

PLANETARY PHENOMENA
by Frances McEvoy

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M.V.I. #3 5

DECEMBER



All planets are direct as December begins, contained between Venus in Scorpio and Jupiter in Pisces. The New Moon just before noon December 1 is nearly conjunct Saturn and square Jupiter. The annual conjunction of Saturn and the Sun actually takes place December 4 at 11 degrees Sagittarius. Saturn is moving at its fastest speed, now, and by month's end will be at 15 degrees Sagittarius, racing to catch up with Uranus.

The still new Moon will be at perigee the morning of December 2 while conjunct Uranus. The Moon will be at perigee again the evening of December 30 at the time of the New Moon in Capricorn.

The asteroid Juno is in the first degree of Capricorn as December begins, and will be at 11 degrees that sign New Years Eve, conjunct the Sun.

The conjunction of Sun and Uranus occurs December 14, followed by the Full Moon two days later. The Moon will be farthest from the Earth December 17 in the sign Cancer.

The conjunction of Neptune and the Sun takes place December 27, with Juno nearby.

Mars and Jupiter have been a brilliant sight in the night sky all Fall, and as December begins Mars is within 10 degrees of catching up with Jupiter in Pisces. Each night the space between the two planets grows smaller, and on the night of December 18 Mars overtakes the larger Jupiter in close conjunction at 15 degrees Pisces. As the year ends, Mars has pulled slightly ahead of Jupiter, lying seven degrees east of the largest planet.

Venus is moving slowly through Scorpio this month, having just turned direct in late November. The Moon passes by Venus the evening of December 27. Venus will be at its greatest brilliancy as morning star on December 11 at 9 degrees Scorpio.

Mercury, which also turned direct in late November, plays catch up with the Sun this month, and by the end of the year is too close to the Sun to be visible. Ceres is conjunct Mercury December 5 at 23 degrees Scorpio. Ceres enters Sagittarius on December 20. Pallas is also in Scorpio all month, conjunct Pluto at the Winter Solstice.

The Winter Solstice occurs at 11:02 P.M. December 21, with the Sun standing still at its maximum southern position before beginning the slow climb back into northern declinations. Solstice means sun-stand still, from the words sol and sistere. Ancient peoples celebrated this day as the rebirth of the Sun, knowing the days would soon grow longer again.

Chiron remains retrograde in Gemini, and will be in opposition to the Sun December 11 at 18 degrees of that sign.

URANUS CONJUNCT NEPTUNE IN CAPRICORN 1992-95

by FRANCES McEVoy

Uranus catches up with Neptune every 171 years, and the two remain in conjunction for about three years. In April 1992 the two meet again when they make stations at 18 degrees Capricorn within a day of each other. While in retrograde motion they separate by two degrees and meet once more in December 1992 at 17 degrees Capricorn, remaining closely conjunct all through 1993. The two finally begin to separate in 1995 when Uranus pulls ahead and moves into Aquarius.

The last conjunction of Uranus and Neptune occurred in January 1821 when Uranus caught up with Neptune in the first degree of Capricorn, and lasted until 1824. The two remained together in Capricorn until 1828 when Uranus finally moved on into Aquarius. That period was known as the Era of Good Feeling, with James Monroe in his second term as President. This was a calm and prosperous administration and the most notable event was the enunciation by Monroe in his presidential message in December 1823 of the policy that has since become known as the Monroe Doctrine. This doctrine has had a profound effect on U.S. foreign policy ever since. Uranus and Neptune were still within four degrees of conjunction when this message was delivered.

The Monroe Doctrine declared that there would be no more colonization by European countries in the New World; existing European colonies could not be transferred from one country to another, and the United States would not interfere in the political affairs of Europe nor allow intervention of Europe in the governments of North and South America. This position had first been stated by George Washington in his farewell address in 1796 and had been restated by Thomas Jefferson in 1801, but Monroe felt it necessary to make the doctrine official because Russia claimed territories now known as Alaska. There was also a danger that European countries might intervene to help Spain reclaim colonies in South America and Central America which had recently revolted and claimed independence. It was a bold gesture of open diplomacy and would have far reaching effects twenty years later.

