few of those stars, which appear like so many lucid points to the unassisted eye of the observer, expand into large circles upon the application of the telescope, and are some of them much larger than the ball which we tread upon, and to which we proudly apply the denomination of the universe.

The planetary system has its boundary. There are only five, or at most six, of the planetary orbs visible to the naked eye. What then is that multitude of other lights which sparkle in our firmament, and fill the whole concave of heaven with innumeral splendours? The planets are all attached to the sun; and in circling round him, they do homage to that influence which binds them to perpetual attendance on this great luminary. But the other stars do not own his dominion. They do not circle around him. To all common observation they remain immoveable; and each, like the independent sovereign of his own territory, appears to occupy the same inflexible position in the regions of immensity. What mean these innumerable fires lighted up in distant parts of the universe? Are they only made to shed a feeble glimmering over this little spot in the kingdom of nature? or do they serve a purpose worthier of themselves, to light up other worlds, and give animation to other systems?

The first thing which strikes a scientific observer of the fixed stars, is their immeasurable distance. If the whole planetary system were lighted up into a globe of fire, it would exceed, by many millions of times, the magnitude of this world, and yet only appear a small lucid spark from the nearest of them. If a body were projected from the sun with the velocity of a cannon-ball, it would take hundreds of thousands of years before it described the mighty interval which separates the nearest of the fixed stars.