

years, are now always studied in whatever part of the world they occur, by a large number of observers sent out by scientific societies or by the different governments. The photographic and spectroscopic work done during the few minutes of totality, furnishes most important data for the determination of the elements of which the sun is made up. The solar eclipse of 1870 was the first which, in this connection, excited the keenest interest in the scientific world. The recent triumphs of the camera in the hands of De LaRue and Secchi, and the no less marvellous spectroscopic victories achieved by Janssen and Secchi had opened a new field for speculation and research. As a consequence when the time of the eclipse approached, solar physicists from all countries were sent to Spain and Northern Africa which were crossed by the line of totality. Among the distinguished scientists who observed the phenomenon were Huggins, Lockyer, Young, Secchi and Janssen who had escaped from Paris then besieged by the Prussians. England alone sent over fifty observers; it speaks highly for Father Perry's reputation that he was chosen even at that early stage of his career to take charge of one of the four parties into which the English observers were divided.

At a solar eclipse, or indeed in any astronomical work in our day, it is about impossible for any *individual* observations to attain results which command astonishment and admiration; it is a comparison of the sum total of the observations made which bring out valuable data. The results arrived at from the study of solar eclipses during the last quarter of a century are truly marvellous, but the merits of securing these is shared by a dozen, perhaps a score of great observers. Some of those best qualified to judge, however, say that Father Perry, ever careful and painstaking in preparation, accurate and skilful in observation, zealous and enthusiastic in the love of his science, has perhaps done more than any other astronomer, by the data he collected in his various expeditions and his observations at Stonyhurst, to raise solar physics to the dignity of a science.

As often as he was available he was made leader of the solar eclipse expeditions sent out by the English government. Among his lengthy trips in this connec-

tion, may be counted, besides that to Northern Africa in 1870, a trip to Carriacoa, one of the Windward Islands, in 1886, one to Russia in 1887, and another to Salut Island, West Indies, in 1889. All these expeditions were remarkably successful, with the exceptions of that to Russia, which failed owing to a thick curtain of clouds which hid the solar corona. Russia, with its calendar at variance with the heavens and stars, seem to be an unlucky place for observers. Ferrari, who was sent thither by the Pope in 1882 to observe the transit of Venus, failed to get a view of the sun during the critical moments.

Father Perry was most retiring and self-sacrificing in disposition; he never thrust himself forward to gain praises and honors; but where work and sacrifice were required, there he was ever found. To quote from a kindly notice published in the *Observatory* by the chief-assistant at Greenwich: "Father Perry was always eager to gird on his armour in the sacred name of science; the discomforts and anxieties, nay the real dangers of the crusade never daunted him for a moment, and we can claim for him all the laurels due to the soldier who pays for victory with his life, and dies bravely, cheerfully, nobly at the moment of success." Those words are literally true of his last expedition, that to Salut Island in 1889. Though only in his fifty-sixth year his constant and arduous labors and the hard ships inseparable from his many and protracted expeditions to distant and unhealthy climes, had told heavily upon him. As from the deck of H.M.S. *Comus* he waved good-bye to his friends, he thought not that he was never more to set foot on his dearly loved native land. The voyage was a rough one and Father Perry who had always been subject to sea-sickness, became seriously ill. As the time of the phenomenon drew near he was helped to his post and when the critical moment arrived, electrified with enthusiasm, he forgot his sufferings and made the observations with the accuracy of his best days. Never before had he obtained results more satisfactory, victory indeed was his and he saluted it by waving his hat whilst his companions joyfully cheered for the great work accomplished. But the energy which had revived him during the observation