

PLANET MARS AND ITS MEN

Much Discussion as to the Lights and Marks on the Planet.

Resemblances Between Mars and Earth—We Cannot Tell Yet About the Men There.

Are the people on the planet Mars trying to signal the earth?

That is the question which the work of the great Lick telescope during the past few days has aroused, as Mars has approached nearer and nearer to the big California instrument, which will soon have opportunities for observation such as were never known before in the history of astronomy.

This may be the explanation of the strange phenomena observed this week at the Lick observatory. The results thus far obtained have already been so extraordinary as to have made profound impression upon the practical minds of the astronomers there assembled. Three great lights, forming a triangle, have been seen in the southwestern limb of the planet. They had never been seen before, in any observations.

There was no mistake about these lights. They were seen for four nights in succession, so that it was impossible that they could have been produced by conditions of the earthly or Martian atmospheres or have been optical delusions of any kind. When first seen at the Lick observatory, these lights in a triangle so astonished the astronomers that they believed them to be the effect of light unconnected with the planet. They therefore, with true astronomical caution, waited until the following night before devoting much thought to the lights. On the second night, however, which was even more clear and brilliant than the first, the lights were seen to be there when the great polished lens was turned upon the orb which had stepped to its place in the sky.

For two succeeding evenings after that these lights were observed, burning steadily, brilliantly and effulgently, as if from three mountain tops. It was evident that the lights were placed upon mountains in Mars or artificial projections or elevations of some kind.

The appearance of three brilliant lights in a triangle upon one of the planets in a manner the astronomers are unable to explain raises a presumption at which their minds recoil. A scientist would, when thoroughly convinced of the existence of these light under such conditions as are known to prevail in Mars, easily glide to the almost irresistible conclusion that they were the work of the men on Mars.

Observed at any other time, there would be apparently no other mean of explaining these lights in a way satisfactory to common sense. Observed at the present time, when eminent men in science have reached the conclusion that the people on Mars would seize the opportunity to try again to attract the attention of people on the earth, the three lights on Mars are as significant as the moving lights in the distance were to Columbus on his caravel.

But the the three strange lights which have looked down the 36-inch tube of the Lick telescope for four successive nights and astounded the astronomers at the other end are not the only unusual appearances upon the surface of the planet which the great piece of flint glass has revealed. That glass, which cost over \$50,000 and

took years to select, grind and polish until perfection was attained, has revealed things which other observatories have not noticed during the present opposition.

The people of Mars being able to bridge this globe which we call Earth so close to them that they can see forests, fields and cities, if indeed, they cannot actually see people walking on the streets, would be eager to establish communication with us. They may have tried to do this for centuries at each recurring opposition of Mars, or opposition of the Earth, as they would call it, and repeated failures would only stir them to greater efforts.

The lights suddenly went out, though, at different times of the four nights when they were seen. It almost seemed as if they were supplied by an electric current and as if the current had been shut off, so suddenly did they disappear.

Amazement struck the observers when first the lights went out. They reflected that, of course, the lights were some atmospheric effect on the rim of Mars and the very fact of their strange disappearance tended to prove this. The next night, however, the three strange lights flashed out in the same place as soon as darkness had set in and after showing steadily for a few hours they vanished.

Schiaparelli was the first person to give definite basis upon which to rest the belief that Mars was inhabited by a highly civilized race. He discovered that the surface of the planet was intersected by a large number of canals.

Primarily, Flammarion based his theory upon that of Schiaparelli and the two run in together in many places, being to a large extent identical. He showed plainly that there was water upon the planet, and there was little doubt, he said, that the inhabitants of Mars very closely resembled those of the earth.

Thus, in considering the subject of opening up communication with the Martians Flammarion has devoted much thought to a possible method of signals which might be devised upon the earth. He has said: "A triangle, traced in luminous lines on Mars' surface, each side from twelve to fifteen kilometres long, would be visible from here by the aid of our telescopes. It follows then that a triangle, square or circle of the dimensions stated, constructed upon a vast plain of the earth by means of luminous points, reflected in the daytime by solar light and lighted at night by electricity, would be visible to the astronomers of Mars if there are such astronomers and if they have optical instruments as good as our own.

Tracing this illustration still further, Flammarion has said:

"The logical sequence is simple. If we were to see a triangle constructed on Mars we would be considerably puzzled, but if we were to see it change first into a square and then into a circle we would think with some reason that such figures reveal without question the presence of a geometrician upon the neighbor world. The question however, now arises, what object our brethren could have in forming these figures. Why should not the inhabitants of Mars be as curious as we are, more intelligent perhaps, more elevated in their aspirations, less hampered than we are in the mire of material needs? Why should they not suppose that the earth is inhabited as well as their own world, and why should not the object of these geometrical appeals be to ask us whethers whether we exist? It is not difficult to reply. They show us a triangle; we produce it here. They trace a circle; imitate it, and lo! communication is established.

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COULD NOT TELL A LIE.

"Tommy, how did you get the back of your neck all sunburned?"
"Pullin' weeds in the garden."
"But your hair is all wet, my son."
"That' perspiration."
"Your vest is on wrong side out, too."
"Put it on that way a-purpose."
"And how does it happen, Tommy, dear, that you have got Jakey Du Bois' trousers on?"
(After a long pause) "Mother, I cannot tell a lie. I've been a swimmin'."—Chicago Tribune.



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