Planets.

Venus.—Is an evening star. The time of its setting is 9 h. 25 m. p.m.

Saturn.—The position of this planet on the 15th June at 8 p.m. will be R. A. 2 h. 53 m. 55 s. Dec. 14°-20′-45″ N. Time of its rising 2 h. 31 m. a.m. on the 16th June.

Mars.—The position of this planet on 15th June at 8 p m. will be R. A. 0 h. 36 m. 53 s. Dec. 1°-46′-9″ N. Time of its rising will be 0 h. 36 m. a.m. on the 16th June.

Jupiter.—The position of this planet on the 15th June at 8 p.m. will be R. A. 14 h. 13 m.-2 s. Dec. 12°-2′-49″ S. The time of its setting will be 1 h. 59 m. a.m. on the 16th June.

Correspondence.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the bright spots in the trail of the meteorite, the photograph of which has been before the Society, I imagine a meteor to be a part broken off some other body which is travelling in its own orbit, and this broken part, which must necessarily be an outside portion, and consequently more or less of a crescent shape, according to its relative size to the object from which it came, is thrown off at a tangent at the same pace at which the original body is travelling. If this portion were a sphere, which it cannot be, unless the original object were in a molten condition, it would spin; but if it were a crescent or uneven-shaped figure, it would go in a spiral on account of one side being heavier than the other.

The asteroids, I take it, are spheres and spin round an orbit, but a meteor has no orbit. To take an example. If one drives along a road on which there is a surface layer of mud, and some of the mud adheres to the wheel of the carriage, the wheel, in turning round, throws off flakes of mud. If these flakes of mud were thrown high enough, would they fall straight down to the ground again, or

would they have a tendency to turn over in falling? I rather think they would turn over, and the further they have to fall, the oftener would they turn. The same with a meteor. I suppose, in order to find this out, one should have a cinematograph camera attached to a telescope, but then the difficulty would be to set it going just when the meteor is there. Here is a suggestion for the dim future, when the Society will have got together enough funds!

Yours Sincerely,

ETHEL VOIGT.

[The above would no doubt account for the bright patches in the trail, but the shape of a meteorite would be roughly spherical as a crescent shaped body which, nobbled in the manner suggested, would not obey the laws of equilibrium in its orbit. It seems probable that the bright patches are due to the trail doubling back on itself owing to air currents. At the overlapping places a patch would appear.—H. G. T.]

Extracts from Publications.

Mr. Hollis, writing to the *English Mechanic* regarding a paper by Mr. Holmes of the British Astronomical Society, says:—

Mr. Holmes asks for what reasons do we believe, or are there good reasons for believing, that meteors are visible because they ignite by friction, and is our atmosphere sufficient to prevent them arriving with some force on the Earth? Mr. Holmes gave figures showing the equivalent of the whole atmosphere between the meteor and the surface of the Earth expressed in volume of air at surface density, which did not amount to very much, and asked with some humour whether anyone would care to stand with only that between him and the muzzle of a loaded gun? In the discussion which followed—and this paper called forth some valuable remarks—the opinion was expressed that perhaps sufficient account had not been taken of chemical action; also it was pointed out that the immense velocity of the meteors increased rather than diminished the resistance of the air, but the feeling was evidently pretty general that Mr. Holmes had touched a weak spot, and that this statement about the incandes-