

change before I saw it. At all events I suddenly stood rooted in my tracks, and staring aloft beheld the blessed sun simply flicker and go out. Nor do I suppose that I stirred again until it was over.

From what I had heard of other eclipses, I had anticipated the chief sensation from watching the oncoming shadow. It is said to be most strange and awful to see it travel toward you across the landscape, world-wide, noiseless, rushing at the speed of the planetary bodies in space. Owing to my being taken by surprise, I got nothing of this sight, if it was presented. In conversation afterward with others, I found no one else who had seen it either, even in organized parties who were on the watch for it. One man I found who did see the shadow depart eastward at the end of the eclipse, but I did not regret missing that, for I was watching at that moment a far more glorious spectacle.

What I did see was this: a round object of a dead color, like a stone, hanging in a blue-black sky; a slight gauzy wisp extending for some distance above it, and a less distance below; and one bright yellow star not very far removed. This is all that was distinctly noticeable to a layman.

To go into details; the clouds of the morning had vanished completely; the sky was absolutely clear, so that the high contracting parties were as plain to one's sight as the dinner plate on one's table; the wisp of gauze was the outer corona; the yellow star was the planet Mercury.

I am sorry to say that I stood in a kind of amazed condition through the minute and some seconds that the eclipse lasted, staring rather helplessly at the strange apparition above me, conscious that the opportunity of a lifetime was passing rapidly by, and striving to remember what I ought to be seeing. I now have the fullest sympathy for the early astronomers, who tried single-handed to observe, reason, record, draw and remember all at once these things that were of so great importance to them. But I think I commiserate even more the astronomical specialists of today, who after years of preparation spend the few precious seconds attending wholly to some stop-watch, camera or telescope, and do not see the eclipse at all.

I did look around for stars, but found none save Mercury aforesaid. I did observe the outer corona with some care; but, what I cannot account for now, I forgot to scrutinize the moon's edge for the inner corona. I thought I remembered afterward that the rim of the disk had had a slightly pebbly or granulated appearance, something like the skin of an orange; but there was nothing like the saw-tooth spurts of brilliant light that I had expected visible to the naked eye, of that I am certain;

it surely would have caught my attention else.

As to the outer corona, if you will look at the moon through a window-screen, you will get an idea of its texture; you will see a cross, like that which appeared to the Emperor Constantine, convincing him that it was his manifest duty to join the Early Church. Such an unsubstantial spectre stood out on each side of the moon; one would have supposed it no more than a slight haze in the earth's atmosphere. It was more vertical than horizontal, but the upper end lay somewhat to the right; the lower end equally to the left, for they were in a straight line. They were nearly, if not quite, the full width of the sun; their edges straight, their ends irregular, like a strip of ribbon with notched ends. The upper one extended some two diameters and a half from the moon, the lower perhaps one and a half.

I do not think the darkness was very dense. I was not paying much attention to what was around me, though I remember hearing the word "luna" a number of times, showing that I was among Italians, and that they understood the occurrence. But I know that a baby came crying to his mother, and that I thereupon looked around and could distinguish objects plainly enough. I am also of opinion that there was no noticeable fall in temperature, and I satisfied myself that no dew formed, by feeling in the first patch of grass I came to afterward. Chickens may have gone to roost, but it could hardly have been worth their while, as it was all over in about a minute.

The end came very suddenly. I was staring wildly, as I have mentioned, trying to gather impressions for the rest of my days in those few seconds, when there came a trickle of white molten metal over the tilted edge of the moon, like slag creeping out at the vent of a blast-furnace; then there was the tiniest hoop of a crescent of sunlight, and as it broadened Mercury vanished, vanished the corona, and the world began to resume its accustomed habit. So, as there was no more to do there at that time, I simply departed, remembering once more such matters as breakfast-hours and railroad time-cards, and postponing consideration of the things I had seen until they should have settled somewhat in my mind.

My ideas as to total eclipses of the sun will hereafter include two very distinct and powerful impressions. The first is the horrid, sickening, thick, yellow murk that invaded everything as totality approached, clogging one's feet and clamping one's breath as it accumulated. Of this I had enough, and I fear that I may have inhaled the stuff for many bad dreams from it.

The other is quite different. It is of that priceless moment when the cataract of glory broke over the brow of the dead

moon, and the sun, the father of all, the giver of life, restored the favor of his countenance to his dependent children.

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MACHIAVELLI. In the fifteenth century Machiavelli wrote a treatise upon the duties of a "prince" or ruler. His ideas were generally repudiated by his contemporaries. President McKinley, however, shares with his majesty, the Sultan of Turkey, the distinction of being the only modern rulers who act upon the principles laid down by the noted Italian. The inspiration for our imperial policy must have come from a perusal of the work of Machiavelli, who thus prescribed the ethics of a ruler:

"A prudent ruler cannot, nor ought he to, keep faith when such fidelity shall turn against him, and the reasons which moved him to make his promises are spent. * * * We must recognize this, that a ruler, and especially a new ruler (one serving his first term), cannot observe all those things which men deem good; being often obliged, for the welfare of the state, to act contrary to humanity, contrary to religion. And, besides, he must have a mind ready to shift as the winds and eddies of fortune bid; not to depart from good, if he can help himself, but to know how to do evil if he must. * * * Therefore, a ruler must take great care that no word shall slip from his mouth that shall not be full of piety, trust, humanity and simple faith; and he must appear, to eye and ear, all compact of these. Let a ruler, then, make the state prosper and his methods shall always be judged honorable and be praised by all; because the vulgar are always caught by appearance and by the event; and in this world there are none but the vulgar. A certain ruler of today—it is well not to name names—proclaims nothing but peace and faith; had he observed either he would have toppled the state and his own reputation."

In 1899 President McKinley said, at a national gathering of Methodists, "the flag shall not mean Shift as the Winds. one thing in the United States and another in Porto Rico." Being "a prudent ruler," in 1900, he does not feel any obligation to keep faith, "the reasons which moved him to make his promises have been spent." He has also adhered faithfully to the Machiavellian ideal in piety of expression. He has not failed to avail himself of every opportunity to attend noted religious gatherings and speak words indicating wonderful depth of religious feeling. Even his messages to congress have been clothed in language appealing strongly to the moral sense. It will be remembered how he pointed out that our policy with Porto Rico should be dictated by "plain duty" and that "good faith" demanded free trade with the Porto Ricans. His determined efforts a few months later in behalf of a tariff bill prove him to be a man with a "mind ready to shift as the winds and eddies of fortune bid."