

the Atlantean myth that the ancients appreciated the effect upon our globe of seismic forces and of heavy storms. But though they prepared the way for such men as Tycho Brahé and Copernicus, we must honour Galileo Galilei as the man who launched the barque of astronomical science upon its great modern career. All before him I call the childhood of astronomy. With him its vigorous youth began.

Our Librarian has placed us in possession of a copy of Galileo's works, printed at Bologna in 1655, only thirteen years after his death. It seems to me that we get nearer to the great men of past centuries through the perusal of these old editions, and he must be dull indeed who does not feel a thrill of unusual interest when he sees the *Syderius Nuncius* in something like its original dress.

After the dedication to Cosmo, of the Medici, dated in March, 1610, and the license to print, declaring that the work contains nothing contrary to the Holy Catholic Faith, the State, or approved custom, the second and fuller title of this celebrated tract appears, "*The Astronomical Messenger*, being an account of recent observations with the new Perspicillum on the surface of the Moon, the Milky Way and the nebulous stars; also of the innumerable fixed stars and of four planets named the stars of Cosmo, never before seen." (In the dedication they are called "Medicean stars.")

"About ten months ago," says Galileo, "there came a rumour to our ears that a certain Belgian had made a lens by the aid of which visible objects, though far from the eye, could be distinctly seen, as if they were near, \* \* which some believed and others not. A few days afterwards the fact was confirmed in a letter I had from Paris, which caused me to turn my thoughts to the reason for the effect, and to preparing an instrument that should produce the same result. I studied the subject of refraction, and, having made myself a leaden tube, I fixed glass lenses in the ends of it, plane on one side and spherical on the other—one convex and the other concave. On placing my eye to the concave glass, I looked at some objects of fair size and at a short distance, which I found three times as close and nine times as large as when looked at with natural sight. I then made another instrument which magnified sixty times. Finally, sparing neither time nor money, I made one so excellent that things seen by it were almost a thousand times enlarged, and appeared more than thirty times as close as when viewed by unaided vision."