

## THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

## FOUR LITTLE PLANETS.

An astronomical feat has just been performed by Professor E. E. Barnard, the discoverer of a fifth satellite of Jupiter. It consists in taking the measure of four of the largest asteroids, the size of which has hitherto been only a matter of conjecture. Popular Astronomy gives an account of this latest scientific triumph.

The asteroids are very small planets principally pursuing their course around the sun between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. The first of them was discovered in 1801, but after that year others have been found in great numbers until at present about 400 are known to exist, while the supposition is that they in all probability amount to thousands. Possibly there are multitudes of them scattered like dust in the immensity of space and too small to be seen by earthly astronomers, even through the most perfect telescope. Some of those that have been observed are not more than ten miles in diameter, being veritable Lilliputians among the worlds of the universe.

The first asteroid discovered was named Ceres and it was found to revolve around the sun in a period of four years, seven months and six days. The next three observed were called Pallas, Juno and Vesta. As further discoveries were made rapidly, the theory was advanced that these diminutive worlds must be the fragments of an exploded planet, but this supposition has again been abandoned without the adoption of any other satisfactory explanation of their existence.

Professor Barnard states that all efforts to determine the size of the four largest asteroids by comparing the light they emitted to that of the planets have proved unsatisfactory. Schroter measured the diameter of Ceres and made it 2,025 miles while Sir William Herschel estimated it at 100 miles. The instruments they had were exceedingly imperfect compared to modern telescopes, and this accounts for the discrepancy. When viewed through the Lick telescope, however, it was found that the discs of Ceres, Pallas, Juno and Vesta assumed measurable proportions. The professor then took up the work of measurement and after two years' diligent labor he is prepared to state that the true dimensions of these little planets are known for the first time with certainty. Here are his figures:

Ceres.....	485 miles
Pallas.....	304 miles
Juno.....	118 miles
Vesta.....	213 miles

The discovery may be regarded as of importance chiefly to astronomers, but it does not lack general interest. Every little bit of information added to our stock of knowledge of the universe, of which our own habitation is only a part, furnishes new ground for admiration of that supreme power and wisdom that directed the construction of the whole, and that still guides it with never ceasing care. To the ancients the heavens furnished evidence of the glory, the intelligence of the

Almighty, and in this age that evidence is becoming still more strong through the in some respects more perfect knowledge obtained of the visible universe.

## TRIPLE ALLIANCE AND SWEDEN.

Bjornstjerne Bjornson, the celebrated Norwegian poet and statesman is responsible for the statement that the Triple alliance is seeking to make a bargain with King Oscar, according to which, in case of a European war, Sweden and Norway should act in concert with the three powers. In a Norwegian paper he says in effect that as soon as the war commences, Sweden is under obligations to engage a Russian force in Finland in order to make the czar's operations in other directions that much less effective. Bjornson does not mention the source of his information, but it does not sound entirely impossible. The German emperor has paid several visits to the Scandinavian peninsula in order to "hunt" in company with other royal persons: the general feeling in Sweden against Russia is that prevailing to France against Germany and for similar reasons; lately there has been much activity in army and navy circles in Sweden, as well as in Norway, and recently Count Douglas has been appointed minister of foreign affairs, and his sympathies for the Triple alliance are said to be well known. These facts would seem to bear the idea out that Germany possibly has a trump card in reserve which, if played at the right moment, would cause the Russian government some trouble in the Baltic provinces.

## "HONOR TO WHOM."

An eloquent plea for the free coinage of silver finds place on the editorial page of the Plain Dealer (Cleveland) for Sunday last. It is from the pen of "L. E. H.," whom few readers will have trouble in identifying as Hon. L. E. Holden, well-known in this city and Territory as well as throughout the West. His paper is headed, "Walks and Talks about the New West;" and we quote a few paragraphs, which are a deserving of local perusal by reason of their appreciative references to Utah pioneer life:

I have spent a month in Utah, Idaho and other western states. After an absence of three years I am able to note the effects of the panic and the condition of the people there. It is almost impossible for people of the East to understand the condition of the people in the New West. Pioneer life always calls for the strong and the energetic and daring. They are an expression of the survival of the fittest. In this case those who had wings strong enough to fly over the mountains and strong enough to endure the hardships have lived and made their homes there. The peasant life of the New West, these territories in the great basin beyond the mountains, is different, vastly different, from anything that we know in the older states.

History some day will do justice to the Mormons, who sought homes in the wil-

derness and who have made "the desert to blossom as the rose," who have done more than this, who have made wheat fields to wave in the sunlight where once gray sage brush grew before. Whether they went because of their religions or whether driven by an unseen power, or whether they were made the forerunners of empires that are yet to be, I care not. They deserve all credit for their energy, for their fortitude and their courage. They planted the Territory and they have now made it a State, far better qualified to be a State than any one of the new states that has been admitted from the new northwest.

They went into a rainless country Think of it if you can. They have provided farms that are surer of crops than any of the farms in the eastern states, because they control the water and sunlight is perpetual. That rich soil, if irrigated, is a sure of a crop as the sunshine is to flow over it, and their sunshine is from May till November.

But I am wandering into generalities and I intended to give a picture of the life as I have seen it in years gone by and as I have seen it during the last month. Most of the people that went into these territories went from the frontiers of the newer states, the western and southern states, or were brought there by the missionaries of the Mormon Church from the poor and lowly of Europe. These people from our own states went out with ox teams, often times taking from six to eight months, camping by the trail at night cooking their food in the rudest possible way in a kettle and a coffee pot, sleeping the men upon the ground and the women in the wagons, while their cattle, their oxen or their horses grazed on the bunch grass at night. How many of these trains I have seen! I remember one year within six weeks to have counted from a place where I was located 1,700 wagons. I have seen them by their campfires at night, I have seen them winding their slow trail along, creeping as it were into a destiny which they hardly dreamed of, yet all-patient, dusty and hopeful. I have followed them into the different states and territories, I have seen them settle upon the public domain and build first a house from the poplar poles that they could gather from the streams' shores or hillsides, or dig a dugout into the bank and put a roof over it, or cut the turf and pile one piece upon another until the walls of the house were built, without a floor, with only such a roof as could be made of the long reeds or grasses gathered from the swales of a neighboring brook or river. I have seen the rude bunks for beds put one above another in these primitive houses and the table made by splitting a log and hewing one side and putting the two halves together. I have seen the chairs in such houses made from blocks of wood or a section of a slab, and many a bench that has given me rest and hospitality in these cabins was but a slab with four legs put into it, and many a woman have I seen who was thankful for such a house and such accommodations, who cheerfully put up with the privations because she hoped to have a home and land and comfort in the future.

The house built, then the land must be cleared and broken and most of the land that is taken up in the new West is covered with a low hush known as the sage brush. It is about the color of a camel. It is cold and gray and cheerless. No animal but the jackrabbit lives in and around it, but it always grows on fertile soil and is the garment that nature weaves to cover her nakedness in that great new West. This sage brush must be torn out by the roots, water must be brought on to the land by a ditch and then a crop is sure to come if planted. These are the conditions under which life has been started in that new country. There