

Random thoughts & nonsense.

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Here-to-fore, I have spoken or written only of things that I have experienced or observed in the past. Today I am going to express some thoughts about which I know little or nothing. I will begin by telling you a story. A colored preacher was extolling to his congregation on the subject of eternity. This is the story.

"A little sparrow take one drop of water in his bill from the Atlantic ocean and take one hop a day to the Pacific ocean and he put that drop of water in the Pacific ocean. Then he hop one hop a day back to the Atlantic ocean for another drop of water drop of water which he take to the Pacific ocean in the same way. He do this until the Atlantic ocean am dry and all of the water am in the Pacific ocean. That, brothers and sisters, would be only early dawn in eternity".

That is an introduction to my topic of TIME AND SPACE of which I know little but is open for much speculation. Any facts or figures that I give you have been gleaned from books, newspapers, TV, etc. As I understand it; all recorded history, hieroglyphics included, if placed upon the clock of time, would amount to only a few minutes. I read where diggings just south of the Dardenelles <sup>in Turkey</sup> have oncovered not one but two or more evidences of past civilizations. We are told that dinasours dominated the earth millions of years ago. Fossils are still being discovered in differest parts of our continent. Evidences of past civilations are found in both North and South America. There is much speculation as to what catastrophic event or events that may have caused the demise of these civilázations. Are we to believe that history will not repeat itself?

Our scientists have developed, and are using, much more deadly means to destroy ourselves than any civilization had at their disposal in the past. It is even rumored that cyanide gas is being used in the war between Iran and Iraq. The <sup>manufacture and</sup> excessive release of fluorocarbons are causing holes to appear in <sup>the</sup> ozone layer which protects us from <sup>ultraviolet</sup> harmful rays of the sun. These holes are appearing over the poles and may cause excessive melting of the ice caps. The arctic ice cap is said to be the size of the United States. The antarctic ice cap is much larger. The statement was recently made that the mean temperature of the earth is ~~r~~aising two degrees each 15 years. If this warming trend continues, the ice caps could eventually melt causing the ocean to rise as much as 20 feet. This would play havoc on all the coastal regions of the world. Some scientists are already discouraging long term investments in coastal propertys. There are reports of huge icebergs, the size of, or twice the size of Rhode Island, breaking off of the antarctic icecap. The area of Rhode Island is 1,212 square miles or about 30 by 40 miles. The Des Moines Register of Feb. 20th, 1988, carried an article stating that an iceberg about 22 miles wide by 90 miles long had broken off the antarctic ice cap and was drifting west-northwest at 2 or 3 miles per <sup>day</sup> ~~hour~~ toward the shipping lanes. When this iceberg hit the water, it is estimated that the worlds oceans raised about the thickness of 10 playing cards. Another thing to think about is the world's supply of heat and power for the future. Fortunately, science has discovered the atom, fission, fusion, nuclear source of power. However, the powers that be will hinder <sup>or</sup> ~~and~~ delay thier safe domestic use until the fossil fuels are almost depleted.

And what are fossil fuels? Mostly coal and oil. How were they formed? By the decomposition of lush vegetation buried deep in the soil by the earth's natural evolvem<sup>ent</sup>ent. <sup>over</sup>sons of years ~~ago~~. Where do we find these deposits? From the equator to <sup>the poles to</sup> the north slopes of Alaska, in Siberia, below deserts, mountains and places barely habitable today. During the ice age much of the ocean's water was contained in the huge glaciers which may account for our off-shore and Gulf of Mexice oil strikes but how about the North Sea strikes, or Alaska? Can you imagine forests and other vegetation growing in all of the regions where vast amounts of oil are being pumped today? There must be an explanation <sup>for</sup> this. My conclusion is that the earth, over it's millions of years existence, has wobbled and not moved in the precise manner that we have observed in the last few minutes on the clock of time. I also note that the spinning of the earth is slowing down; that time was adjusted one second recently. Since time is infinite, can we not then conclude that, at some far time in the far future, the earth will stop revolving? Think of the implications.

Now a few words about another of earth's phenom<sup>ena</sup>ena. The volcano. Most of you have observed volceanos in one form or other. Like the <sup>extinct</sup> Punch Bowl at Honolulu, site of a national cemetery, or <sup>active</sup> Mauna Loa, the world's largest, on the island of Hawaii. I was up on the west <sup>slope</sup> ~~side~~ of Mauna Loa many years ago and observed fields of coffee plants and the drying and grading process where the coffee was bagged for <sup>to the roasters.</sup> shipment. This giant volcano is more than 60 miles wide at it's base and rises 30,000 feet to it's summit 13,677 feet above sea level. <sup>Loa</sup> Mauna has erupted several times since I was there. Another volcano, little Kilauea, is located near it's base. It is a short distance from Volcano House where tourists can observe it's steaming crater the year around.