Financially it was a good period in American history. Any suggestion that Neptune in Capricorn is bad for business is clearly incorrect. The Panic of 1817 had occurred with Uranus and Neptune both in Sagittarius and Neptune was square Pluto in Pisces. The Primary Post War Depression ended in January 1821 as Uranus and Neptune moved into Capricorn. Saturn and Jupiter were conjunct in 1821 in Aries and this conjunction lasted into 1822. The next financial crisis of note came in 1837 when Neptune was well into Aquarius and Uranus into Pisces. This panic came as a result of reckless expenditures for farm land, cotton, slaves and railroads. It lasted past the Saturn-Jupiter conjunction of 1842 in the sign Capricorn with Neptune still in Aquarius. There were no financial crises of any sort during the time Neptune was in Capricorn between 1821 and 1834. This was indeed a good period sandwiched in between the crisis when Neptune was in Sagittarius in 1817 and when it was in Aquarius in 1837.

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But what of note did happen during the period when Uranus and Neptune were conjunct in Capricorn? Mexico, Guatemala, Venezuela, Peru, and other Spanish colonies revolted successfully against Spain. A Greek War of Independence began that would last until 1831 and in 1822 a Greek assembly proclaimed independence from the Ottoman Empire. And Brazil proclaimed independence from Portugal in 1822, with the Portuguese crown prince Pedro becoming Emperor of Brazil.

The Rosetta Stone, found in Egypt in 1799, was deciphered in 1822 by French Egyptologist Champollion. This made it possible to read the papyri and stones of ancient Egyptian civilizations. The stone contained phonograms and ideograms that gave the necessary clues to decipher all Egyptian inscriptions.

The first permanent photograph was made in 1822 by a French physicist. And Hungarian child piano prodigy Franz Liszt made his debut in Vienna at age 11. Britain abolished the death penalty for more than 100 crimes.

The first tuition free public high school opened in Boston in 1821, and by 1827 every town in Massachusetts with 500 families was required to support a public high school. And in New York, the Emma Willard School opened for women, proving that women could master such subjects as mathematics and philosophy.

There has been widespread concern that the lineup of planets in Capricorn might cause earthquakes, volcanos or some other natural disaster. The New Moon at 2 degrees Capricorn on December 25, 1821 was exactly conjunct Uranus and Neptune. There were no recorded major earthquakes between 1815 and 1828. Every December between 1821 and 1824 there were close lineups of Sun, inner planets and Uranus-Neptune in early Capricorn. At the time of the December 1828 earthquake in Japan Uranus was in the first degree of Aquarius and Neptune was at 18 degrees Capricorn. Venus and Mercury were not in Capricorn, nor was Mars as it was in 1821 and 1822. Yet between 1811 and 1815 there were five major earthquakes in the United States, Venezuela and Indonesia. At that time Neptune was in Sagittarius, and Uranus was in Scorpio and early Sagittarius. And in 1835 and 1837 there were two more major quakes, in Chile and Syria, after Neptune had moved into Aquarius and Uranus into Pisces. Again it is clear that historically the conjunction of Neptune and Uranus in Capricorn did not produce a major earthquake or volcano.

