until about the end of March, when it became a "morning star," *i.e.*, it was seen in the morning before sunrise. But it did not become bright enough to be seen with the naked eye until about April 21st, and cloudy weather prevented its being seen in Toronto until a week later. From that time it was continuously observed, and it gradually became brighter until a tail of 30 degrees or more could be made out. Then it again approached the sun — apparently to us, but not actually getting closer — and actually came between us and the sun on May 18th at about 11 p.m. Toronto time.

Now the tail always points away from the sun, and it was predicted that we should pass through it. Further, cyanogen, which is a poisonous gas, is known to be a constituent of comets, and so many had some fear lest we might suffer from the comet's tail. But we came through safely, and the question is asked, "Did we pass through the tail after all?" As the tail lagged behind the line joining the sun to the comet's head, the tail was not due to enshroud us until some hours after the time just given. Many watched for indications of the tail, and some reports show that certain peculiar effects were seen. On June 30th, 1861, the earth passed through the tail of a great comet and on the evening of that day the sky had "a singular yellow phosphorescent glare, very like diffused Aurora Borealis." Dr. R. H. Curtiss, of the Detroit Observatory, says that at 2.15 a.m. (May 19th) he saw "a distinct glow which extended from the north point around to the south-east. Extending from this was a definite shaft of light reaching from a bank of clouds below Gamma Pegasi to the Milky Way. At Gamma Pegasi, which was in the centre of the glow, this tail was 12 to 15 degrees wide, tapering rapidly as it rose in the sky, and, at a distance of 15 degrees above Gamma Pegasi, was 5 degrees wide. The sky was dark on each side of this shaft of light." At least half a dozen others report similar observations, from which it would seem that we actually made the passage. But the tail may have been somewhat curved, and we may not have passed fully into it, or we may have passed between the "shreds" of the tail which are clearly seen in photographs of the comet.

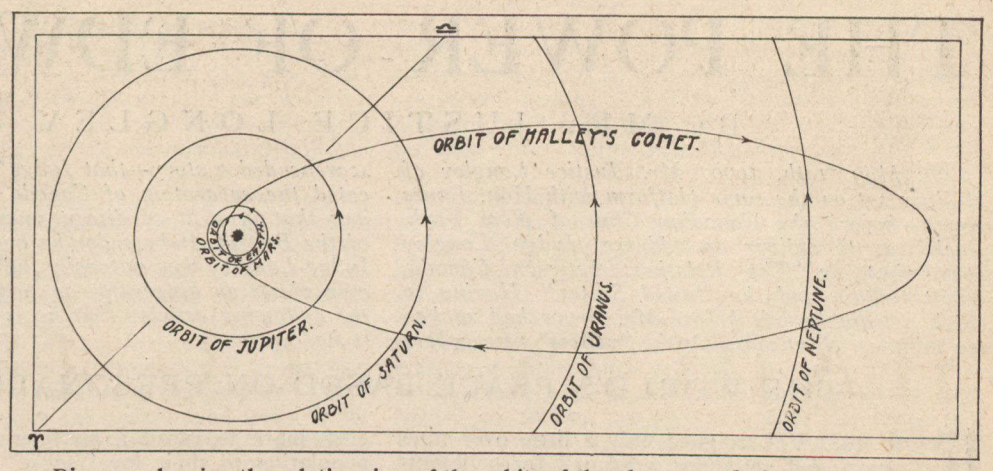
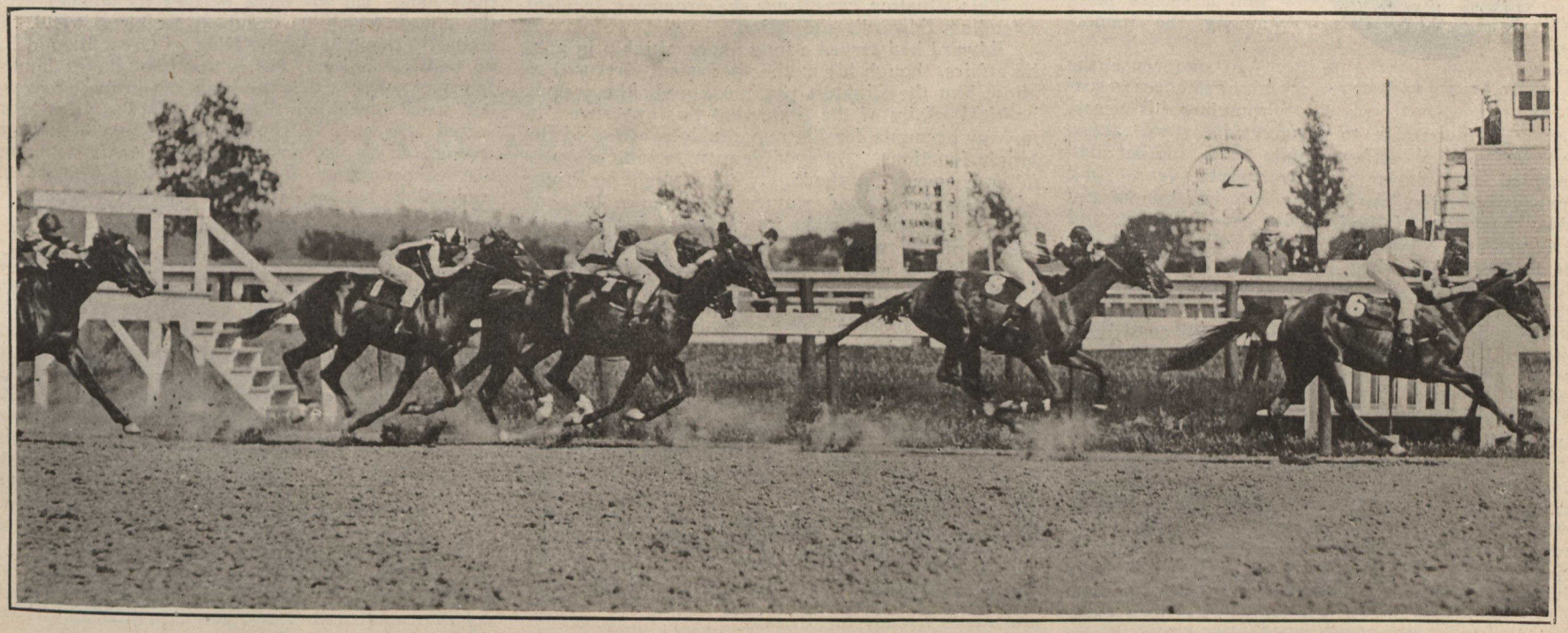


