CITY AND DISTRICT.

Transfers of Real Estate.

Deeds in fee have been recorded as follows: O. R. Whiting to A. W. Fisher, lots A and B, sq. 513; $6,500, &c. C. B. Church to C. W. Johnson, lots 40 and 41, sq. 326; $6,500. Maria C. Fitzhugh, executrix, to John T. Arms, part lot ——, sq. 690; $2,000, &c. John T. Arms to Maria C. Fitzhugh, sub. lot 24, sq. 843; $2,000, &c. S. H. Walker to S. C. Ramage, part 9, sq. 815; $3,800. D. F. Forrest to Matilda F. Rogers, sub. lot 40, sq. 192; $6,400. M. F. Rogers to D. F. Forrest, part 3, sq. 238; $4,500. James Robbins et al. to W. B. Slack, lots 81 and 84, sq. 191; $6,800. W. B. Slack to James Robbins, parts 24 and 25, sq. 279; $500. Jane W. Williamson to John D. Masterson, lot 20 and part 21, sub. of Friendship, &c., (9 acres); $900. C. S. Drury to T. E. Waggaman and J. W. Pilling, lots 3, 4 and 5, sq. 349, lots 3 and 4, sub. of same, part 5, and lots 6, 7 and 8, sub. 350, parts 1, 2 and 14, sq. 317; $——. Amelia G Harris et al. to R. J. Fisher, jr., part 63, "Widow's Mite;" $320. F. W. Pilling to Jane S. Dulaney, lot 72, sq. 194; $8,750. Eliza Webster to C. W. Huguely, part 9, sq. n. of 515; $2,280. M. Harrison to E. C. Harrison, fifth interest in part sq. 338; $500. W. K. Mendenhall to Catherine R. West, lot 32, sub sq. 205; $2,900. Max Luchs to Florence P. Hill, lot C, part sq. 337; $1,300. Thos. Wynn to same, lot A, do.; $2,500. J. B. Clagett to R. Devens, part 26, sq. 106; $2,744. Sarah E. Acker to W. M. Galt, part 2, sq. 573; $2,936. B. H. Webb et al. to D. Ballauf, lot 28, sub lot 9, &c., sq. 454; $12,100. E. Cammack et al. to C. C. Martin, lots 137 to 142, sq. 249; $6,750. C. C. Martin to John Sherman, sub lot 138, do.; $5,060. Henry C. Reichert to Mary Ann Reichert, lot 30, sub of 27 and 428, of sub 11, sq. 456; $1,400. Annie J. Ryon to John C. Harkness, pt. 3 and 4, sq. 377; $——. J. C. Harkness to T. J. Clark, same property; $3,060. Columbian Institution for Instruction of Deaf and Dumb, to same, same property; $——. Foundry M.E. Church to same, same property; $——. Washington City Orphan Asylum to same, same property; $——.

Letter from Anacostia.

AN INDIGNANT DENIAL THAT IT IS A "TUMBLE DOWN TOWN" VILLAGE—IT STANDS HIGH IN RELIGION AND MORALS—NOT A LIQUOR SALOON IN THE PLACE—A PRETTY, HEALTHY VILLAGE, ETC.

To the Editor of the THE EVENING STAR:

ANACOSTIA, D. C., Sept. 28, 1883.

In your issue of the 26th instant, is an article upon the "Four Blind Brothers," by the Washington correspondent of the New York *Sun*, containing a description of our village, in which occurs the statement that "it is a sleepy, tumble-down village, whose chief claim to aristocracy is the nomenclature of the streets, which bear the name of every President to Buchanan. Its chief citizen is, perhaps, Frederick Douglass, who owns a fine country place near the river's bank." Now we rise, with our protest, bow and beg to say that the above statements are not borne out by the facts, and that our local village pride has been grievously insulted. We indignantly deny that statement. If the aforesaid scribe visited our village at a time when the term "sleepy" could be justly applied it must have been when

"By the revolution of the skies,
Night's sable curtain from the ocean rise."

And if so we admit the "soft impeachment," but the "association of ideas" awakened by such a reflection gently insinuates that there may be some connection between the aforesaid visit and the mysterious disappearance of certain poultry from sundry roosts, as also the nocturnal eccentricities of the Widow O'Callahan's stone-throwing ghost.

There is not the remotest suggestion of "Sleepy Hollow" about our village, and as for its being a "tumble down," there is not a cow-shed in the vicinity that, if not a model of architectural beauty, is at least all that a respectable cow-shed ought to be. The residences are very many of them good specimens of comfortable homes, with some fine villas among the number, presenting a neat, thrifty appearance. We have a fine large public school, numerously attended and well administered; three churches, St. Theresa's, a fine new brick, Emanuel, P. E., and the M. E., which has for twenty-five years stood as a landmark. A Masonic hall, owned by one of the most flourishing lodges in the District, provides a place for our public gatherings and social entertainments, and the banner tent of the I. O. Rechabites of the District boasts of its birthplace and home here. Nor are our citizens of the "tumble down" character, for they have refused to permit for the entire year past the presence of even one retail liquor saloon. No license, no "tumble down." Sabe?

