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NEW AND CURIOUS.

On the night of the 13th of Aug., 1898, a German astronomer, Herr Will, exposed a photographic plate to the heavens in his observatory of Urania, at Berlin. He had selected one of the most rapid plates that the skilled manufacturers can supply to the photographer. To secure the imprint of the faintest stars we must expose the plate for an hour, and sometimes for much longer. It was the very requirement of a long exposure which led to the present important discovery of the new and wonderful planet Eros.

Many points of light which were undoubtedly stars, were shown on this picture taken by the German astronomer. Among these points of light was, however, one object which, though in appearance hardly distinguishable from a faint star, was in truth a body of a very different character. This star-like point, or, as we may at once call it, this asteroid, Eros, is moving. The completed photograph accordingly shows a large number of well-marked dots for stars, and among them one faint line for the asteroid. Eros is quite a small globe. If the moon were to be crushed into 2,000,000 equal fragments, each of those parts would be as big as Eros. Eros is the nearest globe to the earth in the wide expanse of heaven.

The importance of the new discovery arises from the fact that by the help of Eros all our measurements in the celestial spaces will gain that for which every astronomer strives—namely, increased accuracy.— [Robert Ball, P. S. M.]

For the Torch of Reason.

Idea and Idol.

BY D. E.

These words have the same derivation and signify each an image. But one is a mental image and the other is a material one. Idea and idol, thought and substance, mind and matter; these terms may suggest to us the two great departments of the universe. We think of things as really existing in both of these realms, and yet little or nothing is actually known. Matter is only known by its properties; and mind is only known by its thoughts. That there is such a thing as mind or matter is a pure assumption or inference in either case.

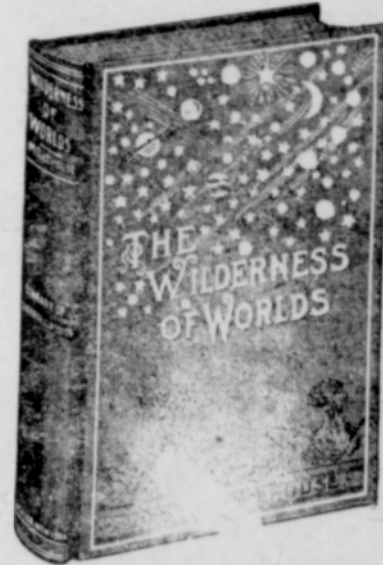
But our greatest mistake, perhaps, and most common, is to suppose that a thing exists in substance, or reality, which exists only in our thoughts; such for instance as the thought of a God.

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