And we have our own Mt. St. Helens, in the State of Washington, which blew it's top a few years ago and created <sup>much destruction and</sup> ~~some~~ excitement. It flattened <sup>many</sup> square miles of forests, changed the course of a river and scattered <sup>ash</sup> ~~dust~~ over a large area. History tells us of the surprise eruption of Vesuvius, in Italy, which buried the city of Pompeii over 1900 years ago. The greatest eruption of all was Krakatoa which exploded in 1883. Krakatoa, in Indonesia between Java and Sumatra, had been inactive for 200 years. In 1883, a great explosion blew out more than four and a half cubic miles of ash leaving a hole five miles wide. The whole top of the mountain disintegrated. It had been 2600 feet high and ended as <sup>and 5 miles across.</sup> a hole 1,000 feet deep. Krakatoa created a 120-foot tidal wave that killed about 35,000 people in Java. The eruption sound was heard as far away as Australia, a distance comparable to from Seattle to Miami.

Now, a few thoughts on astronomy. Time and space being closely related, both infinite, are subjects for much study and speculation. We are told that, on a clear night, about 2,000 stars can be seen on our half of the earth. But that's only a tiny fraction of the number of individual stars that are actually out there in space. Astronomers tell us there are more than 200 billion billion stars. That number is a two followed by 20 zeros. Stars are gigantic balls of glowing gas. The earth's sun is a star and it is the only one close enough to look ball-shaped. The smallest of all stars is about the size of our earth. The largest is so gigantic that it would more than fill the space between the earth and our sun. Distances between stars are unbelievably wide. For example, the star that is closest to our sun is more than 25 million million miles away from the sun.

And that distance is about one-billionth the distance from the sun to the most distant star. Stars are in groups or galaxies rather than being spread out evenly, in the universe, Our earth, the sun and all the visible stars and planets belong to a galaxy called the Milky Way. Astronomers tell us there are more than 200 billion stars in the Milky Way. Altogether, there are more than a hundred million galaxies out there in the universe, many of them much larger than the Milky Way. A nova is a star that suddenly increases in brightness by thousands or millions of times its original intensity then decreases in brightness over a period of months to years. <sup>a</sup>to what I believe astronomers call a "black hole". I read of such an occurrence a little over a year ago. Astronomers accidentally discovered a nova where no star had appeared before. They calculated that this nova receded into a dead mass about the size of the earth. <sup>not</sup> Can we then conclude that the earth <sup>may be</sup> is a former nova, or burned out star? Pressures from remaining fires are finding vents through our present day volcanos. Our sun, about 93 million miles from earth, is a nuclear furnace. Its internal temperature may be as high as 25 million degrees F. and the surface temperature <sup>about</sup> 11,000 degrees. The size is said to be over 109 times the width of the earth. The star nearest the earth, not including our sun, is Proxima Centauri. It is 4.3 light years away. The distance between stars is measured in light years. One light year is the distance light travels in one year; five thousand eight hundred eighty billion miles (5,880,000,000,000). So when you look at a star, you only see the light that was emitted <sup>billions of</sup> years ago. Astronomers tell us that most stars are between 1 and 10 billion years old, with some of them being as old as 20 billion years. The age of the earth is said to be 4.6 to 5 billion years and the age of the sun at 4.6 billion years.

about to  
 Now, just as I was ~~going~~ to leave you worrying about the sun burn-  
 ing out Or the thought of future civilizations digging us out of  
 debris and ash thousands or millions of years from now, I pick up  
 a Des Moines Register, dated April 12, 1988, and read of a new dis-  
 covery. "Astronomers have found the oldest and most distant galaxy  
 ever seen, an object 10 times the size of the Milky Way that formed  
 when the universe was less than 2 billion years old. So this pushes  
 back the time at which galaxies formed in the early universe. This  
 discovery could force a revision in astronomers' conception of the  
 universe". I have concluded that astronomy is not an exact science.  
 That is the end of my random thoughts for today. I will close by  
 telling you a story. Like other stories that I have told; this story  
 is clean, without a single bad word.

Ma and Pa, the elderly couple, were sitting in their living room one  
 evening. Pa had had the hic-cups for a week and every attempt had  
 been made to cure him to no avail. Pa, said Ma, we have tried and  
 failed to cure your hic-cups. Why don't we call in that nice young  
 man who is on the porch courting our daughter? He may be able to  
 help. They agreed and the young man was called in and the situation  
 was explained. He admitted some experience and was persuaded to try.  
~~to cure the hic-cups.~~ He approached the old man and said lay your  
 head  
 way back. He then carefully got hold of and jerked a whisker out of  
 each nostril. Much to the old man's relief, and surprise to every-  
 one, the hic-cups stopped immediately. Ma said to Pa, that's wonder-  
 ful, this young man should be a doctor. Pa said to Ma; mebbe so  
 but from the way his fingers smell, I think he should be our son-  
 in-law.