We must add, to complete our remarks on this subject, that in addition to these two movements of *translation* and *rotation*, the Earth participates in that common motion which carries the entire solar system through space. The Sun, with all its glorious retinue of planets, describes in the heavens, around some unknown centre which lurks far away in the depths of the Infinite, a curve with

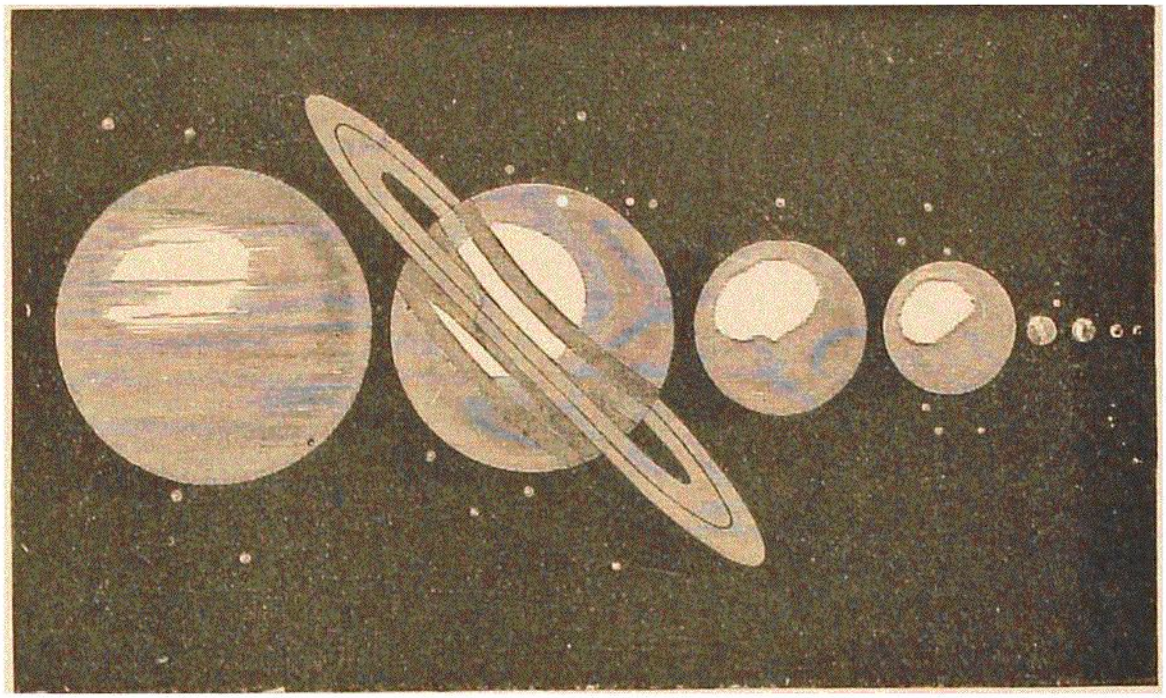

Fig. 8. — Relative Dimensions of the Planets.

so extensive a radius that it seems to our eyes rectilineal. In company with the other planets composing the solar system, Earth obeys this aggregate movement, whose rate of speed is about 10,936 yards a second.

If we now compare our globe with the other planets of its system, it will readily be seen that, so far as regards its distance from the Sun, and consequently its temperature, and, finally, as regards its mass, the Earth represents a kind of *juste milieu*, or medium, between the extreme terms of the solar world. It is neither the nearest to, nor the most distant from the Sun; it neither burns under the scorching temperature of Venus, nor freezes under the icy cold of Saturn or Uranus.

Figure 9 exactly represents the distance of the various planets