

know that you have not now for the first time to seek that help & comfort, so needful in time of trouble. God has long been your Father & your Friend, & it is natural and pleasant for you to turn to Him now: in the certainty of free access to His gracious ear. How do I doubt that you will come out of this trial with a more serious desire to make yourself intimately acquainted with His Holy Word, and to glorify Him by steadfast and consistent obedience.

It is curious that you should have a Wyatt to attend you in your illness - who will prove to you we trust everything that you, or we, can desire. We hear too with pleasure of your Scotch nurse. Italians I believe are very kind - but they are less likely to be acquainted with our country ways. I have not much news to report. We are much as usual in every respect, including my dear wife's eye, which has made no progress, but I am thankful to add is not worse. We heard incidentally yesterday that Dr. Evans had said that one day's more delay would have caused its loss. We little knew that at the time - and often little know how near we are to some unexpected danger, or how often we are delivered unawares.

I have discontinued "Nature" - not from any "ill-natured" feeling about it, but because I could not succeed in my plan of making it pay me for the outlay, which to me was worth more, generally speaking, than the information. Mr. Lockyer asked me to help, though my name did not appear on the staff - I sent an article on the state of astronomy, soon after he <sup>began the</sup> ~~started~~ publication. It was not put in - but this I may say did not surprise me, for I did not like it myself, it was poorly written, & worth little. I sent another paper - since Mr. L's departure - on Jupiter, containing a good deal of thought & care - this also was "buried," so as I have no means of doing better to replace my outlay, I have resolved up retrenching it, without any other personal - only a purse-on-all - feeling, in the matter!

I have done a little in the Observatory - notwithstanding the severe cold - which on Dec. 23 & 24 was, at night, below zero. Jupiter is as last season, with some variations, & if I am not mistaken, a decided enfeebling of his features, arising, I fancy, not from their being intrinsically fainter, so much as from some change in the transparency of a region which overlies the ordinary belts. But this "with all reserves".