

Telescopic Planets.

Previously to the year 1791, the known Planets were only six. The great space intervening between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, had led to the supposed existence of an intermediate Planet; this idea was the more strongly impressed upon the mind of Kepler and other leading Astronomers by the discovery of the Uranus. The "conjectural Planet," however, was not detected until Piazzi, Manager of the Royal Observatory at Palermo, on the first day of the year 1801, found a Planet in the Constellation Taurus, to which he gave the name Ceres. This discovery was followed in 1802, (March 28th,) by that of another, (in Virgo,) which Dr. Olbers chose to designate as *Pallas*—both of these, exceedingly small Planets, were observed to revolve in orbits between Mars and Jupiter; but so minute were they that conjecture at once appropriated them as "but fractions of a broken Planet, which, formerly circulating at the same distance from the Sun, had been shattered by internal convulsion." But it was by no means equally clear that *all* the parts or fragments had been detected; and a vigorous search was instituted and sustained; accordingly, on the first day of September, 1804, the Director of the Observatory at Lilienthal, near Bremen, found *Juno*, and nearly three years after Dr. Olbers succeeded in hitting upon *Vesta*. No other Planet was discovered intermediately between that date and the year 1845, in the month of December, of which year, Hencke, of Driessen, "saw a Star occupying a position where he was assured no Star previously existed,"—it proved to be a Planet, received the name of *Astræa*, and was subsequently ascertained to be another of the remarkable groups situated between Mars and Jupiter. On the 23rd September, 1846, Galle discovered the Planet *Neptune*. Since that period there have been discovered, successively, *Hebe* by Mr. Hencke, (1847;) *Iris*, by Hind, (in the same year,) also *Flora*; *Metis* by Graham, April, 1848; and, in the April of 1849, a tenth Planet, *Diana*, was added by Signor de Gasparie, of Naples. The entire group, so interesting, lying in the space between Mars and Jupiter.

The apparent diameter of these "Strange Planets" have not as yet been measured accurately; Mr. Hencke remarks of the manner in which the existence of the wanderers has become known to us:—"Diligent search, combined with an intimate acquaintance with the Heavens, has enabled Astronomers to detect the additional Asteroids." He, however, regards the discovery of the Planet Neptune, in the exact spot predicted by theory and calculation, as displaying one of the most remarkable combinations of sound theory and careful observation that Astronomical science has ever presented. These several discoveries of Telescopic Planets lead us to suspect the existence of many such bodies yet unknown to us; and there seems good reason to believe, that in a few years we shall have a large addition to the Solar system.

THE POLAR STAR not occupying the true place of the Pole of the Heavens, but revolving around it at a distance of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, comes to the meridian once only in twenty-four hours, when its bearing is *North*, precisely.