True, our streets are patriotically named, but they do not "bear the name of every President to Buchanan," as we have not enough to go round, but should the work of improvement advance as it has in the past two years, we will exhaust the Presidents, and make a heavy drain on the Vice Presidents.

Fred. Douglass, it is true, resides in a handsome residence a long way from the river bank, back of our village; the beautiful country place, on the river, being the home of Dr. Christy, one of "ye oldest inhabitants," but our chief citizens are the enterprising men of capital and of business, physicians, merchants, &c, and those whose industry, talents and labor are devoted to the improvement of our village and the employment of her citizens. The prominence of Mr. Douglass arises from his public and political reputation—that of the latter from their practical utility and commercial value, and their long residence here. As an evidence of our enlightment, civilization, push, and wide-awake condition, let me submit to your unprejudiced judgment the happy fact that we are readers and subscribers to your invaluable paper.

If you want a cozy home at the base of the lovely hills, skirted on their front by the waters of the Potomac, and hidden in a plentitude of shade, among a thrifty, hospitable people, with good schools, plenty of churches, with no retail liquor saloons, and all the latest improvements (as the real estate men say), and if anybody but that fairy tale correspondent of the New York *Sun*, (yes, we will take him, too, for we do reform men sometimes),—just let them come over the Eastern branch, and they will receive a cordial welcome in the thrifty, prosperous, wide-awake Arcadian village of Uniontown. J. E. P.

The National Lincoln Monument Association.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

Will THE STAR be so good as to enlighten its readers concerning the "National Lincoln Monument Association," as to what disposition was made of its funds, &c., &c. Handsomely engraved receipts, the work of the Treasury department, were issued to the contributors, signed "F. E. Spinner, Treasurer." The one held by the writer is dated April 29, 1868. The movement was a popular one, and at the time large sums were said to have been subscribed. As you may remember, it was intended to have the monument occupy a position at the east front of the Capitol, to consist of a group of statues of prominent Unionists, with Lincoln as the central figure, &c. As there is now a commemorative statue of that great man in the park bearing his name, would it not be well to merge the fund, if it is now available, with that of the subscriptions to the newer enterprise—the statue to Garfield? D. W. C. B.

Where Are "the Sweeps ?"

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

I am led to make the above inquiry for the reason that, needing the services of such a person, I made inquiry at the health office and police office and could get no information, further than they thought orders left at the police stations might be called for. Many fires originate from foul chimneys, and as it is about time to start fires, it seems to me that if there is anybody who does this work it ought to be advertised or made known in some way, so people could find him. Some years ago we were notified that it was required officially. A CITIZEN.

The Courts.

PROBATE COURT—*Judge James.*

Yesterday, estate of Samuel Magee; proof of publication filed, will admitted to probate, and letters testamentary granted to Laura Magee; bond $1,000. Estate of Squire Williams; petition of widow for administration filed. Estate of John W. Hogan; claim against J. H. Platt settled. Will of Robert J. Powell filed. A number of guardians' accounts were also proved.

MUCH NEEDED REPAIRS.—The W., O. and W. railroad has recently renewed one of its bridges and made secure all of the others with trustles and braces. The new management found the bridges as well as the tracks, cars and engines of the road, in a dilapidated and dangerous condition, and in a few months, it is said, will put the road bed in good order from this city to Round Hill. The very largely increased freight business from Alexandria this year has overreached the capacity of this road as well as others, and some delay and inconvenience has been caused thereby. The officials of this road generally are a polite, efficient and cheerful set of business men, and are trying to do all they can to relieve the trade. The guano, coal, salt, seed and grocery trade of that city was never better than this season, and in fact all branches of business are active.

THE COMING BICYCLE RACES.—The fall races of the Capital Bicycle club, to be held October 4th and 5th, promise to surpass anything of the kind ever held in Washington. The program includes professional and amateur races each day. The recent Springfield meet has given a new impetus to wheel matters, and the gentlemen of the Capital club who were there secured the entry of some of the best men who raced at Springfield, including the English champions. In view of the splendid track, it is expected that the magnificent records made there will be broken here. Among those who will participate will be Robinson (amateur), who has a record of 6:02¼ for two miles, 2:52 for one mile; Corey, whose one mile record is 2:51¾, and Frazier (star), who has a five mile record of 15:40 and 25 miles in 1 hour 23 minutes and 10 seconds. Of the professionals, James Kane and Higham (of England) and Prince (of America) are secured, and others, it is thought, will enter before the races. A novel and interesting feature will be the tournament on the wheel, the first ever held in this country. Each Sir Knight will be in costume and have two tilts at three rings.

THE TEMPERANCE CAMPAIGN.—Eagleston Division, No. 17, Sons of Temperance, have located themselves in Timms' hall, corner of 7th and D streets northwest, for the fall and winter, and intend pushing a vigorous campaign against intemperance. The following officers have been elected: Worthy patriarch, Henry J. Bradley; worthy associate, Miss Bessie A. Wilson; recording scribe, William J. Webb, assistant recording scribe, Miss Carrie Hill; financial scribe, Mrs. Anna L. Scott; treasurer, Charles A. B. Boyd; chap., Henry A. Niedfeldte; conductor, Miss Mary V. Wilson; assistant conductor, Miss Ella Bayliss; inside sentinel, Miss Minnie Lewis; outside sentinel, Joseph Johnson; P. W. P., Robert W. Scott.

