

**FACTS ABOUT METEORS.**

Numerous Pieces of "Falling Stars" Are in Museums.

(New York Sun)

The atmosphere forms an armor which is almost impenetrable to the meteors that are constantly pelting the earth. Most of the meteors are small. They come rushing through space, strike the atmosphere and the friction against the molecules of air heats them to a white heat, and sets them ablaze. Sometimes part of one may reach the earth; but as a rule they are consumed and the dust alone, cosmic dust, drops upon the surface. One of the earliest known meteors fell in 204 B. C. in Phrygia where for a long time it was worshipped. It was carried to Rome and was supposed to be a messenger from the gods. Livy describes a shower of meteoric stones. The people were greatly alarmed and the senators were demoralized and declared a nine days' festival to propitiate the gods. There is at Mecca a meteorite which fell in 600 A. D. and is still worshipped by the faithful. In Chinese literature there is mention of meteors which fell in 644 B. C. The oldest known meteorite which was seen to fall is now on exhibition at Ensisheim, Alsace, Germany. In 1492 it came crashing down through the air with a roar that prostrated the peasantry with fright. It buried itself deeply in the earth. It weighed 200 pounds and hangs today in the parish church.

The Chupaderos meteorite, which weighed 25 tons, fell in Chulushus, Mexico. The largest meteorite known is the Peary stone which weighs approximately one hundred tons. The stone of Canon Diable weighs at least ten tons and exploded high in the air, the pieces being found all over the surrounding country. In Italy several instances are known of the loss of life from meteorites. A peasant was sitting in his cabin and was killed by an iron mass that crashed through the roof; the act was regarded as a visitation of divine anger. The city of Milan is perhaps the only one that has been struck by the meteorite. A meteorite of several pounds weight fell in the heart of that city in the year 1690, on the authority of Paolo Maria Tezzyo, and struck a Franciscan monk.

More remarkable are the falls at sea. That a ship would be struck would seem an extraordinary chance, yet a Swedish ship was so struck, the stone killing two of the crew. On December 1, 1893, the ship Walkomming was sailing from New York to Bremen when her officers noticed a brilliant meteor that appeared to be bearing down on the vessel from southeast to northwest. It passed with a loud roar and hissing sound and plunged into the sea ahead of the ship. That it was a meteor of large size was evident, for a few minutes later the ship was struck by a tidal wave. Even more remarkable was the experience of the British ship Cawdor, which reached San Francisco Nov. 20, 1897. During a severe storm a large and brilliant meteor was observed rushing down upon the ship, and with a roar and filling the air with fumes of sulphur it passed between the masts of the ship and fell into the sea not fifty feet from the rail.

One of the greatest curiosities possessed by man today is a supposed fragment of a comet in Mazapil, Mexico. The fragment is believed to be a part of the tail of Biela's comet. In 1846 something happened in space; a wreck occurred; Biela's comet may have collided with another comet in any case the comet divided and many living observers remember seeing the two parts gradually separating. Some fatality pursued one part of the comet and it met its fate in infinite space, literally went to pieces and became a wreck upon the shoreless sea of space. Astronomers predicted that if the comet itself did not appear in 1872, its wreckage would become visible as shooting stars, and this prediction was realized apparently as on November 27, 1872, there burst from the heavens a cloud of shooting stars. During the display one piece dropped upon the earth and was secured at Mazapil,

Mexico, and was declared to be a part of the great comet. The average meteorite after its fall is intensely hot, but at least one, which was handled immediately after falling still held the intense cold of space. A few men can say that they have experienced this. A meteorite exploded above Dhurmalu, Kangra, Punjab, India, in 1860, and a section was picked up immediately by some natives who dropped it with expressions of pain. The fragment is now to be seen in the Field Museum. Of it, Dr. Farrington, the curator, said: "This is perhaps the only instance known where the cold of space has become perceptible to human senses."

**A Happy Man.**

(Exchange.)

When we asked to name the "happy man" of this day and time, we would not name the banker, neither would we set forth the rich merchant, nor the politician, and yet we would not call up the preacher. But should the editor come forward? By no means. Then who is the happy man? The farmer, who is "at home," and honest and full of charity, is certainly entitled to the place. He is and has a right to be the most independent man. He has a bank (his farm) that fails not, with a deposit like the crust of oil that increases with the use. The farmer can and should be happy. He ought to be contented in the position that gives him the sweetest rest that mortals know. Young man, if you would be happy, get a farm and a wife and make a home.

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L. W. Stone,



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