

MYRIADS OF STARS.

Grand Meteoric Display Expected Next Month.

Washington Post.

The Leonids are coming. On the night of the 14th of next month there will pour from the heavens the most remarkable and spectacular stream of shooting stars ever predicted by astronomers. In Washington the scientists of the United States naval observatory are making elaborate preparations for observing the coming appearance of the Leonids, while throughout the colleges, universities, and astronomical observatories of the United States and of the world thousands of men trained to a knowledge of the stars are awaiting with eager interest an opportunity to observe the grandest of celestial phenomena.

Once every thirty-three years the wondrous spectacle of millions of stars falling out of the heavens is witnessed by the human race—a seemingly long time, this thirty-three years, a generation in the life of man, a second in the eternity of the heavens. A goodly percentage of persons are living to-day whose age exceeds this average of human existence; smaller by far is the number whose years exceed three score and six; while the world contains only an infinitesimal proportion of men and women whose years will reach the extreme limit of ninety and nine. But the assertion is safe that there are none living to-day whose eyes have ever beheld the cataclysm of living fire which pours from the sky when the orbit of the Leonids intersects that of the earth who will not bear forever in mind the memory of that spectacle. At any rate, if the calculations of the astronomers who are heralding throughout the world the near coming of the Leonids do not fall this magnificent and awe-inspiring sight will be viewed by tens of millions of the members of great general republic on the 14th of November of this year.

So rarely rare is the appearance of the Leonids that questions naturally present themselves to the ordinary person as to what in reality are the Leonids, where do they come from, and how is it possible to predict the fall of one or more shooting stars? These questions have been answered in part by calculations and observations, and in part by well founded theories of astronomers.

WANDERERS OF THE SKY.

In the first place the single meteor or meteorite, which makes, when it strikes the atmosphere of the earth, the so-called shooting star, is often a mere tramp of the heavens. It is the detached fragment of some bursted planet, and, too small for observation with the finest telescope, it wanders around in space until it comes within the circle of attraction of some large body, when gravity causes it to fall. Generally, in the course of its descent through the atmosphere of the large body, the meteorite generates so much heat that it is entirely consumed; the meteor, being larger, continues on and strikes the earth. But neither the single meteor or meteorite can be observed except in the brilliant fashion of its death.

The comet, on the contrary, is a creature of the skies more to be reckoned with. Erratic as its wanderings may seem to the unsophisticated, in reality it pursues a most definite course throughout the regular courses of the stars. The length of the orbit which it travels varies from a comparatively small distance of a few hundred millions of miles to one which reaches into the thousands of billions. The time which different comets take in completing their orbits varies from three and a half to a hundred thousand years. The preciseness of astronomical knowledge is such that the exact rate per second of the movement of the bodies can be determined and the time at which they will arrive at any given point in their orbit can be predicted to the second.

When the statement is made then that the Leonids are but the fragments of a former comet and that these fragments are following the course pursued in bygone ages by that comet, it will be readily seen that there is nothing remarkable in the further statement that modern astronomers can predict almost the exact time at which the November meteoric showers will make their appearance. The swarm of particles which formed the once glorious orb known as Tempel's comet now pursue in the outer darkness of space the identical path which they followed when parts of a composite whole.

Reckoned by the figures of the heavens, the Leonids are but infants. According to Prof. Simon Newcomb, Tempel's comet has been dead only thirty-three hundred years. The cause of explosion was probably the intense heat generated by the terrific rate at which the comet revolved. The sight as the great fiery body burst into a thousand particles must have been one that beggars the powers of human description.

FRAGMENTS OF A COMET.

But for the fragments of the bur-

ing body there could be no rest. The forces which compelled the larger body to follow through countless ages a certain path were at work as well among the bursted and flying particles. They fell into line, the larger fragments taking the head of the line and the smaller particles falling in behind for a million miles and more, and the unending journey, interrupted for a while, was taken up again along the old path.

