

through space at the rate of one hundred and fifty millions of miles a year. And yet so vast is the circuit upon which he is launched that 18,200,000 years will have faded away before he shall have completed a single revolution.

If throughout all these boundless intervals of space a resisting ether is present—if it be a fact that a material fluid pervades all the wide realms which light has traversed, what is the conclusion which looms up as a consequence? Are we not compelled to recognize the fact that every sun in our firmament, as it journeys round and round in its circuit of millions of years, is slowly, but surely as Encke's comet, approaching the centre of its orbit? And in that most distant future, the contemplation of which almost paralyzes our powers of thought, is it not certain that all these suns must be piled together in a cold and lifeless mass?

I forbear to say more. With reverence I refrain from the attempt to lift the veil which conceals the destiny of other firmaments. I dare not hazard the inquiry whether an immensity of firmaments may not be executing their grand gyrations on a still larger scale; and whether these, in turn, may not be destined to a grander cosmical conglomeration. It is vain to push our conjectures farther. We have even here entered upon the border-land of infinite space. In the presence of Infinity, what can man do but bow his head and worship?

Reason assures us that somewhere the tendency to central aggregation must be stayed. A universe of worlds can never be gathered together in a single mass. Within the bounds of the visible we see all matter wending its way toward centres of gravity. Within the bounds of our firmament we see all matter tending toward one centre. Let us content ourselves to speak of this. This shall be our universe. This is the universe whose final aggregation into one mass we are compelled to contemplate.