

THREE COMETS DUE

Three comets—those most mysterious of all heavenly wanderers—are due for a visit to the general vicinity of the earth and sun this year, the United States naval observatory has announced. Astronomers throughout the country are preparing for the arrival of the derelicts from the great open space of the universe, and expect new discoveries of scientific value.

The list of the 1924 comets prepared by the naval observatory, includes Encke and Tempel, the first in November, and Tempel, the first of December. In 1925, six comets are due in March, July, August and October.

The naval observatory is yet unable to determine the brilliancy and visibility of the visitors. They were of the smaller variety of heavenly strangers on the last trips to the sun, but years of wandering in space may have vastly increased their volume—or brought about their diminution.

Should one of the great comets known to astronomers hurl itself into the earth, it is believed the seas would boil and tidal waves would dash against the mountains; polar ice would melt and fires and suffocation sweep the globe, according to scientists at the United States bureau of standards.

Scientists frequently have speculated on destruction of the earth by a comet, but bureau of standard experts declared that the probabilities of such a catastrophe are highly remote. The earth with its 8,000 miles of diameter, a tiny star in the infinite expanses of the universe, is a poor target for the meteors rushing through space at more than 7,200 miles an hour.

Government observers explained that should the earth pass close to the head of the comet a great amount of gas probably would be absorbed, resulting in material alterations in terrestrial climate.

"If the head of a comet was to strike the earth, or even come close, it would produce most disastrous results," experts of the bureau said. "A considerable proportion of the population might be destroyed. The diameter of the earth's 180,000 mile orbit would be changed, and the length of the year might change."

"Nevertheless it is thought that in the untold ages of the past, comets have collided with the earth. Such an explanation has been advanced to account for that curious gash that forms the valley of the Dead Sea and the Jordan and whose continuation has been traced across the Red Sea into Africa.

EARTHQUAKES DRIVE SHARKS TO SWARM IN MANILA BAY

Manila, June 18.—Fishermen have reported an unusual number of sharks in Manila bay in recent weeks, and some scientists believe that the many earthquakes experienced in the Philippines and adjacent islands have driven the sharks into less disturbed waters.

It is said that in the days when Dewey's ships were lying in the bay near Cavite, "swimming call" for the crew was sounded each day, but now crews of the American fleet are forbidden to swim in the deep water unless they remain within the wire screening at Canacao bay, where the Cavite naval station is located.

LIVES WITH GERMAN SHRAPNEL IN LUNG

Salisbury, June 18.—Joseph Nicholas, a Salisbury boy, who was wounded in service in France, is now in the Walter Reed hospital, Washington, and Mrs. Nicholas has gone there to be with him. Mr. Nicholas still bears in his lungs portions of shrapnel and the wound is giving him considerable trouble. Recently he has been in the Oteen hospital, but some days ago was transferred to the Walter Reed institution.

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