http://www.geology.19thcenturyscience.org/books/1870-Winchell-Elements/README.htm

distance of millions of millions of years. It is true that the sun may have cooled millions of years before the consummation of the final crash. It is true that a million of years before the cooling of the sun the earth may have become desolate and tenantless, as it was a million of years before it received its first inhabitant, or as the moon is today, poised in space before our very eyes. It is true that thousands of years may yet elapse before the ordinary powers of geology shall have leveled the continents, or changed their habitable conditions to such an extent that man and other organic beings will have passed away. But the magnitude of the numbers by which these intervals of time are symbolized does not embarrass the argument. Infinity dwells not alone in years. Are the recitals of Astronomy less fanciful than these? Are the data with which she deals less staggering to the human mind? We think ourselves dwelling in the immediate neighborhood of the sun, since, perchance, his light comes to us in eight and a half minutes. Yet his distance is such that a traveler, setting out for the sun by railway on the day of his birth, and traveling continually thirty miles an hour, would attain the age of fourscore before having spanned one fourth of the vast interval. Were he and his posterity to complete the journey, and were generations to succeed each other according to the established rule, the twelfth generation would appear before the station should be reached. The great luminary would be pressed by the foot of his great-grandson's great-grandson's great-grandson, and he would be upon the tottering verge of fourscore. Had Christopher Columbus set sail for the sun instead of a new continent, and traveled continuously at three times the speed of a steam-ship, he would only have reached his destination this year. This is the distance which light travels over in eight and a half minutes. There is no doubt admissible