

Office:  
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 1755.

# The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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## THE MYSTERY OF THE COMET.

Astronomy seems to be composed to a large extent of theories, especially when it comes to the study of comets. The recent bewildering behavior of the tail of Halley's comet illustrates this. One more theory, therefore, may not be amiss. The astronomers told us weeks and months in advance that on a certain day the earth would pass through the tail of Halley's comet, and on the day after the date set for the passage we are greeted with the astonishing statement that the scheduled passage did not take place. We are told that the transit across the sun of the comet's head occurred at the predicted time, but that the tail unaccountably lagged behind.

Yet there is an explanation that seems reasonable. Observation shows that the tail of the comet is always directed away from the sun. This must be modified, however, by saying that the tail is sometimes curved, or bent, near its extremity. Why should the tail always point away from the sun? Traveling at high speed on an orbit around the sun, one would suppose that the tail would follow in the train of the comet, trailing behind along the comet's orbital path, instead of flaring out into space away from the sun and at right angles with its orbit. Observation, however, shows that such is not the case, and the phenomenon has to be accounted for. The explanation given by astronomers is that the tail is so exceedingly tenuous and so extremely sensitive that it is influenced by the pressure of the sun's light.

For the purposes of illustration, we may imagine the sun's light to be a stiff breeze and the comet's tail a trailing film of smoke "blown," streamer-like, directly away from the sun's disk. The pressure of sunlight forces it outward from the sun. Why, then, should the tail ever be curved, or bent? Why should it not always be turned straight away from the sun? It should be, of course, unless subjected to other influences that might cause a deviation in its relative position to the sun. But may there not be such influences? Suppose such an influence was a pressure of light from some source other than the sun. Suppose, for example, the comet passed near enough to the planet Venus for its sensitive tail to feel the pressure of her light. Subjected to this pressure, working in opposition to the pressure from the sun's light, would not the comet's tail be bent backward a little?

This, perhaps, will explain why the tails of comets are sometimes curved and sometimes not. And if it does explain it, the present phenomenon is also explained. The half of the earth's sphere turned toward the sun shines under reflected sunlight with a radiance many times more brilliant than that of the full moon. If there is any pressure to moonlight, the pressure of "earth light" must be very much greater. While it could not equal in power the pressure of sunlight, it might exercise power enough to influence something so sensitive to light pressure as a comet's tail. Especially might this be true in a case like the present one, when the comet is some 80,000,000 miles from the sun and only a little more than 14,000,000 miles from the earth.

Suppose the foregoing theory to be true, what would occur? Precisely what appears to have occurred. As the comet came nearer to a point directly between the earth and the sun its outward streaming tail would be brought more and more under the pressure of light from the earth. This pressure might be so strong that the comet's tail could not remain straight under it, but would have to bend

backward in a great curve in order to get by the earth. The earth would not pass through the tail, because the pressure of its light would not permit the tail to approach it to the point of contact. The tail would have to "go round" the earth, its entire length passing between the earth and the sun. Obviously, it would take some time for its fifteen or twenty millions of miles to trail past through this relatively narrow passage and it would not be surprising that a portion of it had not got by when observers saw it in the eastern sky this morning instead of in the west as they had expected.

## ZEPPELIN COMETH—NOT!

Some days ago, when mentioning the pending Dresden visit of Count Zeppelin in his airship, we ventured to state that we should expect the airship—when we saw it. Unfortunately, our doubts have proved well-founded; and we mention our prediction, not at all in the spirit of "I told you so," but merely as another evidence that as matters stand today airships cannot be depended upon. We are informed by the Royal Meteorological Station at Dresden of the receipt of the following message from the Zeppelin Airship Company at Friedrichshafen: "Owing to necessary alterations of the airship, the Vienna-Dresden trip must be postponed for the time being." Supplementary to this laconic despatch, it is stated that although the trial trips of the new airship were fairly satisfactory, certain defects, necessitating changes, developed. It therefore appears that Count Zeppelin would rather postpone the Dresden visit until his vessel is absolutely reliable, than risk a break-down en route. Further enquiries elicited no information beyond a rumour that the motor was proving defective and had ceased to run several times on the last trial voyage. Only after grave consideration did the Count decide upon postponement, in view of the fact that elaborate preparations had already been made for the airship's arrival at Korneuburg, Vienna, Breslau, and Dresden. It was impossible, added the Friedrichshafen people, to fix a definite date for the Vienna-Dresden trip.

