

favoured. But the rush of air into this European furnace would be such that a storm more violent than the most frightful hurricane and more formidable even than the air-current which moves continuously on the equator of Jupiter, with a velocity of 400,000 kilometres per hour, would rage from the Antipodes towards Europe, destroying everything in its path. The earth, turning upon its axis, would bring successively into the | line of collision the regions lying to the west of the meridian first blasted. An hour after Austria and Germany it would be the turn of France, then of the Atlantic Ocean, then of North America, which would enter somewhat obliquely the dangerous area about five or six hours after France—that is, towards the end of the collision.

The terrestrial globe being thus entirely surrounded by the cometary mass for nearly seven hours, and revolving in this incandescent gas, the air rushing violently towards the centre of disturbance, the sea boiling and filling the atmosphere with new vapours, hot showers falling from the sky-cataracts, the storm raging everywhere with electric deflagrations and lightnings, the rolling of thunder heard | above the scream of the tempest, the blessed light of former days having been succeeded by the mournful and sickly gleamings of the glowing atmosphere, the whole earth will speedily resound with the funeral knell of universal doom, although the fate of the dwellers in the Antipodes will probably differ from that of the rest of mankind. Instead of being immediately consumed, they will be stifled by the vapours, by the excess of nitrogen, the oxygen having been rapidly abstracted, or poisoned by carbonic oxide; the fire will afterwards reduce their corpses to ashes, while the inhabitants of Europe and Africa will have been burned alive. The well-known tendency of carbonic oxide to absorb oxygen will doubtless prove a | sentence of instant death for those farthest from the initial point of the catastrophe.

M. Camille Flammarion breaks off his story with an interruption, caused by the announcement that the inhabitants of Mars were photophoning to the earth, and the meeting was adjourned in order to ascertain what it was that they had to say.

In the June number, M. Flammarion brought the comet into collision with the world. But the end of the world was not to happen till the August number. The catastrophe described in the opening chapter was but the preliminary canter as it were. Here is the French astronomer's picture of what happened when the comet struck the earth:—

Already the cometary fringes had invaded the | lunar orbit. At any moment they would reach the rarer limits of the earth's atmosphere, only 200 kilometres away.

Then every one beheld, as it were, a vast conflagration, kindled over the whole extent of the horizon, throwing skyward little violet flames. Never before had the earth been bathed in such a light, which at first seemed to be colourless, emitting lightning flashes from its pale and wan depths. The dryness of the air, hot as the breath of a furnace, became intolerable, and a horrible odour of sulphur, probably due to the superelectrified zone, poisoned the atmosphere. Every one believed his last hour was at hand.

A terrible cry dominated every other sound. The earth is on fire! | The earth is on fire! Indeed the entire horizon was now illuminated by a ring of bluish flame, surrounding the earth like the flames of a funeral pile. This, as had been predicted, was the carbonic oxide, whose combustion in the air produced carbonic anhydride.

Suddenly, as the terrified spectator gazed silent and awe-struck, holding his very breath in a stupor of fear, the vault of heaven seemed rent asunder from zenith to horizon, and from this yawning chasm, as from an enormous mouth, were vomited forth jets of dazzling greenish flame, enveloping the earth in a glare so blinding that all who had not already sought shelter, men and women, the old and the young, the bold as | well as the timid, all rushed with the impetuosity of an avalanche to the cellarways, already choked with people. Many were crushed to death, or succumbed to apoplexy, aneurismal ruptures, and wild delirium resulting in brain fever.

Although at the instant of collision the greater part of the hemisphere on the side of the comet had been affected by the constricting dryness, the suffocating heat, and the poisonous sulphurous odours, as well as by deadening stupor, due to the resistance encountered by the comet in traversing the atmosphere, the supersaturation of the ozone with electricity, and the mixture of nitrogen protoxide with the upper air, the other hemisphere had experienced no other disturbance than that which followed inevitably from | the destroyed atmospheric equilibrium. Fortunately, the comet had only skimmed the earth, and the shock had not been central. Doubtless, also, the attraction of the earth had had much to do with the fall of the bolides in Italy and the Mediterranean. At all events, the orbit of the comet had been entirely altered by this perturbation, while the earth and the moon continued tranquilly on their way about the sun, as if nothing had happened. The orbit of the comet had been changed by the earth's attraction from a parabola to an ellipse, its aphelion being situated near the ecliptic. Later statistics of the comet's victims showed the number of the dead was one-fortieth of the population of Europe. |

(c.) At the rate of 150 words per minute. Takes 5 minutes.

If one may judge from current talk in Anglo-Canadian circles, Canada is very much in earnest in her efforts to promote closer trade relations with Australasia. Following up her parliamentary subsidy of £25,000 per annum to the new line of steamers which Messrs. Huddart, Parker, and Co. are running between Sydney and Vancouver, the Canadian Government now intend to send a Commissioner—probably the Minister of Trade and Commerce himself—to Australasia, and the Boards of Trade at Toronto, Montreal, Warra, Victoria, and Vancouver have all been holding meetings to discuss the best method of utilising this extension of Canada's connections in the Pacific Ocean. Trial shipments of Australian fruit and