RELIGIOUS NOTES.

CHURCHES HERE AND ELSEWHERE.

—Rev. Dr. Domer will lecture at Williamsport, Pa., Tuesday night.

— The basement of Union Wesley church has been thoroughly repaired. The revival in progress has already resulted in over fifty conversions.

—St. Ann's Catholic parish, Tenleytown, which has been in existence about twelve years, and is now under the care of Rev. Father Chappelle, of St. Matthew's, has now about 500 parishioners.

— Rev. Dr. Domer's Sunday evening lectures, in which he is presenting the chief characteristics of Dr. Martin Luther, are largely attended. The lectures are delivered in com memoration of the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth.

—The Tabernacle Society, an association of Catholic ladies here, whose object is to furnish vestments, &c., for the priests of poor parishes, will resume work on October 1st. It has applications for about 200 vestments pending.

—The congregation of the Church of the Reformation, on Pennsylvania avenue, near 2d street east, which has been occupying the basement for some time, expect this season to finish the auditorium and to occupy it about December 1st.

Rev. J. C. Hagey, of North Capitol M. E. church, was surprised a few evenings ago at his residence, on New Jersey avenue, by a large number of his congregation, including a number from the neighborhood of the fair grounds, who came in wagons, loaded with an abundant supply of provisions.

—Next Tuesday the autumnal series of great Hebrew festivals begin. Tuesday, October 2d, 1883, according to the Gregorian calendar, is Tisri 1, 5644, according to the Hebrew calendar, and therefore New Year's day. The festivals to be celebrated are New Year's day, the day of atonement, the feast of Tabernacles, and the day of conclusion.

— The revival meetings at the 9th-street M. P. church, which have been held tri-weekly since the Jackson Grove camp-meeting, under direction of Rev. Dr. J.L. Mills, pastor, continue, and as a result there have been twelve additions to the church, Rev. Dr. Ward, a former pastor, now president of the Western Maryland college at Westminster, Md., was present at the meeting on Thursday evening.

— The A. M. E. Church is raising money to send missionaries and teachers to Africa.

— In England, fifteen halls, to seat 25,000 people, are being built for the Salvation Army.

— The Congregational church at Redding, Conn., recently celebrated its 150th anniversary.

— In some parts of the country the Baptists are favoring a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper.

— The Roman Catholic bishop of Michigan has forbidden the raising of money for fairs, raffiles and excursions.

— Methodist union is at last an accomplished fact in Canada. The united churches number 2,036, and have 168,831 members.

— The trustees of Janes' church, Brooklyn, N. Y., have contracted for an elegant new edifice, with seatings for 1,000 persons.

— Ex-President Hayes, at the recent corner stone laying of the M. E. church, at Freemont, Ohio, gave $5,000 towards the building.

— The gospel tent on 2d avenue and 20th street, New York, under the auspices of the Baptist city mission, has closed for the season.

— A Workingmen's Sabbath Association has been formed in St. Louis, for the purpose of assisting in the enforcement of Sunday laws.

— The New England Divorce Reform League, of which Rev. S. W. Dike is the active worker, has appointed Rev. F. B. Makepeace his assistant.

— Rev. J. T. Vine last month conducted revival services in the First Baptist church, Northport, L.I., and there have been a number of conversions.

— The Wesleyan Home mission society, of Baltimore, has appointed Rev. B. Johnson, of the Reformed Episcopal church, a missionary in that city.

— The fall term of the Hartford, Conn., Theological Seminary opened Sept. 13 with fifty-two students. Fourteen were examined for the junior class.

— The Presbytery of Milroy, Pa., has deposed Rev. J. W. White for heresy and Rev. J. C. Wilhelm withdrew on the ground that he agreed with the heretic.

— The Oregon conference of the M. E. church has requested Dr. O. Gibson to organize a Chinese mission at Portland, where there are 7,000 Chinese residents.

— Bishop Robinson (Episcopal), of Missouri, notes that for some time past almost all the accessions to the ministry in his diocese have been from other denominations.

— Rev. Jacob Freshman, of the Hebrew Christian congregation, in New York, has returned after an extended visit to kindred missions in the European capitals.

— Rev. Wm. Taylor is in South America, and under his preaching a number of officers and men on one of the United States vessels in Chili have been converted.

— Mr. Edward Judson declines the associate secretaryship of the American Baptist Missionary Union, preferring to continue his home missionary work in New York city.

— The Baptist church at Cannonsville, N.Y., Rev. P. R. Gott pastor, has received thirteen members since June 15th, eight of them by baptism, mostly members of the Sunday school.

—The American Sunday-school Union calls attention to October 21 and 22 as Days of Prayer for Sunday schools. These days are coming to be observed by all sections of the church throughout the world.

— The twenty-sixth annual meeting of the National Local Preachers' Association will be held at Nazareth M. E. church, Philadelphia, commencing Saturday, October 13th, and closing Tuesday evening, 16th.

