

also look back with complacency to the generally long, cold, and very snowy Winter of 1886-7, which I was also enabled to forecast "to a hair," and with some degree of confidence take a look off into the future. At my elbow are astronomical calculations for the whole of the year 1888, tabulated along with the resultant weather of past seasons at such aspects, positions and planetary constellations, augmented with the records of similar years' weather—or what I believe will prove similar years to that of 1888. For just as sure as the planetary constellations repeat themselves, so the weather repeats itself; the weather is not new, but as old as the climate; it is only man that is new at studying it. But man will get over this difficulty in time. Patient work and patient watching, careful studying and careful recording have already done, and will continue to do, wonders.

Everyone thinks he knows everything about the weather, except the man who really does know something, and almost everyone at present with sense enough to anticipate the future, is anticipating and dreading another terribly severe winter, a "couplet" to that of 1886-7. I wish to lift a weight from such peoples' minds. Because last Winter was very cold and snowy, and the Summer now ending very hot and dry (generally)—there were, I know, heavy streaks of rain in sections—is that a sufficient reason for anticipating another very cold Winter? If so, why? Even if only on the idea of a general law of compensation, has not the hot, dry Summer counterbalanced and generally made up for the cold, snowy Winter? Of course it has.

So far then, we are just "ending even." The weather ledger is balanced, and the books for the year closed.* But can Nature throw off her Summer attire now, as easily as she did her Winter wraps last April? Is it probable that, as we then leapt out of the Winter into the Summer, that we shall now jump right out of Summer into Winter? Possible, but not probable, for Nature but seldom indulges in extremes. With this knowledge I was led to make the remarkable calculations for November and December 1887, in my last ALMANAC; with this knowledge, I now go several steps farther and open out what I consider to be the general probabilities for 1888.