

said to be their contact with the earth's atmosphere. Why may not have our planet overtaken the Leonids and passed them by at a comparatively short distance, supposing them to be still in existence? The failure to strike our atmospherical envelope might account for their invisibility. If they be subject to variations in their orbit, as Professor Pickering tells us, there is no good reason why our failure to see them last November may not be attributed to another change like that in the interval from 1602 to 1698.

CANCER AND VACCINATION.

The alarming hypothesis has been broached that the great increase in that frightful malady cancer is due to the practice of vaccination. The theory was put forward by Dr. W. B. Clarke, of Indianapolis, in a paper read a short time ago before the State Society of Homœopathic Physicians. Commencing with the fact that cancer is a disease characterized by rapid growth of abnormal cell-structure, he said: "It takes twenty-one years or more to make ease characterized by the rapid imposition of cells, I ask you is it safe a man, and but three or four to make a cow. As cancer is a disease characterized by the rapid imposition of cells, I ask you is it safe to put the rapid-growing cells or protoplasm of a diseased animal into the slow-growing cells of man, as is done in vaccination?" Dr. Clarke believes that we are reaping the harvest of the seed so generally introduced forty to fifty years ago, and that deaths from cancer are more numerous in England and Prussia, simply because the pernicious practice (of vaccination for smallpox) was generally introduced so much earlier there.

This is something for the out-and-out vaccinationists to ponder over. Dr. Clark's inferences seem to be borne out to some extent by Dr. Lambert Lack, a London physician, who has for a considerable time been investigating the reason for the abnormal ratio of increase in cancer cases. He gave his views and basic reasons to the *Lancet* a short time ago. He had long believed that the epithelial cells of cancer were themselves the sole infective agents; that this cancer epithelium was practically normal epithelium, only out of place, and that from the very commencement of the cancer it was growing in the lymph spaces. "I thought from this," he goes on, "that if the normal epithelium by some accidental means should obtain entrance into the lymph spaces it would find no barrier to its continued growth and would produce all the phenomena of cancer. At present I have performed but a single

experiment to test this view. I obtained an emulsion of the epithelial cells from the healthy ovary of a healthy rabbit and placed them in the animal's peritoneum. The animal died fourteen months afterward, and on examination masses of growth were found in the abdominal and thoracic cavities having the characteristic features of typical ovarian cancer."

Dr. Lack undertook to furnish the results obtained from further experiments in this direction, and until this information is forthcoming it would be rash to predicate acceptance of these somewhat startling statements about inoculation from animals.

A CETACIAN CURE FOR RHEUMATISM.

According to the *British Australian*, several persons suffering from rheumatism have arrived at the Kiah whaling station, in the Eden district, New South Wales, for the purpose of undergoing the whale-bath cure. The treatment requires the patient, divested of his clothing, frequently to remain for a long time in the interior of a dead whale. Some remarkable cures are said to have been effected by the treatment. This feat recalls a somewhat similar one which gained for a distinguished Dublin surgeon a knighthood. He treated a Lord Lieutenant for a cutaneous disease, and the method he adopted was to get him into the interior of a cow freshly killed and still warm. It was heroic, but, as the story goes, perfectly successful, and the grateful viceroy, beside a munificent fee, bestowed on the surgeon the knightly accolade. In old medicine such remedies were frequently resorted to; and many more of a still more repulsive character. The pendulum of therapeutics seems to be swinging back to the ancient ideas, and perhaps in due time we may witness the reintroduction of astrology as one of the subjects to be taken in the preparatory medical course.

A NAVIGABLE AIR-SHIP AT LAST.

It seems to be beyond all doubt that the dream of the aëronauts, a balloon or air-ship that can be steered like a marine vessel and driven even against the wind as a steamer, is at last realized. To France, the natal place of the air balloon, belongs the palm of success in this marvelous undertaking. The inventor is M. de Santos Dumont. His balloon is twenty metres in height and $7\frac{1}{2}$ metres