— The Wissahickon (Pa.) M. E. church was organized on Sunday last with 60 members and 10 probationers, and a Sunday school of 100 scholars. The society has a neat stone chapel, which with the lot cost $10,000.

— The Women's Board of Missions of the M. E. Church South has appointed Miss Jennie C. Wolfe, of Pensacola, Florida, for mission work in China, and Miss Mattie B. Jones, of Narcross, Ga., for work in Central America.

— Rev. A. G. Thomas, of Chester, has just resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church there. Malaria compelled him to the step. Mr. Thomas has done most excellent work there, the last year of his pastorate being especially blessed.

— A southern correspondent writes the New York *Observer:* "Presbyterianism is relatively stronger in South Carolina than in any state in the Union south of Pennsylvania. And yet there are only 12,500 members to a population of nearly 400,000 whites, and 4,500 to a population of 600,000 colored.

— The Twenty-third-street theater, between 6th and 7th avenues, New York, has been leased for Sunday evening services of an attractive and practical character, specially adapted to young men. Special efforts will be made to reach the thousands of young men who do not attend any of the churches and to interest and engage them in active Christian work.

—The Clinton avenue Dutch Reformed church of Newark, N.J., has been conducting for some time a mission in the lower part of the city. The attendance at the services having increased so rapidly that its present accommodations are inadequate, a committee has been appointed to receive funds to purchase a site and erect a suitable building.

— The American Home Missionary society (Congregational) has just made the following appointments: Rev. Leavitt Bartlett, of Kansas City, superintendent of New Mexico and Arizona; Rev. S. F. Gale, of Romeo, Mich., general missionary for Florida; Rev. J. T. Ford, of San Bernardino, Cal., general missionary for southern California; Rev. C. C. Otis, of Orange, N. J., for the same office in western Washington Territory, and Rev. N. F. Cobbrigh, of Walla Walla, for eastern Oregon and Washington. Discovering that there were about 10,000 Scandinavians in San Francisco and vicinity, the society has appointed Rev. T. T. Frickstad general missionary for this work, and now there is a call for seventy more men, for places which are waiting for them to-day.

THE OCTOBER MAGAZINES.

A Graphic Description of California Cattle Ranches.

WHAT DR. OSWOLD SAYS OF THE ALCOHOL HABIT—A PLEASING ACCOUNT OF THE HIGHLANDS OF NORTH CAROLINA—A REGION AND A PEOPLE AS YET NOT WIDELY KNOWN TO TOURISTS.

H. H. (Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson) writes in the October *Century* of the "Outdoor Industries in Southern California," and says of sheep ranches:

The sheep ranches are usually desolate places; a great stretch of seemingly bare lands, with fenced corrals, blackened and foul smelling; the home and outbuildings clustered together in a hollow or hillside where there is water; the less human the neighborhood the better.

The loneliness of the life is, of itself, a salient objection to the industry. Of this the great owners need know nothing; they can live where they like. But the small sheepmen, the shepherds, and, above all, the herders; it is a terrible life—how terrible is shown by the frequency of insanity among herders. Sometimes, after only a few months of the life, a herder goes suddenly mad. After learning this fact, it is no longer possible to see the

PICTURESQUE SIDE

of the effective groups one so often comes on suddenly in the wilderness: sheep peacefully grazing, and the shepherd lying on the ground watching them, or the whole flock racing in a solid, fleecy, billowy scamper up or down a steep hill side, with the dogs leaping and barking on all sides at once. One scans the shepherd's face alone, with pitying fear lest he may be losing his wits. A shearing at a large sheep ranch is a grand sight. We had the good fortune to see one at Baldwin's, at La Puenta. Three thousand sheep had been sheared the day before, and they would shear twenty-five hundred on this day. * * * The faces of the sheep being shorn were piteous, not a struggle, not a bleat, the whole of their unwillingness and terror being written in their upturned eyes. "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb" will always have for me a new significance.

The Alcohol Habit.

Dr. Felix L. Oswald has a paper in the *Popular Science Monthly* on "The Alcohol Habit," which deserves to be committed to memory. It is philosophic, reasonable and wise. He says of alcoholic tonics:

Alcohol lingers in our hospitals as slavery lingers in the West Indies, as the witchcraft delusion lingers in southern Europe. Has alcohol any remedial value whatever? Let us consider the matter from a purely empirical standpoint. Does alcohol protect from malarial fevers? It is a well known fact that the human system cannot support two diseases at the same time. Rheumatism can be temporarily relieved by producing an artificial inflammation; a headache yields to a severe toothache. For the same reason the alcohol fever affords a temporary protection from other febrile symptoms—i. e., a man might fortify himself against chills and ague by keeping himself constantly under the stimulating influence of alcohol. But sooner or later stimulation is followed by depression, and during that reaction the other fever gets a chance and rarely misses it. The history of epidemics prove that pyretic diseases are from eight to twelve times more destructive among dram drinkers than among the temperate classes. * * * Does alcohol impart strength? Does it benefit the exhausted system? If a worn out horse drops on the highway, we can rouse it by sticking a knife into its ribs, but after staggering ahead for a couple of minutes, it will drop again, and the second *deliquium* will be worse than the first by just as much as the

BRUTAL STIMULUS

has still further exhausted the little remaining strength. In the same way precisely alcohol rallies the exhausted energies of the human body. The prostrate vitality rises against the foe, and labors with resistless energy till the poison is expelled. Then comes the reaction, and before the patient can recover his organism has to do double work. Nature has to overcome both the original cause of the disease and the effect of the stimulant.

