

revealed the unseen, yet known planet, to the eye of astronomers, the reviewer thus proceeds:—

“There are two facts connected with the newly-discovered planet,—the one certain, and the other all but certain, which merit particular attention. The first of these is its deviation to a far greater extent than any one of those bodies heretofore known, from what is known as Bode’s law of the distances. According to this law—or rather rule, seeing it simply expresses a fact of which no explanation whatever can be given,—the various planets are placed at distances bearing a certain and uniform relation to each other: this proportion being that, the interval between Mercury and Venus being assumed as unity, the intervals between the successive orbs each double upon the one before it. Had the newly-discovered orb conformed to this rule, it would have been found at a distance of 3,600,000,000 miles from the sun. Its actual distance is about seven-ninths of this amount. And such a deviation, important and interesting in itself, as the first example of departure from a rule hitherto found universal, derives additional interest from the fact, that, chiefly on it, conjectures have already been founded relative to the possible existence of a second unknown orb, situated as much beyond the distance indicated by the law, as the present one falls within it. This conjecture, however, must be left to time to verify. It is more than probable that, if such an orb exist, the means which have guided our telescopes with such unerring aim towards this one, must again be employed for its discovery: its disturbing action be watched and waited for; and direct observation, almost powerless at such a distance, be guided and led out by theory towards a mind-seen result.

“The second of the two facts we have referred to is one of yet higher interest and importance, and certainly one more unexpected still. It is believed that the planet is self-luminous. This inference has been deduced from its high degree of visibility and great clearness of light, not only as compared, or rather contrasted with Uranus, but beyond what is comprehensible in conformity with the known principles of optics. It is, indeed, conceivable, that the physical organisation of the orb may be such, as shall give to its surface a light-reflective power very far beyond all we have experience of, at least among the other orbs of the system: but it is very questionable whether any amount of this, within the limits of probability, would account for a planet receiving little more than a third of the sunlight which Uranus receives, nearly equalling it in visibility, and far surpassing it in vividness of light. Here, too, at all events, we are called on to ‘stand still and see’: to rid the mind of every bias, and