The course of Tempel's comet and of its subsequent particles completely encircles the orbit of the earth, touching it only at one point on its outer edge. Continuing, it crosses the orbits of Jupiter and Saturn and extends a few millions of miles beyond that of Uranus. In shape the orbit of Tempel's comet is elliptical. Its length is twenty times that of the orbit of the earth.

"One of the most interesting questions that will be brought up for determination during the coming visit of the November meteors is connected with their first presence in the solar system. There is a well founded theory to the effect that Tempel's comet was originally drawn into the solar system by the planet Uranus, and this year the exact date of its coming will probably be proven by actual observation," said Prof. William A. Harkness, who is in charge of the astronomical department of the naval observatory, in the course of an interview.

"We are unable to predict the exact hour at which the November meteoric showers will begin. But it is estimated that the showers will reach their maximum brilliancy at 1 o'clock a. m., the morning of November 15. Although these meteoroids revolve around the sun in a definite orbit, the point of their intersection with the orbit of the earth moves forward at the rate of a degree and a half per year, thus throwing the advent of the meteors a few hours later at each succeeding fall. For example, the fall of 1833 occurred on the night of November 13; the fall of 1899 will take place on the evening of the 14th of November, and will probably be of some hours duration. It will be visible throughout the whole of the North American continent and in Europe and Asia.

ORIGIN OF THEIR NAME.

"The November meteors receive the name of Leonids from the fact that they seem to pour out from that part of the heavens wherein is located the constellation of Leo. When this constellation is at its zenith, it is almost overhead at Washington. In weight these meteors vary from a few grains to many pounds. They strike the earth's atmosphere, and begin to burn at the height of seventy-four miles, and are generally entirely consumed at a height of fifty miles.

"The phenomenon of a great meteoric shower is generally a perfectly noiseless one. When the streak is first formed it is narrow and perfectly straight, but it soon becomes serpentine and assumes an irregular figure as it drifts along under the influence of the wind currents in the upper region of the atmosphere. The streaks are of various colors, owing partly to substances and partly to their altitude. Some are of a delicate greenish hue, while others light up the skies with a ruddy glow. Streaks of orange, red, white and bluish white commingle to form a most remarkable and beautiful spectacle. Occasionally an orange-colored meteor may be observed leaving in its wake a streak of green. A peculiarity of the November meteors is that the nucleus shoots ahead of the streak before vanishing. The individual meteors vary greatly in size. Some of the larger of the meteors appear to be half the size of the moon. Interspersed with the meteoroids is an occasional fireball, which, in bursting, causes shadows to be cast upon the ground, so intense is the light generated for the moment. There is no reason that in such instances as this the sound of bursting should not reach the ears of spectators. The streaks left in the case of fireballs of the first magnitude last in some cases for several hours."

HISTORY OF THE DISPLAYS.

Dr. W. F. Denning, fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society of England, has made a special study of the November meteoric displays. He has found that the history of these displays goes back for a thousand years. In some of his writings on this subject he quotes the celebrated historian Conde, who, in his Arabian history, states that "on the night of the 12th of October, 902, an immense number of falling stars were seen to spread themselves over the face of the sky, like rain." This particular year was known thereafter as "the year of stars."

On the 19th of October, 1202, it is also recorded by Conde that "the stars shot hither and thither in the heavens,

eastward and westward, and flew against one another like a scattering storm of locusts, to the right and to the left. This phenomenon lasted till daybreak. People were thrown into consternation and cried to God, the Most High, with confused clamor."

According to Dr. Denning, the most brilliant display in our annals was the November meteoric shower of 1833. In Boston alone it is estimated that 240,000 meteors were visible during the seven hours' duration of the shower. Concerning this shower, he says:

"The words 'prodigious,' 'stupendous,' and 'magnificent,' do not describe it. Compared with the splendor of this celestial exhibition, the most brilliant rockets and fireworks of art bore less relation than the most tiny star to the broad glare of the sun. 'Stars' fell until there was none left."