ALCOHOL HAS NO REMEDIAL VALUE.

But that would be a trifle, if it were not for the positive mischief which the wretched poison is liable and very liable to cause. Four repetitions of the stimulant dose may inoculate a child with the germs of the alcohol diathesis and initiate a habit which years of anguish and despair will fail to cure. By a single glass of medicated brandy thousands of convalescing topers have lost their hard-earned chance of recovery; poor, struggling wretches, swimming for their lives, and, at last approaching a saving shore, have been pushed back into the surging whirlpool and perished almost in sight of the harbor! The only chance of

CURING THE POISON HABIT

consists in the hope of guarding its victims against all stimulants; and I would as soon snatch bread from a starving man as that last hope from a drunkard.

Abstinence is easier, as well as safer, than temperance. "In freeing themselves from the bonds of an unworthy attachment," says Madame de Sevigne, "men have one great advantage—they can travel." If young Lochinvar's suit had been hopeless, the furtive interview with his lost love might have soothed his sorrow for a moment, but for his ultimate peace of mind it would have been better to stay in the west. The anchorites of old knew well why they preferred the wilderness to the humblest village; they found it easier to avoid all temptations. Vices, as well as virtues, are co-operative.

In the cure of the alcohol habit, the total renunciation of all stimulants is, therefore, the first and most essential measure. A change of diet, a change of climate, of employment and general habits, will help to shorten the distressing reaction that must precede the re-establishment of perfect health.

The Highlands of North Carolina.

A lady who has summered in the Highlands of North Carolina, a region but comparatively little known as yet to the tourist, describes the scenery and the people in a very readable article in the October number of *Lippincott's Magazine.* She says of the region:

The western part of North Carolina is a region of wild and picturesque beauty. Mountains stand—purple shoulder to purple shoulder—all over it; shaggy forests of oaks, pines, stately hemlocks and immense chestnuts clothe all their slopes; down the narrow glens, dark with the shade of rhododendron and laurel, rush clear bright streams, fed by gushing springs, and everywhere a rich profusion of wild flower is to be met with in their season. Botanists who have been attracted to this region by the enthusiastic though vague description of the flora given by the few tourists who have penetrated its wilds, have found their expectations far surpassed both as to variety and beauty.

Health and pleasure seekers have come summer after summer to Asheville and other resorts on the French Broad, and sportsmen have penetrated the Balsam and smoky ranges in search of the deer and bear to be found in the remote forests or the speckled trout that abound in the cold streams. But, compared with the space to be traversed, visitors are few; there are whole leagues where the foot of a stranger has never trod, and the native life of the region is uninfluenced by any contact with the outer world. In these mountains there is a dialect spoken which has

RARELY IF EVER

appeared in print; the mode of life and habits of thought of the natives are less known to general readers than those of the peasants of any country in Europe.

Artists have never set up their easels in these magnificent forests, nor dreamed, pencil in hand, upon the swelling outlines and amethyst hues of the distant mountains. Two or three literary workers have found fresh and interesting material here while on hasty visits, but there are types of character that have never been delineated; there is a rich store awaiting the seeker who is gifted with the power of insight and expression. The existence that goes on in these cabins has not yet found an interpreter. The tanned, athletic mountaineer who steps lightly down the slope is a figure suggestive of the Homeric age. That woman carrying water from the spring in the glen leads a life as unfamiliar to us as the dweller in a wheeled house on the Scythian steppes.

Three things attracted us—the mountain scenery, the fine climate, the cheapness of living, and each of them has surpassed our expectations. The grandeur of the mountains has been a perpetual feast; the climate has restored one to jaded nerves and color to paling cheeks; and we have lived well, as regards an abundance of food.

The town of Butler, Pa., uses natural gas for illumination and for fuel. The whole town is supplied by one well.

"Let's drive a spike" is now the proper way to invite a Montana man to take something.

Mr. Keel, of Detroit, in writing to Castle Garden for a wife, is careful to say: "A Red hair pirson need not aplye."

Paris bonnets are now provided with a mansard, in which is stored the knot or coil into which the hair is twisted on the top of the head.

GLOBE SMASHERS IN THE SKY.

The Danger and Possibility of Astronomical Collisions—What Would Happen if the Earth Should Run Into Another World—Wonderful Stars Whose Blaze May Have Been Caused by Collision—Little Danger from Comets.

From the North American Review.

The universe of space is, in one sense, full and crowded. Everywhere our telescopes find stars, and for every one we see there are probably hundreds, and even thousands, too faint or small or far away to reach our senses. And of this countless host of worlds not one is at rest, but all are rushing through space, free and unbridled, with velocities far exceeding anything in the range of our terrestrial experience. Our swiftest cannon shot takes more than three seconds to go a mile, but the stars and planets seldom move slower than five miles a second, and some of them go two hundred. The veriest snail among them would overhaul a rifle ball in the same sort of way that the rifle ball would overtake a receding freight train. Is there not, then, danger of collisions? Have such collisions ever occurred, and, if so, with what consequences?

