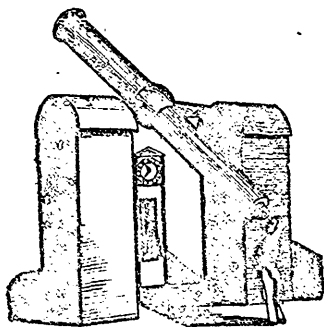


Had a train of cars started from the sun at the morning of his creation (about 5,852 years ago) to visit the planet Herschel, and travelled day and night ever since at the rate of 30 miles per hour, they would still have 284 millions of miles to travel before they could reach the end of their journey. To finish the passage would require 1,081 years longer—the whole of time past since the creation and more than a thousand years to come! To reach Neptune the same train, proceeding at the same rate, would require nearly 7,000 years longer! Such is the vast area embraced within the orbits of the planets; and such are the spaces over which the sunlight travels, to warm and enlighten its attendant worlds!

Yet beyond these distant orbs, in the amplitudes of space, there are suns, and worlds, and systems! How appropriate and forcible are the words of the Sacred Writer—"When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man that thou visitest him?"—*Journal of Education for February.*



This is a *Telescope*, used for surveying those heavenly bodies.

BISSEXTILE.

This hard word is found in the title page of the Almanac for the present year. It is explained by the easier

word, *leap-year*. But many people do not know the meaning of either, except that leap year has 366 days in it, and February 29. *Bissextile* is a Latin word, formed of *bis*, twice, and *sextilis*, sixth. Julius Cæsar made the year consist of 365 days, except every fourth year, which should have 366, the 24th February being then counted twice. This day was the *sixth calend* of March. Our word *calendar* comes from *calends*. The calends were reckoned backward from the first day of the month. Thus the 28th, or last day of February was the second calend of March, and of course the 24th was the *sixth*. We do not double the 24th February, but *intercalate*, as the Almanac maker would say, but *we* must not use hard words—*put in* a day at the end of the month and call it the 29th. But why call it *bissextile*?—Simply because old words, like some old friends, are hard to be shaken off, when they have lost their character and their use. Leap-year is a better term. It is a translation of the Latin *annus silians*, and is applied to every fourth year, because it *leaps over* or exceeds every other year by one day.



A FOX STORY.

We doubt if any animal, having the smallest claim to respectability, has had so many tales told about him as Mr. Reynard. We do not believe one half of them. Still it must be confessed, our bushy-tailed friend is a little too cunning, to be honest. We do not much like your very cunning people. They are not to be trusted. It is hard