The previous conjunction of Uranus and Neptune took place in 1650 in mid-Sagittarius, at the time of the birth of the Duke of Marlborough, and again there is no record of a major earthquake between 1626 and 1667. The cycle before that shows Uranus and Neptune conjunct in late Scorpio in 1478, at the time of the birth of Sir Thomas More, and there is no record of any kind of physical disaster between 1455 and 1531. The only conclusion that can be drawn from these dates is that the conjunction of Uranus and Neptune, in whatever sign, heralds the birth of remarkable men and women. The conjunction in Capricorn in 1821-24 produced such famous people as Clara Barton, Louis Pasteur, Dostoevsky, Mary Baker Eddy, Gustave Flaubert, Ulysses Grant, Rutherford Hayes, Matthew Arnold, Johann Strauss, Sir Richard

Burton, Engels, Baudelaire, Cesar Franck, Gregor Mendel, Anton Bruckner, Alexandre Dumas, Stonewall Jackson, Thomas Huxley, Oom Paul Kruger, Max Mueller, Heinrich Schliemann (he discovered Troy), Frederick Olmstead, Florence Nightingale, and Edmond de Goncourt, just to name a few.

When Uranus and Neptune came to conjunction in 1821, Europe and America were on the threshold of the greatest productive expansion in history. Intellectuals joined with the working class to reform representative institutions and to give the vote to the working class, and political power to the new industrialists. Capricorn puts great value on the work ethic, on production and experience, and admires the self made man rather than the born aristocrat. Neptune in Capricorn naturally relates to the problems of the working class rather than to the privileged aristocracy. In 1821 Massachusetts and New York abolished property qualifications for voting, and in England there was a demand for universal manhood suffrage and the removal of property qualifications for parliament. The working class movement of the 1820s had faith in representative institutions and struggled to make them completely democratic. In 1824 British workers gained the right to organize, and the Factory Act of 1833 restricted child labor, the first of a long series of laws designed to safeguard labor by insuring better living and working conditions.

The champion of the working men during the 1820s was Robert Owen, founder of British socialism. Owen was a Taurus native born during an eclipse of the Sun (like Karl Marx) with Sun and Moon conjunct Uranus and trine Neptune in Virgo, and Pluto-Jupiter conjunct in Capricorn. A more earthy man would be hard to find. At 19 he became manager of a large cotton mill in Manchester and soon made it a model for good labor conditions. Owens greatly improved the homes of his workers and trained them to habits of order, cleanliness and thrift. He opened a company store where his people could buy quality goods at little more than cost price, and he devoted special attention to the education of the young. The first infant school in Great Britain was in his mill. Owen rejected the prevailing religion of his time and developed a philosophy that a man's character is formed by his environment and his education, and can be changed by improving these things. He preached social reform rather than moral reform. In 1821 as Uranus and Neptune came to conjunction in the first degree of Capricorn, he asked the government for legislation to protect workers and for action to cure unemployment by setting up villages of cooperation. Owen appealed first to the government, then to private philanthropists, and finally to the working classes themselves. His movement collapsed in 1834 when Neptune moved into Aquarius.

Owen declared his hostility to accepted forms of Christianity and after that his theories were suspect to the ruling classes. To carry out his plan of self-contained communities, in 1825 he bought 30,000 acres of land in Indiana, in the United States, and named it New Harmony. He spent three years and most of his personal fortune

continued from page six

trying to put his theories into action. He also had community experiments in Scotland, Ireland and England. Owen declared that a transformation of the social order was necessary, and from 1820 his proposals attracted the younger workers. Between 1820 and 1830 numerous societies were formed to advocate his views. The growth of labor unions and the emergence of the working class point of view caused Owen's doctrines to be accepted as an expression of the workers' goals. In 1821 he announced the principle that labor is the source of all wealth. The Grand National Consolidated Trades Union was formed in 1833. The repression by the courts and the government ended this movement in 1834. It would be 50 years before socialism again influenced unionism, and that was when Neptune reached Taurus in 1876. At age 82 Robert Owen became a spiritualist. His son was later to be a congressman from Indiana who drafted the bill founding the Smithsonian Institute.

