

(28.) But, besides this, the two stars in question are remarkable in another way. They are both conspicuous DOUBLE STARS, and have been long watched with especial

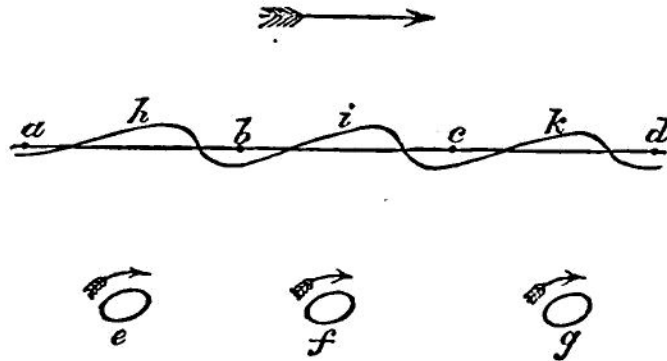


Fig. 1.

interest by reason of the two individuals of which each respectively consists standing to each other in the relation of sun and planet, or planet and satellite. Not only do they keep close company with each other in their journey through space by a common proper motion; but while so journeying together they revolve about each other or about their common centre of gravity in regular elliptic orbits, under the influence of that very same law of gravitation which retains the planets in their circulation round the sun. They are, therefore, at the same distance from us, and therefore both equally and similarly apparently displaced by parallax; so that each of them, microscopically watched, appears to describe the same minute annual parallactic ellipse above spoken of. This must not be confounded with the elliptic orbit the two stars describe about each other. That is on a far larger scale, and requires many years for its completion.