"A South Carolina planter, writing of this meteoric display and its effect upon the negroes of his plantation, says: 'I was suddenly awakened by the most distressing cries that ever fell on my ears. Shrieks of horror and cries for mercy I could hear from most of the negroes of three plantations, amounting in all to 600 or 800. 'While earnestly listening for the cause, I heard a faint voice near the door calling my name. I arose and taking my sword stood at the door. At this moment I heard the same voice beseeching me to rise and saying, 'Oh, my God! The world is on fire!'

"I then opened the door, and it is difficult to say which excited me the most—distressed cries of the negroes. Upward of a hundred lay prostrate on the ground—some speechless, but with hands upraised, imploring God to save the world and them. The scene was truly awful; for never did rain fall much thicker than did the meteors toward the earth, east and west, north and south, it was the same.

OF INTEREST TO ALL.

"It may be safely said," continues Dr. Denning, "that in the month of November all astronomers and a great majority of the general public will become meteoric observers, for the phenomena presented will be of an exceptional kind and of a character to interest every one.

"There is scarcely any natural event which to the observant eye is so brilliant and so impressive and animated as a rich shower of meteors.

"A solar total eclipse, with its weird shadow bands, corona and red prominences, a large comet with its train spread over a considerable extent of the heavens, and a brilliant aurora borealis, with its streamers and condensations of crimson lights have their striking attributes, but it is questionable whether they can compare with the remarkable features which accompany a great fall of shooting stars. The rarity of the spectacle also enhances its interest, so that when once seen it is never forgotten.

"For hours meteors descend, not singly or in pairs, but in bursts of ten or twenty or more, and they are mostly fine objects like Sirius or stars of the first magnitude."

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My wife has been using Chamberlain's Pain Balm, with good results, for a lame shoulder that has pained her continually for nine years. We have tried all kinds of medicines and doctors without receiving any benefit from any of them. One day we saw an advertisement of this medicine and thought of trying it, which we did with the best of satisfaction. She has used only one bottle and her shoulder is almost well.—ADOLPH L. MILLET, Manchester, N. H. For sale by Hill-Ort Drug Co.

—Public story-tellers still earn a good livelihood in Japan. In Tokyo 600 of them ply their trade, provided with a small table, a fan, and a paper wrapper to illustrate and emphasize the points of their tales.

"If you scour the world you will never find a remedy equal to One Minute Cough Cure," says Editor Packler, of the Micanopy, Fla., *Illustrator*. It cured his family of La Grippe and saves thousands from pneumonia, bronchitis, croup and all throat and lung troubles. Evans Pharmacy.

—The highest price ever paid in Berlin for property was a corner measuring two yards long and two wide, for which a cigar dealer a few years ago paid \$1,500, and which he sold the other day for \$12,000.

President King, Farmer's Bank, Brooklyn, Mich., has used DeWitt's Little Early Risers in his family for years. Says they are the best. These famous little pills cure constipation, biliousness and bowel troubles. Evans Pharmacy.

—But a very short time ago a Sicilian advocate was found guilty of sixty-three different acts of fraud. For his industry and enthusiasm in the cause of dishonesty he was sentenced to 189 years' imprisonment.

Joseph Stockford, Hodgdon, Me., healed a sore running for seventeen years and cured his piles of long standing by using DeWitt's Witch Hazel Salve. It cures all skin diseases. Evans Pharmacy.

—The velocity of light is 195,000 miles in a second of time. From the sun light comes to the earth in eight minutes. From some of the fixed stars of the twelfth magnitude it takes 4,000 years for the light to reach us.

—It is only borrowed wings that make high flight dangerous.

Nine Million Bales.

Price, McCormick & Co., of New York, who have steadily fought the cotton bears all the season, have issued a new circular, giving over 1,000 letters from all parts of the cotton belt. The reports are all the same—"crop short but banks independent and farmers able to hold until January or later and no accumulations anywhere."

On the 10th instant, the government at Washington made its October report with regard to the condition of the cotton crop, which it put at 62.4, the lowest, with one exception, on record. This exception was in October, 1896, when the condition of the crop was estimated at 69.7. In that season the total production was approximately \$7,700,000.

