



# The Poetry Of Astronomy - A Series Of Familiar Essays On The Heavenly Bodies

*Richard A. Proctor*

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PREFACE. I think that science cannot truly be called science if clothed in poetic garb, and, on the other hand, others seem to fear that a glory must depart from the face of nature if science scrutinise her mysteries too closely. I believe both these fears to be unfounded. That science need not be less exact though, poetry underlie its teachings while, beautiful and glorious though the ordinary aspect of nature may be, a deeper poetry, a more solemn significance, a greater beauty, and a nobler glory can be recognised in the aspect of nature when science lifts the veil which hides it from the unaided vision. Nay, I believe that no one who studies aright the teachings of the profoundest students of nature will fail to perceive that our Galileos, Keplers, and Newtons, our Priestleys, Faradays, and Tyndalls, have been moved in no small degree by poetic instincts, and that their best scientific work has owed as much to their imagination as to their reasoning and perceptive faculties. And, on the other hand, we find abundant evidence in the works especially of modern poets that the truths of science are even more impressive than the more direct and obvious teachings of nature. I have had these considerations in view in preparing the essays in the present volume. On the one hand, I have not been deterred by scientific scruples from presenting the poetic aspect of, recent astronomical discoveries, nor, on the other, have I feared lest the recognition of the real significance of these discoveries should do aught but enhance our conceptions of the glory and splendour of the universe. . 9 s - RICHARD A. PROCTOR. CONTENTS. PAGE AGIZ O F THE Sna AITD EARTH . 1 THE SUN IN HIS GLORY . 42 WHEN TEE SEA WAS YOUNG . . 77 Is THE RIOOR D EAD . . 144 THE Moons MYRIAD S NALLC RATER S . 182 A NEW CRATE I R N T M E O N , . 216 THE ARCHITECT O U F T E H E UNIVERSE . . . 407 THE POETRY OF ASTRONOMY. AGE OF THX SUN AND EARTH. Raphael. The sun, as in the ancient days, Mong sister st, axs in rival song, His destined path observes, obeys, And still in thunder rolls along. Gabl. iel...

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