CAN SPACE BE CROWDED?

Now, in the first place, it is only in a sense, and rather a Pickwickian one, that space can be called crowded. True, stars are to be seen in every direction; but this is because our vision reaches so unimaginably far. If we restrict our consideration to bodies of respectable magnitude—a hundred miles in diameter, for instance—we ought rather to say that space, instead of being crowded, is almost inconceivably empty. Between any star or planet and its nearest neighbor lie usually desolate distances of millions, or even millions of millions of miles. If we assume, what is probably an underestimate, that the region commanded by our telescopes is so vast that light takes a thousand years in coming to us from its outer confines, and, further, that the number of its stars is a thousand millions (the number visible with our largest telescopes is usually estimated at about sixty millions) then we find that the average distance from star to star must be about nine millions of millions of miles. This is not quite half the actual distance from the sun to our nearest stellar neighbor (*a* Centauri), according to the received value of its parallax; but it is a distance which quite defies the power of human comprehension. If two stars at such a distance were rushing straight toward each other with a speed of ten miles a second, it would require nearly thirty thousand years to bring them together. Represent the sun, as in Sir John Herschel's familiar illustration, by a globe two feet in diameter, so that oranges, cherries, peas, and pins' heads would stand for the different planets at distances ranging from eighty feet to two miles, then, on that scale, *a* Centauri would be eight thousand miles away. Obviously, there is plenty of elbow room in the universe, and the chance of two stars accidentally jostling each other is far less than that of the collision of two bullets in midair over a battlefield. Still the possibility remains.

IS THERE IMMUNITY FROM COLLISION?

There is a prevalent impression that the immunity from collision between the heavenly bodies depends mainly on their being held in orderly orbits by central attraction; and it is true that their orbital constraints make it quite impossible for the planets to collide with each other, or even to approach each other very closely. But a very impressive picture is sometimes drawn of what would happen if the earth, for instance, should some time free herself from the bonds of gravitation—how she would fly off into space (which is true, of course), and soon dash herself to pieces against some other wandering world (which is not true at all, or at least not probable). Most likely, if gravitation were suddenly to cease, the earth would travel four millions, not of years, but of ages, without ever encountering anything more important than meteors, such as are now continually falling upon her surface. And these meteoric encounters, even, would probably be far less frequent than at present, since there is reason to suppose that such bodies are much more numerous in the neighborhood of the sun, and of other great stars, than in the rest of space.

Evidently, however, the attractions between a wandering star and others lying near its path must considerably increase the chances of collision, though not to so great an extent as perhaps might be supposed. A body entering our system at a distance from the sun one hundred times as great as the radius of the earth's orbit, and moving with no more than the velocity natural to a comet at that distance (about 2⅜ miles per second), would not strike the sun unless its path were directed within less than half a degree (23.4′) of the sun's center; and if its velocity were greater, the aim would have to be still more accurate to score a hit. If bodies were shot into space at random from the position and with the velocity indicated, only about one in eighty-six thousand would hit the sun. Were it not for the sun's attraction, however, the proportion would be twenty thousand times smaller still—only one is seventeen hundred millions.

It is obvious, therefore, that encounters between heavenly bodies of considerable magnitude must be extremely rare. There is not in all the astronomical record a single certain instance of such an occurrence. And yet it may confidently be asserted that some time or other in the past such events must have happened, and some time in the future will happen again; simply for the reason that, in a sufficient length of time, the most improbable things, if only not impossible, are sure to come to pass. Now, it is almost certain that the stellar motions are not such as to render collisions impossible; the planets, it is true, as has been said before, can never run into each other, because of the size and nature of their orbits, but, so far as can now be ascertained, nothing of the sort holds good for the motions of the stars. We already know enough about some of their so-called "proper motions" to be quite sure that, as a fact, they are not traveling in any simple curves around any common center, and also that some stars are flying through space with such velocities that no attraction, such as can reasonably be supposed to act in the premises, can control them. Nor does theory, any more than observation, indicate a structure of the stellar universe at all analogous to that of the planetary system. Among the stars there is no central dominance and no imperial power, but we have to do with a republic of comparatively free and independent members.

COLLISIONS ARE INEVITABLE—THE EARTH WILL BE A HUGE BALL OF VAPOR, IF IT IS HIT.

Sir William Thompson is therefore fully justified in writing: "It is as sure that collisions must occur between great masses moving through space as it is that ships, steered without intelligence to prevent collision, could not cross and recross the Atlantic for thousands of years with immunity from collision." Undoubtedly the chance of an encounter between a pair of heavenly bodies selected at random is trifling, almost beyond the power of computation, and the intervals of time between such catastrophes in that part of the heavens subject to human observations must be on the average enormous; but yet, in infinite time and unbounded space—somewhere or other now, some time or other here—such things are happening, or will come to pass.

