touched by a "star" for my watch and pin—but she wasn't of the heavenly variety.

Being hit by things from way up yonder does not worry me half as much as how I am going to hit a job paying about ten thousand with two six-months' vacations a year.

Now, my dear Auntie, don't wander away into the solar system any more. Stay right here on earth. Sit down in your easy chair, take a good pinch of snuff, and keep right on with your knitting; keep Uncle's socks well darned, don't play bridge, and, when we all "cross the river," I will guarantee that you will land right on top of a great, big, fleecy cloud where you can play all day upon your golden harp and sing "I Love to be in Heaven, But Oh! You Naughty Old Earth."

I am now going down around the corner and make some "observations" through the bottom of a great, big thick glass. Good-bye, VICTOR.

WHAT IS A COMET?

The appearance of a small comet and the near approach of Halley's are incidents which have aroused much interest among those who know little and usually care less about astronomy. We are asked to state the nature of comets, and answer as fully as possible in brief space. Very visible comets, possibly all, are members of the solar system, have very eccentric elliptical orbits and reappear, according to the measure of eccentricity, some having a period of few years, Halley's about seventy-eight years and others possibly thousands of years. The sun and all the major planets are substantially in the same plane, but the comets have unrestricted paths. Some come almost from the zenith, go around the sun and disappear northward and others do the same from the south. Sometimes they are disturbed in their orbits by planets, notably Jupiter, and thereafter have shorter or different periods. Some break up and form meteors, which we see in the sky at night. They are believed to have arisen at the time of the evolution of the solar system from the original nebula. It should be said that the nebular hypothesis of Laplace is no longer accepted in its entirety by astrophysicists and by many is rejected absolutely.

The present theory has for its basis that matter is eternal, that there always have been solar systems, just as now in our universe, and that nebulae are caused by the

crash of suns, either two dead ones, like our earth or moon, two burning ones or one live and one dead one. The result of the crash, either direct or so close as to result in breaking up by tidal action and gravity, is the production of a spiral nebula, not the fire mist of Laplace, but containing more or less solid matter and immense quantities of gases. The solar system is evolved in the plane of the collision—a central sun, planets and their satellites—but comets are supposed to be largely gaseous bodies hurled off at any angle at such force as to get to extraordinary distances before returning in the elliptical circuit around the parent body.

Comets are so tenuous that faint stars can be seen through them. Some are almost like a vacuum. It is estimated that a very large one contains such a small quantity of matter that it could easily be compressed into a pill box, although it extends many millions of miles across the sky. A comet grows brighter as it approaches the sun, partly because of reflection, partly because the heat of its own matter increases and because the component matter is driven off from the head by the radial pressure of the sun. The earth has passed, as is believed, through the tail of a comet without injury.

Comets cause no damage and have little effect of any sort on our system. Large comets are wonderful spectacles, and, although not wholly understood, are being studied with great care in these days by astronomers. Halley's will be the most brilliant seen since 1882. It will be visible in the spring and will probably be extraordinary in its phenomena.

DEACON WAS A SMART MAN.

Opposite the railroad depot, where the colonel had to wait for an hour or two, was a grocery kept by a colored man, and to pass the time away he strolled across. Business seemed to be very brisk with the grocer, though all his customers were of his own color. The colonel noticed that sugar, tea and coffee were asked for most frequently, and during a temporary lull he approached the battered old scales, on which everything was weighed, and picked up some of the weights. The hollow in each had been filled with lead, and it was quite sure that a pound weight would balance 20 ounces of coffee. By and by it was remarked to the old man:

"I see you have filled your weights with lead?"

"Yes, sah—yes, sah," was the reply.

"What was the idea?"

"To keep de dirt outer de holes. Can't git no dirt in dar' now."

"Was it your idea?"

"No, sah. I nebber should have dun got dat idea but for Dekun Williams. De dekon said it was de way dey did down in Atlanta, and he fixed 'em up for me widout cost."

"The deacon buys all his groceries here, doesn't he?" was asked.

"He do sah. Yes, sir, no white man kin git de dekon's trade away from me."

