

like a strange surprise.

A stranger & most sad surprise has come over us this evening - in the news of the sudden death from a fall in skating of the sister of our dearest friend the Rev. Mr. Bruce (of St. Nicholas near Carlisle) ^{my wife} ~~she~~ had just got into communication with him by letter, & we were looking forward with much pleasure to her friendship - but in the midst of life - even the most young, & healthful, and sportive life, are we not in death? May we be ready!

To turn to what I meant to write about. I have been using up this enforced leisure since my accident in preparing my new Edition - & you were so kind as to say, nearly 12 months ago, that you'd give me some assistance, when your work was over, by revising the Chapter on the Sun. I hope you are not so deeply engaged as to lead you to look on this as a trouble - if so, dear Arthur, don't hesitate to say so - much as I should prize your aid, I could get on - like Marshal Ney in the retreat from Russia "je saurais me faire jour" - but if you can by

any means make it a pleasure - why, then it will be so to me. Only there are parts of it written or modified by "dear Dawes", which I should be cautious in touching.

The great & heavy part of the undertaking is what has been strongly recommended to me, & what I should have myself wished to adopt - a large increase of double stars from P. Lindsay's Σ . The reduction, arrangement, & copying out of these involve no small expense of time & labour - but I think I have broke the neck of it already. It will add perhaps 25 or 30 pages to the vol. & something I suppose to the cost.

I have had occasion to make much use of Flammarion's Catalogue - I know him to be a strange fleyaway fact & fiction sort of fellow - but really - after beginning with a strong prejudice against the man - I have been obliged to admit that it is a marvel of industrious research - & I am sorry to add, between ourselves, that, as far as I can see, there are fewer mistakes than in Gledhill's very pretty & pleasant book.

My fool I am thankful to say mends very satisfactorily - in fact, considering my age & the season,