

every office-holder in the United States, in spite of the civil service professions made by the President in his inaugural address, and this insecurity is undoubtedly due to that loosening of the great bond of gravitation that has hitherto held things firmly in their places. There cannot be any doubt—that is, in any astrological mind—that all articles on the earth's surface weigh less than they did a year ago. This can be tested by two simple experiments. You may weigh the next pound of butter you buy and you will find that it does not weigh more than ten or eleven ounces, and you may drop a fifty-six-pound weight on your foot, and you will be convinced that it does not fall as heavily as it would have fallen had it been dropped last year.

We thus see that the astrologers are right after all, and that great and disastrous changes have been caused by the conjunction of the planets. The moment the truth of the theory of gravitation above set forth is assumed, there is no lack of phenomena which can be explained in accordance with it. Probably the worst results of the planetary conjunction are yet to be felt; but we can reasonably hope that when Jupiter, Saturn, and Neptune go their several ways the sun will overpower them and compel them one by one to make restitution. In which case our own lawful quantity of gravitation will be once more served out to us, and all will be well again.

### LOSS OF GRAVITY.

We might as well be candid and admit that ZADKIEL and his brother astrologers were right when they prophesied that at this time of the year we should have bad weather, earthquakes, and other unpleasant things. They based this prophecy upon the fact that most of the large planets were to simultaneously reach their perihelion near the middle of April. When the Weather Bureau prophesies "clear and cloudy weather," and on the following day its prediction is verified, we immediately express our admiration of the unerring predictions of science, but when the astrologers prophesy earthquakes and things months in advance, and their predictions come true, we merely smile and give them no credit whatever. This may be just and magnanimous, but it certainly does not look as if it were.

The astronomers have, of course, the utmost contempt for astrologers, as ignorant and unenterprising persons who draw horoscopes at fifty cents apiece instead of inducing the Government to spend half a million of dollars in sending them to the ends of the earth on the pretext of observing the transit of Venus. Why a transit of Venus is so much more respectable than a conjunction of four or five planets, and why the astronomers who observe the former phenomenon are so much more trustworthy than the astrologers who observe the latter is not clear to the unprejudiced mind. The astronomers are perfectly certain that no matter how many planets may be drawn up in line on the side of the sun opposite to us, no results perceptible on the surface of the earth will follow. They have been mistaken more than once since astronomy became an independent science, and it is not impossible that they are mistaken now.

The law of gravitation has been formulated, but the true nature of the mysterious force which we call gravitation is yet unknown. We are, therefore, at liberty to invent any theory in regard to it that may seem plausible. Now, it has already been suggested by more than one astronomer that the heat of the sun is really identical with gravitation. In other words, the flood of gravitation flowing from the sun is converted into heat when it strikes the earth. That gravitation varies directly as the mass of the bodies affected by it is well established. Hence, Jupiter, though it is an immense distance from the sun, may, owing to its size, receive much more heat from the sun than it is generally supposed to receive, and little Mercury, though close to the sun, may be even cooler than Venus.

If we accept this theory, it follows that when Jupiter, Saturn, and Neptune are all simultaneously in conjunction at their several perihelions they must draw tremendously upon the resources of gravitation stored up in the sun. Instead of pulling in opposite directions and wholly independently, they have now combined their forces and are all pulling at once. Now, the sun is directly between them and the earth, and, of course, the more gravitation these rascally and selfish planets manage to absorb the less there is left for the earth. If the conjunction of the planets thus deprives the earth of her customary and lawful share of gravitation, we might naturally expect even worse calamities than those prophesied by the astrologers.

Do the recent phenomena which have occurred on our planet support this theory that our normal supply of gravitation has been absorbed by the planets now in conjunction? Every candid person must admit they do. A failure in our supply of gravitation would loosen everything on this planet, for it is gravitation that holds the earth together and keeps the Chinamen and other antipodal people on its surface. The earthquakes at Ischia, Chio, and several other places are undoubtedly caused by the lack of sufficient gravitation to keep the earth's crust from bulging. The atrocious weather of the past Winter and the present Spring is due to the absence of gravitation and its correlative heat, and the weather will continue to grow worse until the conspiring planets separate and are made to disgorge their plunder. People find that their local attachments have suddenly grown weaker, and they are everywhere showing a tendency to wander over the earth. Even the Methodists, who ordinarily stay steadily at home, are about to assemble from all parts of the earth to hold a general convention in London. A sense of insecurity is felt by nearly