He was asked to take his weights over to the depot and see how they held out, and he picked them up and started off with a puzzled look on his face. They were placed on the scales one by one, and when the last had been tested the old man threw up his hands and exclaimed:

"Befo' de Lawd, but it am no wonder I've gone into bankruptcy fo'teen different times and had to sell my mawl and make de old woman go barefoot! Dat ar' pound weight weighs 22 ounces, and every time Dekun Williams or anybody else has bought a pound of sugar he has got three-quarters of a pound ober! Shoot! I've gwine back to close de stoah and put up a sign of 'Busted Agin!'"—Exchange.

Alligator's Tail.

A great delicacy in Florida is the tip of an alligator's tail. It tastes like frog's legs, though a bit more gamey. Alligator tails are best just after the rice bird season. The big alligator floats in the water with only their eyes showing. When they see a flock of these fat, juicy little birds, they dive to the bottom. Their long wide snouts scoop up some of the loam and they float to the surface again, with just the rich soil showing. The birds think it is an island. They alight upon it. When the whole family is there the big reptile turns suddenly. Just as the birds scramble off he opens his mouth once. They are gone. The birds are neat little feeders and the alligator is an epicure at this time of the year. The rice bird diet makes the tip of his tail, of which he is most vain, tender and sweet.

A Nomadic Piece of Land.

Cape Cod itself is sand, and like everything of a desert nature is nomadic. Like the Arab, it is always silently stealing away, so that the appearance of the peninsula constantly changes. The prevailing winds in the winter being from the north, the sand is blown south; in summer it is blown t'other way, but the winter winds being stronger the land is gradually working south.

Monomy at the lower end used to be an island, its extremity being called Cape Malabar, a name not used now. This island of Monomy is rapidly growing toward Nantucket, it having advanced some five miles in the last fifty years.

Seemed Unlikely.

Little Loren had watched the rain pour down all day. Finally when the clouds began to break away, he said, "Mamma, do you suppose these clouds will ever be fit to use again?"

Wishing and Winning.

There is a vast difference, says a wise philosopher, between wishing and winning. Many a good man has failed because he had his wishbone where his backbone ought to have been.

STRANGE CASE OF HYSTERIA.

The Running Away Mania and Double Personality Phenomenon.

Professor Pierre Janet, in his book, "The Major Symptoms of Hysteria," describes a number of remarkable cases of what he calls "fugue," or the hysterical mania that impels people to run away. One of these is the case of a boy of seventeen, living in Paris, who suddenly lost all memory of his previous life and his home. He left Paris, and wandered about the provinces, at last falling in with an old china-mender, whom he accompanied, and for whom he worked. The restoration of his memory is described by Professor Janet as follows:

"One evening an unlooked for event took place again. The day's work had been a success; the two companions had earned seven francs. The old china-mender stopped and said to R.: 'My boy, we deserve a good supper, and we will keep to-day's feast; it is the fifteenth of August.' On hearing this, the boy heedlessly said: 'The fifteenth of August? Why, it is the feast of the Virgin Mary, the anniversary of my mother's name-day.' He had scarcely uttered these words when he appeared to be quite changed. He looked all around him with astonishment, and turning to his companion, said: 'But who are you, and what am I doing here with you?'"

The poor man was amazed and was quite unable to make the boy understand the situation; the latter still believed himself in Paris and had lost all memory of the preceding months. They had to go to the village mayor's, where with great difficulty the matter was made more or less clear. The mayor telegraphed to Paris, and the prodigal child was sent back home."

One of the most remarkable cases of double personality on record is described by Professor Pierre Janet in "The Major Symptoms of Hysteria."

The patient, whom he calls Marceline, first came to him about twenty years ago. For several months she had not taken any food and was on the verge of starvation. After trying other methods of treatment she was hypnotized, and a secondary state was induced, which, although apparently artificial, differed altogether from the state in which she had been on her entrance to the hospital. She immediately began to eat, and soon regained her strength. When she seemed on the road to recovery it was thought necessary to awaken her from the hypnotic state, which was considered artificial. Immediately the patient fell back into her preceding state. She was again unable to eat and in order to save her life it was necessary to reinduce the hypnotic state.

