

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

SILENT FORCES.

New planets are discovered by means too abstruse for common understanding. Such discoveries are, or rather have been since the field is presumably exhausted, within the intellectual scope of a very few in all the world's people, but the additions which they make to the domain of science and useful information have been and are diffused throughout the masses by means of improved educational systems. Primarily the discoveries spoken of are suggested by certain perturbations of remote planets, that are absolutely unobservable and unrecognizable by any but those whose lives are consecrated to the cause of astronomical research and by them only through the most patient, laborious, watchful and unremitting attention, such attention as excludes participation in any other pursuit whatever and forbids the mind for any length of time to emerge from the celestial field and itself become perturbed through inharmonious associations. The existence of the disturber is found out long before his actual whereabouts are ascertained, and these in turn are fixed some time ahead of his definite location; then, if the mechanical appliances are sufficiently powerful to pierce the dense veil of space intervening, and locate the misty image and draw it within the pale of human vision, lo! there beams forth a new world—new so far as the previous knowledge of man is concerned, albeit the discovery may have been born when time itself was young and when first beheld by a resident of earth have been in existence for a period incomprehensible even when our own globe was rolled into the vast depths of ether and began its formative and orbital career. All the while the stranger was there, all the while sending out irresistible volumes of magnetic power and causing its nearer neighbors to deflect from their orbits in his direction when the nearest distances to each other were reached in their stately procession about the sun, but unheard, unseen, unfelt by us.

The force by means of which all this is caused was in existence and being applied for countless ages without being noted until very recent times by the inhabitants of our planet. So also was the presence of the other planet unsuspected until its influence upon its surroundings was observed and by such means itself was brought into view. That is, its disturbing influence betrayed its hiding place, and the investigations of man, guided by intelligence and fortified by faith, were thus brought into a larger, grander field. The inspirational, inquiring mind, the steadfast, unshaken devotion to an occupation which few can and few care to engage in, is still active, still grappling with the undeveloped mysteries of space, and quietly but certainly adding to the store of human knowledge. The work, the progress of such minds are not heralded to the world as are the labors of those with whose occupations we are more familiar, partly because such information would if given out be incomprehensible to the great majority of men. It is only results that come from the observatory, and these after having been reduced to terms and forms such as all can understand. Now and then we hear of a new comet being discovered, or the return of an old one noted, but that is all. There are no grand receptions for the astronomer; no blowing of horns or beating of

drums over his advent and no following up of the grand, comprehensive work which he is steadily, quietly and undeviatingly pursuing. And yet he is doing so much for the race, is so faithful a guardian of its time, its meteorological conditions, its controlling circumstances, its mysterious progress, that he ought to stand highest among the high.

It is not yet sufficiently known that those who make the most noise in the world are by no means its most useful entities. Great displays, splendid mechanical triumphs, new processes of mental development, improved appliances of construction and destruction are constantly bringing before the gaze and within the admiration of mankind some one who was previously unknown. He lives for a time upon his prominence. Obscurity would wither him as surely as the frosts of autumn blast the flowers of the field. Not so with the quiet, earnest, obscure and effective worker who abnegates self and, looking beyond temporal affairs, hopes chiefly to learn and explain and accomplish such things as will benefit others in this and himself in a future stage of action.

THE ILLINOIS TROUBLE.

In dealing with the merits of the controversy between the mine owners and striking miners, the New York World justly remarks that facts are of more value than prejudices or sympathies. It then states the facts of the situation to be that during the past sixteen years an inexorable competition in the production of coal in that state has reduced alike the profits of the operators and the wages of the workmen.

Statistics have been prepared by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch which show that during that period the coal mines of Illinois have increased in number from 704 to 853; the output of coal has increased from 11,017,069 tons to 20,072,758 tons; the number of men employed has increased from 20,290 to 33,788; the average value of lump coal at the mine has decreased from \$1.51 to 85 cents per ton, and the average price paid in the state for mining coal has decreased from 80 cents a ton to a little over 50 cents. Upon which showing the conclusion is reached that the situation is bad and offers no hope of improvement. It is shown that if the mines of the state were worked to their full capacity the yield would be the enormous quantity of 50,000,000 tons a year, an amount so greatly exceeding any present or prospective demand that the contemplation of the case produces a feeling akin to sadness for all concerned.

THE TORRENS LAND LAW.

The supreme court of Illinois has decided that the Torrens law, of which the press of the country has had much to say at various times, is constitutional. This law provides that any person owning real estate in Cook county may apply to any court of record for a registry of the title. If the claims to the title are found satisfactory and no contest is made within a certain time, the court grants a certificate of ownership, which then is indefeasible and not to be contested anywhere. This certificate is as easily transferable as any other token of ownership. Under this law the books of the registrar show at a glance the ownership of any particular piece of real

estate and the incumbrances upon it. It makes it unnecessary for buyers to wait weeks, or months, for an abstract of title going back to the beginning of time, and for legal opinions covering every point. It simplifies the transfer of real estate and makes the transaction at once cheaper and safer.

The adoption of the law for Cook county, Ill., is the result of an agitation that has been going on for about eight years, conducted by the Chicago real estate board. When at last the passage of the law was secured, it was contested on the ground that it conferred upon the county recorder judicial powers. It is this objection that has been removed by the decision of the supreme court.

The Torrens system of registration has been in successful operation in Hamburg, Prussia, Bavaria, Australia, New Zealand, British Columbia and elsewhere and has, therefore, been well tried and found satisfactory. It is by no means an experiment. The wonder is that its excellent features have not received recognition in the United States long before this. Ohio followed Illinois with a Torrens law but it was held to be unconstitutional in that state. In Massachusetts no contest was made and transfers are being made there under the new system. Other states in the Union, we understand, are giving attention to the matter, and the Illinois supreme court decision will undoubtedly give new force to the agitation.

AGAINST INEBRIETY.

According to a dispatch, a San Francisco physician proposes to render the human race proof against the temptations of Bacchus by means of inoculation. His remedy is a preparation from the blood of a horse which has been fed upon alcohol until it has become a regular toper. He probably wants legislation making the inoculation of this nasty preparation into the veins of innocent infants obligatory, but nothing is said about this, nor about the fees he expects to collect as a remuneration for the loathsome operation, but since he states his belief that "inoculation against inebriety is a duty to children whether there is a hereditary taint or not," it is safe to say that the question of money-making is not secondary to the enterprising physician.

The scheme does not seem complete, though. Horses are common. Their blood cannot command a fancy price. But probably a graded scale can be adopted later. Those credulous as to the efficacy of a common scrub horse can, no doubt, when the system has been perfected, be accommodated by a few drops of blood contributed by an intoxicated gorilla or perhaps a drunken hippopotamus at correspondingly higher prices, and even the famous sea-serpent may be captured and fed on alcohol for the exclusive benefit of the exclusive set. The possibilities are clearly innumerable.

But seriously, it is high time for some of the disciples of Aesculapius to turn their attention to fact instead of fancies. Science itself is brought into disrepute by vagaries. The remedy against intemperance, as against all sin, is a moral one. Admit the claims of the San Francisco doctor, and there can be no force in an argument against inoculation as a remedy against the tendency to lie, to steal, to kill, to cheat. These vices are also, to some extent, hereditary. Human depravity in general is an inheritance, but it cannot be removed by the inoculation of any kind of pus from diseased animals. Vaccination against smallpox is fast