

mies. Law and miracle can co-exist in the same event. You can counteract gravity on the earth for a little and in particular instances ; no doubt God can do the same on a wonderfully grander scale in the sky. He can cast a planet away from the sun as easily as we can cast a pebble into the air. Should He do it there would be a miracle, for there would be an astonishing effect by a supernatural cause. But there would be no suppression of law, only the dominance of one law over another—that is, the dominance of a supernatural force working according to its laws over a natural force working according to its laws. So law and miracle can sit side by side on the same throne and never quarrel.

Surely if ever there was a friend to law and order, it is He who built and maintains the skies. They are an object lesson as to what God desires and proposes in the spiritual realm. As we look at the delicate proportionings and balanced adjustments and orderly ongoings of the systematized firmament, we see a testimony on a magnificent scale that God cannot be tolerant of disorder among any beings, but has given stringent laws to prevent it, which He is bent on upholding and to which men will do well to conform.

4. *God credibly maintains over us both a providential and moral government—maintains them in the interest of order and the general welfare.*

It is now universally understood by astronomers that the numberless suns imply as many systems of planets which they light, warm, and control in the interest of intelligent beings like men ; also that in these vast systems of rational and responsible beings lies the supreme significance and purpose of the visible universe. It exists for their sake. The imposing materialism is for the more imposing and important spiritualism. Houses of all grades, from cabin to palace, are for the sake of inhabitants.

Astronomy shows that God is intelligent and powerful enough to administer an efficient government over these responsible beings (among whom we stand) on both providential and moral lines ; also that He is disposed to do it. For we see that He is disposed to regulate most thoroughly and vigorously the physical universe according to its nature ; and it follows that He must be still more disposed to regulate thoroughly and vigorously, according to its nature, that vastly more important universe of intelligent and moral beings for the sake of which the other was made. Of course God has His wishes and purposes in regard to this supreme department of His empire, as well as His measures for securing the fulfilment of these purposes. The only two possible systems of measures are the providential and the moral. He can restrain, impel, and direct us by various appeals to our voluntary and responsible natures, and he can also do it by the pressure of circumstances that do not appeal to the principle of free choice. Whatever His purposes in making us ; whatever the courses He wishes us to take and characters to form, and experiences to have ; it is plain, from what we see on the surface of our astronomy, that He has both wisdom and power enough to bring to bear on us most potentially both forms of