Diagram showing the relative sizes of the orbits of the planets, and of Halley's Comet. The elliptical path of the latter is 3,426 millions of miles long, and 868 millions of miles wide. That point of the orbit nearest the sun is called perihelion; it is 56 millions of miles distant.

At any rate there was no ill effect to us, and soon afterwards the comet became sufficiently separated from the sun for us to see it well in the western sky in the evening. It is now rapidly receding from us at the rate of about three or four million miles a day, and it will soon be too faint for naked-eye vision. It will be followed by telescopes for some months, but will soon disappear in the depths of space, not to be seen again for 75 years.

When the fact had been clearly demonstrated that Halley's comet returned every 75 or 76 years efforts were made to identify its previous visits to the sun, and its history has been traced back to 240 B.C. Its appearance in 1066 is of great interest to us. That the comet was a precurser of the Norman conquest was quite generally accepted. "*Nova stella, novus rex,*" (a new star, a new king), was a proverb of the time. On the tapestry at Bayeaux, in Normandy, France, which is attributed to Matilda, Queen of William the Conqueror, is a representation of Harold on the throne, in great dread of a comet to which his attention has been called by his attendants. Tennyson in his drama "Harold" introduces this comet in the first scene. This is but one of its many "superstitions."

TWO PICTURES FROM THE REALM OF AMUSEMENT



Bluebonnets, Montreal, opened Saturday last. This was the finish of the second race. Eaglebird first, Supple second, Loscar third

The Queen's Own Rifles, of Toronto, are holding their semi-centennial celebration this month. One feature will be a "Pageant of Ontario." First epoch covers the period 1783 to 1796, the U.E. L. period. Second epoch deals with the stirring events between 1811 and 1838. Third epoch covers the Fenian Raid of 1866 and the Rebellion of 1885. Fourth epoch gives a retrospect of British History from Henry VIII to the present day, with a grand procession of Kings, Queens and Celebrities.