The same experience was repeated over and over again, and as Professor Janet explains, "things continued in this way for fifteen years. Marceline would come to me in order to be put to sleep, enter into her alert state, and then go away very happy, with complete activity, sensibility and memory. She would remain thus for a few weeks; then either slowly or suddenly, in consequence of some emotion, fall back into her numbness, return to the state we had considered primitive and natural, with the same visceral disturbances. The forgetfulness was extended over whole years, and disturbed her existence completely. She would hasten to come to me to get herself transformed again. Things continued thus for years together, till the death of the poor girl who succumbed to pulmonary tuberculosis."

Guards Light Convicts' Pipes.

Leavenworth, Kan.—A peculiar duty has been imposed on the guards in the Federal prison here by which they are to light the pipes of convicts who desire to smoke.

THE KINGDOM OF LABOR IS COMING

Workers of Future Will Live as Well as Does Capitalist of To-Day

INVENTOR EDISON'S PREDICTIONS

Daily Stint of Eight Hours of Brain Work—This, He Thinks, Will Be Largely Brought About by Cheapening of Commodities.

WHAT IS IN THE MIND OF EDISON, INVENTOR.

- Some Predictions.
- Domination of labor.
- Cheapening of commodities.
- Laborers living as well as men who now have \$200,000 income.
- Things He Deprecates.
- The monorail.
- Narrowness of railroad tracks.
- Chemical food.
- Make-up of society.
- Whiskey.
- Problems to Be Overcome.
- Waste of fuel.
- Friction.

New York, N. Y.—Thomas A. Edison, looking into the future, thinks the prospect of the laboring man is a particularly bright one.

"In 200 years, by the cheapening of commodities, the ordinary laborer will live as well as a man does now with \$200,000 annual income. Automatic machinery and scientific agriculture will bring about this result," Mr. Edison says. "Not individualism but social labor will dominate the future; you can't have individual machines and every man working by himself. Industry will constantly become more social and interdependent. There will be no manual labor in the factories of the future. The men in them will be merely superintendents, watching the machinery to see that it works right."

"The work day, I believe, will be eight hours. Every man needs that much work to keep him out of mischief and to keep him happy. But it will be work with the brain, something that men will be interested in, and done in wholesome, pleasant surroundings. Less and less man will be used as an engine, or as a horse, and his brain will be employed to benefit himself and his fellows."

"The clothes of the future will be so cheap that every young woman will be able to follow the fashions promptly."

"The monorail does not appeal to me. It was a fundamental mistake that our railroads were built on a 4 foot 9 1/2 inch gauge instead of a 6 foot gauge, which we will probably have to come to yet."

"The aeroplane of the future will, I think, have to be on the helicopter principle. A successful air machine must be able to defy the winds. If Wright's aeroplane had one-twentieth of its surface, the wind principle is the only way to rise above atmospheric conditions. By increasing the velocity of propeller revolutions the size of the machine can be diminished and thereby we vanquish the hostility of the wind. A helicopter could have foot-size planes distributed on a 100 to 150 foot circle and controlled from the centre by wires."

"Chemical food has been worked out pretty well by Emil Fischer and his students, but it won't be a commercial proposition. You can't beat the farm as a laboratory, commercially speaking. If we should dry up like Mars and couldn't raise vegetables on the earth we might turn to a chemical diet."

"Society will have to stop this whiskey business which is like throwing sand in the bearings of a steam engine."

"Among the many problems which await solution in the future one of the most important is to get the full value out of fuel. The wastefulness of our present methods of combustion is tremendous."

"There is not as much power in a ton of 40 per cent. dynamite as there is in a ton of coal."

"Everything in nature would burn up if it were not for the fact that nearly everything except coal is already burned up. Iron would burn and make a good fuel—if in a very fine powder—but it has already been consumed in Nature's furnace."

"We may discover the germ of getting all the power from fuel tomorrow, and then again it may take a long time to find out."

"To get rid of friction in our machines is one of the future problems. The only machine without friction that we know is the world, and it moves in the restless ether."

No Socks in Sixty Years.

Lancaster, Pa.—Edward Petery, of Denver, Lancaster county, is eighty years old and in the enjoyment of excellent health, though for sixty years he has not worn stockings.

Helpful Beauty Hints

How To Reduce Weight—A Proper Sleeping Room—Directions: Treating Pimples, Blackheads and all Other Skin Eruptions—How To Obtain Cucumber Juice.

Directions for Treating Pimples.