On the 11th, Henry M. Neill, of New Orleans, issued a circular in which he stated that the indications pointed to a crop of 11,000,000 bales. Mathematically, the government figures, taken in conjunction with the government acreage, would indicate a crop of about 9,000,000 bales, and the fact that the receipts of cotton at the ports during the past week were the smallest for the corresponding week of any year since 1887 would seem to sustain the conclusion suggested by the government figures. Mr. Neill and his following, however, insist that the crop is a large one, and that the southern farmers, in their efforts to force foreign buyers to pay high prices for the article, are holding it back.

That the crop is a small one seems to us absolutely certain, in view of the overwhelming evidence in that direction, and we are coming to feel that it is smaller than almost anyone has previously believed, or has the courage now to admit.

Leaf From the Past.

The following is from a Pennsylvania paper. Col. Simonton's visit to Due West is well remembered by many citizens of that place:

"Dr. W. M. Grier, president of Erskine college, at Due West, S. C., died suddenly of apoplexy Sunday."

"Dr. Grier paid a visit a few years since to his benefactor, the late Maj. S. C. Simonton, of the Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania regiment, Clarksville. At the battle of Williamsburg, the fortunes of war left the young Confederate, Grier, a prisoner, seriously wounded in the hands of Simonton's regiment. The gallant and kind-hearted federal took compassion on the young man, for he was a mere lad in his teens, supplied special surgical attention, and when able to be moved Simonton gave him money, every dollar he possessed, to aid the boy in reaching his southern home, there to die in the arms of his family, as Simonton believed, and has often related the affecting story."

"For more than twenty years Grier tried in vain to learn the address of the northern officer, and was finally rewarded for his search in reading his name in a Pittsburgh newspaper. Simonton was invited to Due West, where the whole town turned out to do honor. The Greenville Advertiser Argus gave all details of this affair when it occurred some twelve or thirteen years ago."

Montana Under Snow.

HELANA, MON., Oct. 23.—The northern part of the State is digging itself out of the snow. For four or five days last week snow came down almost incessantly. At the town of Choteau, county seat of Teton county, it was ten or twelve feet deep in drifts and at least three feet on the level. Oldtimers are agreed that nothing like this fall of snow has occurred in October for twenty years.

Set Burton arrived here last night from the blizzard swept district and says that the bodies of eight sheep herders have already been found in Teton county and 15 other herders who are missing have been given up for lost. He says the loss of life will exceed twenty persons in Teton county and that 20,000 sheep perished in the storm.

—A woman takes half an hour to put her hair on, but she can make her husband a bloodthirsty mustard plaster in two seconds.

Used by British Soldiers in Africa.

Capt. C. G. Dennison is well known all over Africa as commander of the forces that captured the famous rebel Galshe. Under date of Nov. 4, 1897, from Vryburg, Bechuanaland, he writes: "Before starting on the last campaign I bought a quantity of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy, which I used myself when troubled with bowel complaint, and had given to my men, and in every case it proved most beneficial." For sale by Hill-Ort Drug Co.

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Bill's Luck.

A Chicago hotel manager employed a handy man going by the name of Bill to do his window washing. One morning Bill, instead of doing his work, was amusing himself by reading the paper, and, as bad luck would have it, the manager looked in.

"What's this?" he said. "Pack up your things and go," said the manager.

So poor Bill went to the office, drew the money which was owing to him, and then went upstairs and put on his good clothes. Coming down, he went to say "Good bye" to some of the other servants, and there he happened to run across the manager, who did not recognize him in his black coat.

"Do you want a job?" asked the manager.

"Yes, sir," said Bill.

"Can you clean windows?"

"Yes, sir."

"You look like a handy sort of fellow. I only gave the last man \$5, but I'll give you \$7."

"Thank you, sir," said Bill; and in half an hour he was back in the same old room—cleaning the window this time, and not reading the paper.—*Collier's Weekly*.

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