

Perihelia and Pestilence.

If there is anything in "astrophysical ethnology," we are approaching one of the most pestilential periods in the earth's history. Since, according to the theory of Christian writers, the perihelia of the four great planets of the solar system—Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune—have not been coincident. But this is almost as secure as the doctrine of Dr. Knapp, who has traced the history of the greatest epidemics that ever afflicted the human race to the perihelia of these planets, and has called them "the diseases of the doctor."

The theory is that when one or more of the large planets is nearest the sun, the temperature and condition of our atmosphere are so disturbed as to cause extreme heat, excessive cold, terrible rains, prolonged droughts, etc., resulting in the destruction of crops and fruits, famine among men and beasts, disease among human beings and domestic animals.

Dr. Knapp has collated a mass of statistical data, all going to show that perihelia have always been followed by unusual mortality, and that sickness and deaths have invariably corresponded with the number of planets in perihelia at the same time. The record of Jupiter and the sun is as follows: In a little less than twelve years of Uranus in about thirty-four years, and of Neptune in about one hundred and fifty-five years. It is therefore evident that the perihelia of these planets occasion atmospheric conditions unfavorable to the pestilential germs, shortening out a dozen years, and engendering still more widespread epidemics at longer intervals. Inflicting a history of epidemics for more than two thousand years, Dr. Knapp adds the proof in all cases to validate the theory. Thus, in the sixth and again in the sixteenth century, three of these planets were coincidently in perihelia; and those were the most pestilential times of the Christian era.

But soon we are to have, for the first time in two thousand years, all four of these planets aligned. They will be in their places as regards to the sun in so soon after 1883, so that, for a few years, say from 1880 to 1885, the vitality of every living thing on the earth will be taxed to the uttermost, testing the endurance of man. We see, in the signs of the times, evidences of great disaster in the immediate future. The excessive heat of last summer; the unprecedented floods and whirlwinds, the prevalence of floods and disasters of sea; the general failure of the potato crop; the widespread chill-fever among human beings, and the equal prevalence of epidemic among animals, are mentioned as among the premonitions of the rapidly approaching perihelia.

Well, "to be forewarned is to be forearmed." Accidents excepted, we may suppose that the persons of most vigorous constitutions and most hygienic habits will have the better chance to survive whatever adverse influences the extraordinary perihelia will occasion. It is known to physicians that in all pestilences—plague, typhus, small-pox, cholera, influenza, pneumonitis, murrain, etc., the intermission, or sanitary conditions which have furnished the great majority of victims.

We do not write to alarm any one, nor to make a sensation. We state the facts which all admit. The Society of Health can judge for themselves what importance to attach to the subject. That the conjoint perihelia of all the large planets of our solar system, which occurs every one thousand years or more, is a distinct disturbance to our atmosphere and temperature very considerably, is probable; that this disturbance must be injurious to health and life is equally probable; but that it has hitherto been pestilential is a matter of record. How much we shall suffer during the next dozen or fifteen years, depends very much on how many of us live a life in accordance with the laws of life—*Society of Health*.

A Quare Cup of Tea.

Not long since we called attention to some of the vile drugs retailed in London under the name of tea. Dr. Leathes, the medical health officer of that city, having however, introduced an entirely new system of adulterations of a different sort. The beverage is known as "iron filing tea," and is less than a thousand boxes of tea are actually sold by Dr. Leathes himself. Samples however, had been taken, and the names of the purchasers obtained. He found that the samples contained from forty to forty-three per cent of iron filings, and the next sample was found to contain eight per cent of unsound tea was hawked about in the city, and, on inquiry, he found that it was salvage from a wreck. The tea, after being washed well, was covered with green pigment, and when infused in boiling water, they produced a very turbid solution, offensive to the smell, and nauseous to the taste." In another instance Dr. Leathes would buy tea, and a large quantity of unsound tea was hawked about in the city, and, on inquiry, he found that it was salvage from a wreck. The tea, after being washed well, was covered with green pigment, and when infused in boiling water, they produced a very turbid solution, offensive to the smell, and nauseous to the taste."

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