The words "socialism" and "socialist" came into use in Britain and France in 1825 and were used to describe the followers of Robert Owen. After Neptune moved into Aquarius in 1834, there was a shift of consciousness and socialism changed from the "scientific socialism" of Owen to a more radical "utopian socialism" which exalted the State over the individual. Aquarius is an ideological sign, glorifying society over the individual, while Capricorn glorifies

7

the self made man and the work ethic. Robert Owen and Fanny Wright championed abolition of slavery, women's liberation, free public education and a more equal distribution of wealth. This was a period when people questioned orthodox religious views, particularly the predestination and rigidity of the puritans and calvinists. Neptune in Capricorn definitely does not favor fundamentalism. That is a by-product of Pluto in Scorpio which always produces fundamental moralists such as Savanarola, Jonathan Edwards, Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell et al.

The post-Napoleonic period of the 1820s with Neptune in Capricorn was a period of Romantic Realism in the arts and literature. A widespread cult of Nature and Experience extolled the beauty of the work ethic and of God's handiwork. The scientists of the period were natural philosophers. Rarely has there been such a concentration of talent and genius as gathered in Paris in the 1820s including Victor Hugo, Dumas, Balzac, George Sand, Stendhal, Delacroix, Chateaubriand. Not since the Renaissance had such a group of literary and artistic stars gathered in one spot. In England the same period produced Byron, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Sir Walter Scott and Tennyson. In the United States we had Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, and in Europe there were Goethe and

next page please

continued from page seven

Pushkin. In 1824 Beethoven composed his Symphony No. 9 in D Minor while totally deaf. Other musicians of this period were Chopin, Rossini, Berlioz, Schubert and Mendelssohn. The Hudson River painters of the 1820s were typical of the nature painting that was so popular in this decade. Audubon published his book on birds in 1830 and Charles Darwin sailed for the South Pacific to study geology. The period has also been dubbed Romantic Evolutionism.

The Democratic party was formed in 1828 advocating Jeffersonian principles and Andrew Jackson was elected president representing the common man rather than the elite. The Workingmen's Party was formed in 1829 advocating social reform and non-imprisonment for debt.

Cotton mills began production in Massachusetts in the 1820s with water powered machinery and by 1826 female labor force was used. The first recorded strike of factory workers occurred in 1828. The first big wave of immigrants also began arriving during that decade from Ireland, Scandinavia, and Italy.

Neptune is the planet of all that is sacred and spiritual, giving compassion for the helpless and afflicted. Ordinarily it does not relate to the marketplace and thus cannot be used for financial predictions. In Capricorn, however, there is concern for the working class, for the rights of the common man, and for improving working conditions and productivity. There is an impetus to share with those who are deprived and suffering. Since Capricorn rules the production system, the agricultural and industrial network which converts natural resources into real wealth and which sustains society, there will be special concern for the American farmers and food production in the 1990s.

Capricorn is also the sign of buildings and important structures. Great cathedrals have always been built when Neptune was in Capricorn. The Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York will be completed in December 1992 and may be the last great stone cathedral of the western world. Gothic architecture was a reflection of the Christian message of love. In 1829 Goethe said: "Architecture is frozen music." Neptune was then in Capricorn.

Canterbury Cathedral was completed in 1503 when Neptune was in Capricorn. Many of the world's great cathedrals were built during the 1660s while Neptune was in Capricorn including the Church of San Andrea delle Fratte in Rome in 1665, Mexico Cathedral in 1667, St. Paul's Cathedral in 1666 and Christopher Wren was given the task in 1667 of rebuilding London's churches after the Great Fire. Hopefully there will be a renaissance of great architecture while Neptune is in Capricorn, restoring mystical values and ideas of architecture.

If history is any clue, we can also expect legislation to distribute the wealth more equally, concern for the living and health conditions of workers, advances in photography and film making, social reform, urban ecology, and practical solutions to social problems. Neptune was in Capricorn during the last days of the Renaissance when DaVinci and Michelangelo were creating their most magnificent work. Unfortunately Pluto will remain in Scorpio through 1995 so religious fundamentalism and moralism will be with us too.