Susan M.—To get rid of pimples requires time and patience. One must be exceedingly careful in the way of diet, abstaining from sweets and fried foods, not forgetting the daily bath, using a bath brush and scrubbing the body vigorously.

Before retiring each night cleanse the face with the cleansing cream; remove at once with a soft towel; bathe in hot water and apply the pimple cream. In the morning bathe in hot and cold water alternately several times; into the last cold water put a few drops of benzoin.

Once a week cleanse the face with the following cleansing cream; then steam the face over a basin of boiling water; cover the head with a towel; partly dry the face and with an instrument that comes for the purpose press out any blackheads you have. If the pimples have formed a yellow head contents of these may also be expelled with the instrument. Massage for ten minutes with the pimple cream; remove all the cream from the face and bathe with toilet water.

Cleansing Cream.

Oil of sweet almonds, 4 ounces; White wax, 1 ounce; White vasoline, 1 ounce; extract of violet, 2 drams.

Pimple Cream.

Lanoline, 1 1/4 ounces; Oil of sweet almonds, 1 1/4 ounces; Sulphur precipitate, 1 1/4 ounces; Oxide of zinc, 5 drams; Violet extract, 1 dram.

Toilet Water.

Elderflower water, 2 ounces; Distilled water, 2 ounces.

To Reduce a Woman's Weight.

Miss Maud B.—You should take a long brisk walk every day; eat no pastry, confectionery or sweets of any kind. No soups, salt fish, salmon, veal, pork, sausage, no fats, macaroni, potatoes, corn, beets, carrots, parsnips, turnips, cereal, rice, spices, cream, milk, malt or spirituous liquors, beer, champagne, or sweet wine. You may eat fresh fish, eggs (boiled or poached on toast), lean beef, mutton, lamb, chicken and game, always sparingly. Stale bread or rye toast. Lettuce, celery, cress, spinach, asparagus, onions, white cabbage, cauliflower, radishes, olives, tomatoes and ripe fruit of the acid varieties. One cup of coffee or tea without milk, cream or sugar, or one glass of pure water at the end of a meal if it is sipped slowly. Place some camphor in a bottle and pour alcohol over it. See that there is always a little camphor in the bottle. Bathe the parts you wish to reduce twice daily.

Air in Sleeping Room.

Janet T.—It is not to be wondered at that you are small and have a contracted chest if you sleep in a room devoid of a window. Can you not change your room? You can never expect to be well and strong as long as you sleep in a room without ventilation. To expand the chest you should stand before an open window early in the morning, clad in a loose gown, with feet close together and arms relaxed at your side; rise slowly on the toes and take long, deep inhalations through the nostrils, with the mouth closed; hold the breath for a moment and then come down quickly on the heels and exhale quickly through the mouth. Drink plenty of water and try to walk at least eight squares every day.

Blackheads.

Mrs. H. G.—As long as you scrub your face you are very likely to have blackheads. Always steam the face, or bathe it well with hot water before trying to remove the blackheads.

After removing them massage thoroughly and then bathe the face with toilet water. Apply the following blackhead lotion two or three times a day. Before retiring use the cleansing cream, in the morning the toilet water. Hot water with a teaspoonful of phosphate of soda, taken before breakfast will soon make the skin look clear.

Blackhead Lotion.

Boric acid, 1 dram; Alcohol, 1 ounce; Rose water, 2 ounces.

To Reduce Hips.

Subscriber.—Stand with one foot on an ottoman and swing the other foot back and forth fifty times, night and morning. Begin a short rather slow motion, but increase the distance and height with each movement. Bathe the hips night and morning with alcohol and massage them with a deep, firm motion once or twice a day.

Talcum Powder.

Powdered talcum, 2 1/2 ounces; Zinc oxide, 4 ounces; Powdered orris root, 4 ounces; Precipitated chalk, 1 pound; Extract of violet, 2 ounces.

Mix all the powders together and then the extract; let it stand for twenty-four hours, then pass through a fine sieve.

To Obtain Cucumber Juice.

Slice the cucumber without paring the cover with a little water, cook until soft, strain through a cheese cloth. The essence of cucumber is obtained by mixing equal parts of the juice and alcohol.

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LIVERY.—Fred. G. Rickard has removed his livery establishment from corner Church street to Whitney's Stone Barn.

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