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ON THE PARTIAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN,
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The varied and beautiful phenomena presented in an Eclipse of the Sun, form an important era in the life and study of the astronomer. They form a sort of triumph of his science, a winning-past, planted, as it were, in the distant confines of space—a point of time graven on the history of the past—a land-mark placed as a beacon for the future—and a song of praise to Him, whose power and might are so manifest in the “Heavens that declare His glory, and in the moon and stars that He has ordained.”

The occurrence of a total eclipse gives rise to appearances which have excited the admiration and wonder of the inhabitants of the earth in all ages; but the increase of knowledge, and a more definite theory of the properties of light, and the various improved and modern appliances of science for the investigation of these phenomena, have shed a bright lustre around these observations of a character at once sublime and of intense interest.

No experiments since the days of Newton, but the discovery by Fraunhofer of the dark lines in the solar spectrum, with the more recent invention of the spectroscope, could have led to those results which the total eclipse of last year, 1868, so fully determined, and which would seem to afford such positive proofs of the composition and nature of those protuberances, which, up to that time, had caused so much speculation among men of science.