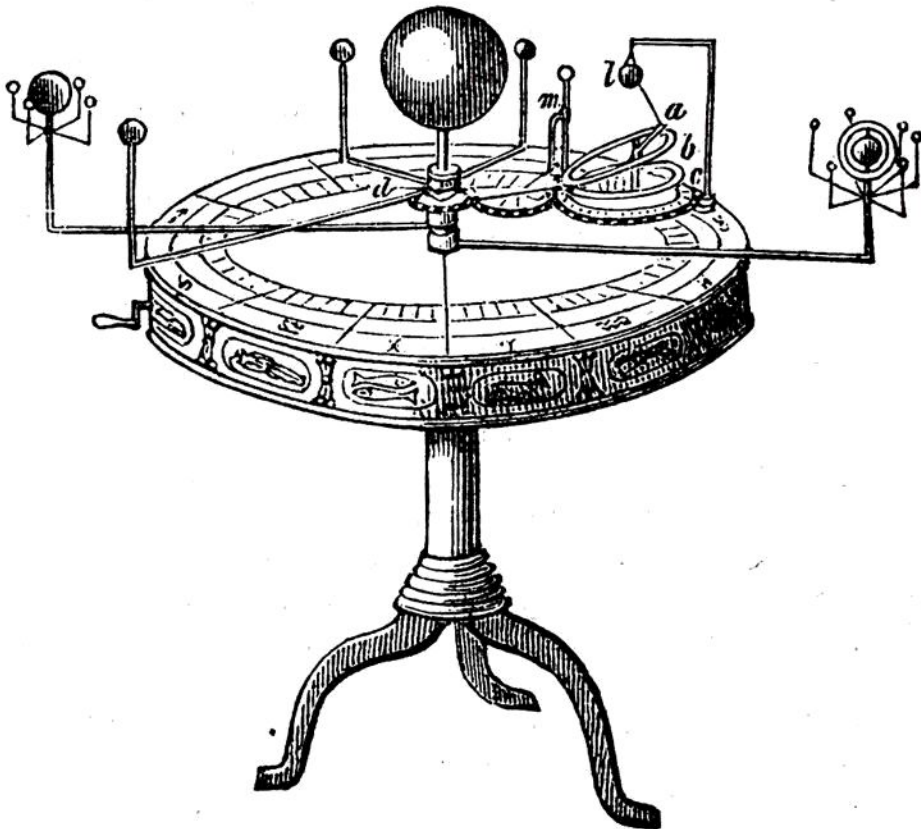


state, to amuse the audience. These arrangements may possibly attract the attention of children, and assist them in remembering the order and names of the bodies composing the solar system, but they are utterly useless in any other respect, except in inducing the presence of those persons who seek to gratify the eye. Many of them, however, are constructed in a very ingenious manner, and are interesting as exhibitions of mechanical skill. The term by which they are known appears to have been derived from the circumstance, that the first instrument of the sort was constructed for the Earl of Orrery, to whom the manufacturer, Mr. Rowley, paid the undesirable compliment of affixing his name to a paltry philosophical toy.

The peculiar orbits in which the planets move can scarcely fail to attract the attention of the student. All the planets



Planetary Orbits.

revolve in orbits nearly circular, that is to say, in nearly concentric circles. The greatest and least distances of the earth from the sun are in the proportion of twelve to thirteen, those of Mars as five to six, and the other planets revolve in paths