If ever two great worlds do really meet in this way it is possible to predict some of the consequences. To use the technical language of science, "their energy of molar motion will be converted into various forms of molecular and potential energy;" which, translated into the vernacular, means that there will be evolution of heat and light, while at the same time the solids present will be wholly or in part liquefied, the liquids vaporized, and the vapors and gases rarefied and expanded. The intensity of the action will depend, of course, mainly upon the mass and swiftness of the colliding bodies; but an easy calculation shows that if our earth were ever to meet another globe like herself, and moving with the same velocity, heat enough would be generated by the shock to transform them both into a huge ball of vapor; unless, indeed, the central core of the earth is much colder and more refractory than usually supposed. At any rate, the quantity of heat developed would be sufficient to melt, boil, and completely vaporize a mass of ice fully 700 times that of both the colliding worlds—an ice planet 150,000 miles in diameter.

If, however, the impinging masses were, to begin with, mainly gaseous (as the sun seems to be) the effect might be curiously different. Heat would, of course, be generated, just as in the case of solid bodies; but, as a consequence, apparently most paradoxical, the resulting nebula might actually be cooler than either of the bodies before the encounter; of course, it would be immensely expanded in volume. Just as a gaseous mass, contracting under its own gravity from loss of heat by radiation at its surface, continually rises in temperature, so a similar mass, expanding against its own gravity from accession of heat within, may fall in temperature, nay, must fall, if the body is composed of "perfect" gas. Of course, immediately after the collision, and before the ultimate expansion of bulk was attained, the temperature and brilliance of the mass would be for a time vastly increased, but the final result would be as stated.

THE BRIGHT STAR OF 1876.

In a preceding paragraph it was said that we have not on the astronomical records a single certain instance of any collision between bodies of considerable size. But there have been several cases of a most remarkable phenomenon, which, perhaps, may owe its explanation to such encounters. Stars never before visible, or else known only as faint and minute, have suddenly blazed out, shining sometimes with the brilliance of Sirius, or even Venus, and afterward faded away to their original insignificance. Such was the famous star of 1572, so carefully observed by Tycho Brahe. As recently as 1866, and again in 1876, similar things have happened, though these later stars were less conspicuous. The star of 1876 (in the constellation of Cygnus) had long been known and catalogued as a telescopic star of the ninth magnitude, with nothing to distinguish it from any of the common herd. On November 24 it suddenly shone out as bright as the pole star. Schmidt, of Athens, who discovered it, had been observing that very region of the sky only four days before, and no such object was then visible. The intervening days were cloudy, so that we cannot tell precisely the hour when it first blazed up, but evidently its increase of brightness must have been extremely rapid. Immediately after Schmidt's observation it began to fade, but it was two weeks before it fell below the sixth magnitude and became invisible to the naked eye, and it was more than a year before it resumed its original faintness. Its whole course was carefully watched with the spectroscope. At first, and for some months, like the star of 1866, it showed conspicuous in its spectrum the lines of hydrogen, together with other lines of uncertain origin. As its brightness decreased the hydrogen lines faded still more rapidly, leaving other lines more prominent, until at last the spectrum, instead of becoming that of an ordinary star, came to consist simply of three bright lines, the spectrum of a nebula, and it continues such to this day. Whether this is or is not the same spectrum it had before the outburst, no one can say, as it had never been observed with the spectroscope before.

Now, I am very far from asserting that this was a case of collision; and yet it is clear enough that the whole course of phenomena was very much what might have been expected if it were. At any rate, the collision hypothesis is held and defended by several astronomers of authority, and the principal reason for preferring a different possible explanation lies in the fact that these "temporary stars," as they are called, are far too common to be probably due to stellar encounters. We have on record eight since the Christian era, and no less than three of them since 1840.

It is hardly necessary to say that if any retinue of planets attends such a star its sudden blaze cannot fail to carry disaster and destruction to all life upon them. We can conceive that forms of life may be possible under almost any imaginable physical conditions, provided only the course of events by which they have been reached has been gradual enough to allow the necessary adaptations. One would not dare to deny the possibility of life of some kind on the airless moon, or even on the sun itself. But all we know makes it certain that no planetary life could survive the tremendous and catastrophic change of conditions involved in a sudden thousand-fold increase of the solar radiation.

STELLAR MASSES—SHOOTING STARS—THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF THEM.

Thus far we have been considering only collisions of stellar masses. But space is filled also with minor particles, separated from each other only by intervals of a few hundred miles; and these, in the form of meteors and shooting stars, are rushing through space, dropping continually upon the larger worlds, increasing their size and adding to their store of heat and energy. Every year the earth encounters nearly three thousand millions of them, according to the estimate of Prof. Newton, ranging from the merest particles to masses of several hundred weight. Very probably, also, the comets belong to the same category, being really nothing but larger meteors, or flocks of small meteors, or perhaps even only puffs of meteoric dust. Nearly all the meteors which strike the earth are very minute. Perhaps a hundred or so reach the ground each year as recognizable masses of stone or iron, weighing from an ounce or two to some hundreds of pounds, but all the rest are dissipated in the upper air, and never come down unless as impalpable dust, not to be certainly identified. The whole amount of matter falling daily upon the earth from outer space is probably about 100 tons on the average (it is variously estimated from 25 to 500). A hundred tons is in itself a very considerable quantity, but utterly insignificant as compared with the mass of the earth, and entirely incapable of appreciable effect upon our temperature. Assuming even the largest estimate (500 tons a day), and also that the average velocity with which meteors enter our atmosphere is 15 miles a second (probably considerably too large), we find that the heat annually received from them by the earth is only about 53 calories for each square meter of her surface—less than would be imparted by two minutes' perpendicular sunshine, and only about 1-60,000 of the heat actually received from the sun in a year. Retaining the same extravagant estimate of 500 tons a day, it appears that the earth's diameter would grow an inch in about 100,000,000 of years, and that her distance from the sun would be reduced about 83 feet in a million years, in consequence of the resistance experienced in moving through the meteoric swarms.

