

The question, How is Mars off for air? he answers in the affirmative and gives what he calls proof positive for his opinion. Changes take place, he says, vast enough to be visible from the earth. The supposed snow round the poles melts and again assumes larger dimensions with the regularity of annual seasons. This phenomenon and others "could" not occur except for the presence of an atmosphere. This air, however, is much thinner than that on our earth, because as far as observed it carries no clouds. There can therefore, he says, be no rain, no hail, no snow-fall on Mars, only dew and frost, and the snow caps at the poles must be formed by the deposition of dew. Prof. Lowell sums up by stating:

We have proof positive that Mars has an atmosphere; we have reason to believe that this atmosphere is very thin,—thinner at least by half than the air upon the summit of the Himalayas—that in constitution it does not differ greatly from our own, and that it is relatively heavily charged with water vapor.

A writer in the New York *Herald* claims to have made a discovery of a particularly startling nature. It is well known that the idea has been advanced by some of the more daring speculative astronomers of the world, that not only is Mars inhabited by intelligent beings, but these are actually endeavoring to attract the attention of the dwellers on the earth. It is claimed that a series of light flashes have been observed and that these at one time assumed the form of a regular triangle. This set a great many scientists to work looking for further manifestations. A few evenings ago, a student of Mars in Washington closely scanned a map showing the canals and lakes on the planet, when to his astonishment the Hebrew letters "aleph" and "you" caught his eye among the outlines of the network. Tracing the outlines preceding he soon found another Hebrew letter "ahin," making the word complete. The writer says:

To his amazement and joy there appeared plainly traced out in the artificial canals of the sister planet the words signifying God, the self same word ordered to be written on the doorposts of every Israelite. There it stood in bold letters, traced beyond a question by intelligent beings, and traced there, too, beyond a question by those beings as a greeting and an overture to the people of our earth for mutual study and friendship. This observer was not a devout believer. He was a frank agnostic, and his observation was, therefore, unbiased by any religious zeal. But this discovery, which subsequent examination only confirmed, impressed him as most remarkable, supporting, as it did, the generally accepted theory that intelligent beings have perhaps for ages been seeking to give us some sign of recognition.

This alleged discovery must, of course, be placed among the curiosities of speculative deductions, but it is nevertheless not entirely void of interest.

Fiammarion recognizes the work of Percival Lowell as the most important thus far in regard to Mars. He takes the view that the planet is inhabited and, there being no rain, the canals were devised for the purpose of distributing the water for irrigation purposes. The climate of Mars, the French astronomer says in his latest work, resembles a clear day on a high

mountain. The condition there is such that events are taking place quite unintelligible to our human reason. It is a world in every physical respect more favored than the earth. As to the possibility of communicating with Mars Fiammarion says:

"Some unexpected new discovery—perhaps of a physical order—will place us in communication with the inhabitants of Mars and will at last begin the solution of the great problem. The destinies of each of us, that of the entire human race, are united to the destinies of the other dwellers of our system."

THE APPLE'S HARD LUCK.

The American dried apple is the latest of our export products to call down the wrath and excite the peripatetic official investigation of the strait-laced subordinates of the German kaiser. Articles of food from this side of the water have ever had a trying and precarious time of it when they knocked at Teutonic doors for admission; this not because the proposed consumer was averse to either the price or flavor of the product, but because there were certain interests at home which the government felt called upon to take care of, and where this could not be sufficiently done by a system of protective duties, there was always the more effective plan of declaring the intruding competitor unhealthy, and issuing the imperial ban against its admission by way of regard for the public stomach. This has been time and again done in the case of beef, pork, corn and other staples; and now, as stated, the edict has gone forth against American dried apples.

The charge against this delicacy is—and it comes from no less a source than the mayor of the sweet-scented city of Cologne—that quantities of the slices of apples which are offered for sale contain a larger or smaller percentage of zinc. Of thirteen samples selected for investigation eleven are said to have contained zinc, absorbed from zinc netting on which the apples were dried. This netting method is employed, as is well known, to save time and labor in turning the apple, and also that the air may reach them more readily. The old-fashioned way was to spread the slices on boards or wooden racks and place them in the sun; when dried on one side they were turned over. This was a healthful manner of procedure, and precluded the possibility of poisoning in the manner indicated by the mayor of Cologne. According to experts he employed, the eating of such dried apples is injurious to health, especially to children and those who have weak constitutions, as by the process there is formed in apples maltate of zinc, which, while its operation or effect on the human system may be generally unknown to the common mind, is nevertheless of a portentous nature as to prove sufficiently alarming.

Of course if American dealers expect to do business in foreign markets they must keep maltate of zinc out of their apples; especially will it be necessary to eradicate everything that

has the sound or symptom of malt, if the German market is to be invaded. Nevertheless one cannot but smile at the spasmodic exhibitions of regard for purity in food products on the part of a nation whose tolling millions dine blissfully on bob-tail sausage and scarcely pause long enough, when they discover a trousers-buckle in the article, to wonder dreamily where the rest of the garment is. We believe it would help that mayor of Cologne if he were compelled to eat a pound of dried apples, drink a quart of lovely Rhine water, and then "sit around and let 'em ferment."

WHAT GIRLS ARE DOING.

The Danbury (Connecticut) young women have set an example which could be followed with profit by the fair daughters of Utah and other places. Over four hundred of the Danbury girls formed a society, which arranged its big initial meeting for Sunday, in the work of augmenting the number of its members. These girls not only agree to follow temperate lives themselves, but have made a covenant that they will not keep company with or marry any young man of intemperate habits. The young men have formed a counter-organization, but if the young women stand by their pledge it will not be long before every man whose company is fit to be sought, or who is worth accepting as a husband, will discover that he occupies a highly inconsistent position in preferring the habits of the drunkard, gambler and libertine to the companionship of pure and noble women.

If the young women of this community would adopt the rule which the Danbury maidens have agreed to observe, they would be a much greater power for good than they are at present. Some of them might think they run chances of becoming old maids by refusing the association of the whisky drinker, the cigarette fiend, the profaner, and the gambler, but they would be infinitely better off, physically, morally and spiritually, as aged spinsters than as the wives of reprobates who would not abandon vile practices for love of their partners in life. No young woman who professes to be a Latter-day Saint exhibits proper self-respect when she stoops to familiar associations with persons guilty of the bad habits named. She also fails in her duty by abandoning the influence for good which her higher example should wield. If the girls were more particular as to the young men with whom they associated there would be an improvement among these to fit them for the companionship denied to persons of evil habits.

FOR HOME-SEEKERS.

In another column we publish a letter from a reliable correspondent in Bannock county, Idaho, setting forth in a fair and impressive manner the advantages which Marsh Valley offers to bona fide settlers. The communication appears to us to possess peculiar force and merit because of its entire