Needless to say, great disappointment prevails in Dresden over this characteristic development. Characteristic in Dresden's case at least, because probably no important German city has had its hopes of seeing a real "live" airship dashed so frequently. Only the other day we had to announce that the Parseval dirigible could not come at the appointed time, the revised date being June 17. As a Dresden paper remarked yesterday, whichever airship arrives first, be it Parseval or Zeppelin, it is certain of receiving a frantic ovation. Personally, in the meantime, we should like to see an aviation meeting arranged in the city, as of late the aerial honours have all fallen upon the heavier-than-air machine.

## BRITISH AND AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES IN DRESDEN.

**THE BRITISH LEGATION:** Wiener Strasse 70. British Minister Resident, ARTHUR C. GRANT-DUFF, Esq.  
**THE BRITISH CONSULATE:** Altmarkt 16.—British Consul: CHARLES W. PALMÉ, Esq.  
**THE AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL:** Ammon Strasse 2 r. American Consul-General: T. ST. JOHN GAFFNEY, Esq.

## NEWS OF THE WORLD.

**LONDON, Wednesday.**—The subject of the Romanes lecture delivered at Oxford University yesterday by Mr. Theodore Roosevelt was: "Biological Analogies in History." The lecturer commenced with a brief sketch of the developments and alterations which had taken place in the animal world in the course of the last thousand years, comparing these with the manifold changes in the human race, its explorations over the face of the earth, and its most striking achievements. Present-day nations, he continued, were simply artificial combinations of absolutely different racial types, but the motive for national unity exerted a far more powerful influence than racial feelings and prejudices. The Northern French, for example, were more nearly related by blood and physical characteristics to their German-speaking neighbours than to the French of the Mediterranean coast, and these, again, stood in nearer relationship to the Catalonians than to their French compatriots on the shores of the English Channel or the banks of the Rhine. But in decisive characteristics all these divergent types of French had merged into one, and were easily to be distinguished from other races. An analogy was to be found with the Germans at the sources of the Danube and Rhine, who were absolutely different physically from the Germans of the Baltic coast. In Great Britain the inhabitants of Kent, Cornwall, and Yorkshire widely differed. In national ideals, however, they were as one; but as soon as this unification ceased to exist, and when particularism became predominant, the end of nationalism was near. The spread of luxury was another invariable menace to national strength. After comparing the histories of Rome and Great Britain, Mr. Roosevelt said that the worst enemies of a nation were to be found in individual passions and foolishness; while the most important factor in the greatness of a nation was national character. The spirit in which each nation performed its appointed tasks must be a spirit of humanity and fraternity, albeit free from weakness. The idle, the dissolute, and the weak could not expect to share in the reward of their betters. The doctrine of Socialism was destructive to the family idea, since it contested the right of property. Contact with foreign nations of the most divergent types and with universal culture carried difficult problems in its train. There were, however, some fundamental principles which always had and always would maintain. There was no justification for exerting supremacy over another nation unless this supremacy was to the advantage of the subject nation. Everybody should be treated according to his merit, and should be accorded no special preference on the ground that he belonged to a certain race. On the other hand, none should forfeit his claim to honour and reward on account of "racial disability." The same principle of equality should hold good between State and State. The nations which had advanced farthest should always hold themselves in readiness to prevent the defeat by barbarism or despotism of other peoples which were also labouring for progress.

**LONDON, Wednesday.**—British trade statistics for the month of May, just published, show an increase of £10,414,631 in imports and of £4,081,565 in exports, over the corresponding period of 1909.

**WASHINGTON, Wednesday.**—In conference with President Taft the presidents of the Pennsylvania, the New York Central, and the Southern Railroads also agreed to the conditions proposed to and accepted by the Western Trunk lines yesterday.