

That the exponent for scaling is about 1/4.1 is suggested in an unexpected area. The distribution of meteorite falls by size and number was found by H. Brown¹⁸ to follow a relation $\Delta \log \text{mass} / \Delta \log \text{frequency} = 0.77$ through the range of 32 kg to 1,024 kg. He also pointed out the "striking resemblance" of the frequency distribution curve as a function of magnitude for asteroids (see Kuiper, *et al.*, Ref. 19) to the curves for meteorites, the congruent slope being 0.76. A study by Opik²⁰ of the size distribution of 812 craters on Mare Imbrium when plotted in the same manner, except that a fixed 20/1 ratio of crater to meteor diameters is used, gives a slope between 0.45-0.50. However, applying the energy exponent $\frac{1}{4}$ instead, the slope is 0.72-0.75. All this may be fortuitous, but it does represent different kinds of sampling of large numbers of the same kind of things in the space around the earth.

The frequency, in fact the very existence, of *random* bodies in the 300-600 km range may well be zero, and in the present inventory of astronomers, the number is zero. However, the presence of large maria on the moon is disturbing in this regard. It may be that in our time lunar explorations will clear up the dating and mechanism of formation of maria, but until then it should be useful as well as instructive at least to consider the possible effects of *large collisions*.

Penultimate disasters have not been missed by far in time or distance. The "mythologies" of ancient peoples include descriptions of very close passes. In 1960 an unknown object of an estimated 8 cubic km passed close to our orbit, 8 million km from the earth. The asteroid Hermes slid to within 320,000-640,000 km of the earth in 1937, and near the turn of the century, Eros, later Amor, came within 20 and 16 million km. Estimated kinetic energies represented by these bodies are in the order of 10^{30} , 10^{20} , 10^{31} and 10^{32} ergs. Visitations by these would have been no myths.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to A. O. Kelly, friend and collaborator, for the sustained interest in this field through years of correspondence. Colleagues and associates have contributed through hard criticism and ideas. Dr. P. D. Krynine and Dr. V. Vand have been especially helpful. Any errors are my own.

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