It would not, however, be just to the general reader to dismiss the subject without fair notice that some most eminent astronomers hold views at variance with those above expressed. The late Prof. Pierce maintained to the end that the heat of the sun is chiefly due to the impact of meteors, and also that the earth itself receives as much heat from meteors as from the sun, a necessary result if the solar heat is really so produced. Of course we have no space to discuss the matter here, and must be content with merely saying that the quantity of matter which falls upon the earth, if his idea is correct, ought to be easily noticeable, amounting to about fifty tons a day on each square mile. It involves also serious difficulties in the planetary theory.

So far as human beings are concerned, the most important question connected with our subject is whether anything is to be feared from comets, as a consequence either of collisions with the earth or of their fall into the sun. It may be said, just as of the stars before, first, that cometary collisions, either with sun or earth, must be very rare occurrences, and, secondly, that they are practically certain to happen some time or other. Babinet computed, on the one hand, that a comet would strike the earth on the average about once in 15,000,000 years; on the other, we know at least three comets whose orbits cut the earth's path so closely that if they should ever reach the crossing at the same time as the earth a collision must occur. These comets are known as Biela's, Tempel's, followed by the Leonid meteors in its train, and the comet of 1862, which precedes the Perseids. One of the three, however (Biela's), has probably ceased to exist as a comet, and it is quite possible that the other two may vanish in the same way before we meet them.

As to cometary encounters with the sun, no comet has yet been known actually to strike the sun, but several have grazed very near it. The great comet of last year brushed through the corona, and came within 300,000 miles of the photosphere, and there is no assignable reason why some other comet should not actually pierce it.

CONSEQUENCES OF A COMET HITTING THE EARTH.

As to the consequences of a comet's collision with the earth, it is impossible to predict them with scientific certainty; probably, however, they would be insignificant. We know absolutely that the whole quantity of matter in a comet (technically its "mass") is extremely small compared with that of the earth; but just how small no one can say. It is impossible to contradict authoritatively either the man who says he could carry a comet home in his pocket if properly packed or one who asserts that a comet's nucleus is equivalent to an iron ball one hundred miles in diameter. An attempt has been made to get at the density of the central nucleus on the assumption that it holds to itself the enormous volume of the head and envelopes by its gravitational attraction, as if the surrounding nebulosity were an atmosphere in equilibrium around the nucleus; but the assumption is more than doubtful, and the derived conclusion, of course, is of little value. It seems, on the whole, more probable that a comet is throughout only a cloud of dust and vapor—a mere smoke wreath—than that there is at the center any solid kernel of preponderant mass.

If a comet really has at the center any great mass of stone or iron, or even a close-packed swarm of aerolites weighing a ton or two apiece, collision with it would of course be a most serious matter, spreading devastation and conflagration possibly over half the globe at once; not amounting, probably, to anything like a destruction of the world, but far more disastrous than any earthquake or volcanic eruption. It is far more likely, however, that the encounter with a comet would be entirely harmless—simply a most magnificent and brilliant shower of shooting stars lasting for an hour or two—a phenomenon which one might well desire to see.

As for the effect of a collision between a comet and the sun, in respect to which there has been much disquieting speculation of late, the probability is that we on the earth should never know it, unless we happened to be expressly watching the event. For a few minutes, just as the nucleus was piercing the photosphere, there might be some unusual flash of brilliance and a fine outburst of solar prominences, followed, perhaps, and very probably, by intense magnetic and auroral disturbances on the earth; but the main thermal transformation of the impinging energy would be effected far below the visible surface of the sun, and would result merely in a slight expansion of its bulk, far too slight to be detected by terrestrial astronomers. C. A. YOUNG.

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Blackfan Sarah Miss	McCalty Fanny Miss
Bland Mrs	McChesney H Mrs
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Booker Delia Miss	Manot Sarah Miss
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Bowman H E, 2	Mealy Bridget Miss
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Hall Jno F	Smoot B F
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Jones Walis	Sharp Capt H G
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MISCELLANEOUS.

LIST OF LETTERS REMAINING IN THE GEORGETOWN, D. C., POST OFFICE,

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1883.

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Garden Mrs Mary	Hall Katie G
Harris Emily	Yates Emily

GENTLEMEN'S LIST.

Jefferson Bartlett	Ross David, 2

LIST OF LETTERS REMAINING IN EAST CAPITOL STATION.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1883.

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