

Foreword

After studying astronomy for a period of twenty years, I venture now to release this volume from my hand. It is presented modestly to the tender attention of my fellow-countrymen across our planet.

The most discerning critic will no more be able to be aware of all the imperfections and defects of this volume, than is the author himself.

If love for the subject-matter, and pondering and reading extensively and deeply, is enough to justify my venture, than there is no need for apology.

A list may be found at the end of some of the books that I read over and over. It was sometimes impossible to avoid adopting the thoughts and ideas of other authors, especially in a subject like this, where the chief facts are, and in many cases have for a very long time been, in the public domain; but I have attempted each time to acknowledge that to the extent of my ability. It is virtually impossible to be original in a subject like this.

It is proper for me as well to acknowledge the help I have received, in my researches and my attempts to gather materials, from my old constant and true companion – that is, from my old four-inch telescope, of the well-known Tulley make.

Plenty of books may be had on this branch of knowledge in other languages, but they are very scarce in Welsh, and if this volume will fill the gap to some degree, it will give me great pleasure.

I have written for the Welsh. I supposed that I saw, as ‘in a vision in the night’, a new day dawning for Wales, and the intellectual boundaries of the Welsh people moving outwards. Even up to about a quarter century ago they were hemmed in by an impassable wall, which made their little world too narrow and stunted. Today, however, their intellectual horizons are expanding, and they are becoming more open-minded every day. New topics are engaging their minds. They have become fed up with politics to a great extent – that was clear in the General Election of 1922. I supposed that astronomy would strike a new chord in their nature. Their temperament makes them mystics. They desire to see the invisible, and I believe that the study of astronomy will satisfy the best yearnings of their nature. An indescribable pleasure it is that is enjoyed when the mind expands.

Yes, Wales was too long in her shell, but now she has emerged. Higher, higher may she go, reaching towards the pure and the fine beneath the splendour of heaven. Onwards, onwards may she go, to possess new worlds.

J. SILAS EVANS.

The Vicarage

Llanrhaiadr

Croesoswallt, December, 1923.