

Driessen discovered a fifth of these planets, which was termed *Astræa*. In various quarters the chase was resumed with great ardor. In 1847 were found *Hebe*, *Iris*, and *Flora*; in 1848, *Metis*; in 1849, *Hygæa*; in 1850, *Parthenope*, *Victoria*, and *Egeria*; in 1851, *Irene* and *Eunomia*; in 1852, *Psyche*, *Thetis*, *Melpomene*, *Fortuna*, *Massilia*, *Lutetia*, *Calliope*. To these we have now (at the close of 1856) to add *nineteen* others; making up the whole number of these Minor Planets at present known to *forty-two*.

As their enumeration will show, the ancient practice has been continued of giving to the Planets mythological names. And for a time, till the numbers became too great, each of the Minor Planets was designated in astronomical books by some symbol appropriate to the character of the mythological person; as from ancient times Mars has been denoted by a mark indicating a spear, and Venus by one representing a looking-glass. Thus, when a Minor Planet was discovered at London in 1851, the year in which the peace of the world was, in a manner, celebrated by the Great Exhibition of the Products of All Nations, held at that metropolis, the name *Irene* was given to the new star, as a memorial of the auspicious time of its discovery. And it was agreed, for awhile, that its symbol should be a dove with an olive-branch. But the vast multitude of the Minor Planets, as discovery went on, made any mode of designation, except a numerical one, practically inconvenient. They are now denoted by a small circle inclosing a figure in the order of their discovery. Thus, *Ceres* is ①, *Irene* is ⑭, and *Isis* is ④②.

The rapidity with which these discoveries were made was owing in part to the formation of star-maps, in which all known fixed stars being represented, the existence of a new and movable star might be recognized by comparison of the sky with the map. These maps were first constructed by astronomers of different countries at the suggestion of the Academy of Berlin; but they have since been greatly extended, and now include much smaller stars than were originally laid down.

I will mention the number of planets discovered in each year. After the start was once made, by Hencke's discovery of *Astræa* in 1845, the same astronomer discovered *Hebe* in 1847; and in the same year Mr. Hind, of London, discovered two others, *Iris* and *Flora*. The years 1848 and 1849 each supplied one; the year 1850, three; 1851, two; 1852 was marked by the extraordinary discovery of *eight* new members of the planetary system. The year 1853 supplied four; 1854, six; 1855, four; and 1856 has already given us five.