

the stupendous one of Lord Rosse were constructed, the discoveries in the skies would be farther and farther extended, and even new wonders appear. Or if we could be transported to one of the remote fixed stars, and there direct our eye, or our telescope, beyond, we have good reason to believe that fresh hosts of shining bodies would be seen. So that we can set no bounds to the material empire of God Almighty, an empire stretching immeasurably into the infinitude of space.

Now, who is there, possessing any right activity of mind, that has not, even from his transition out of childhood, felt the enquiry arising within him, What are these splendid orbs, numberless, and ascertained by astronomers to be of prodigious magnitude? We shall pass over the wrong ideas held concerning these in former times, when true science was in weak infancy, and the earth was believed to be the central point of the universe, and all the heavenly bodies, not excepting the sun himself, were considered as circling around the earth, to enlighten and do it honour! But when (only, however, a few centuries ago,) the philosophers Copernicus and Galileo found out the fundamental truths of astronomy, and showed that the sun is a great centre round which our earth and other bodies revolve as planets; and the illustrious Sir Isaac Newton discovered the material law of gravitation by which these mighty movements are effected with beautiful regularity and mathematical precision, and the continuous progress of scientific research, made it more and more evident that our solar system of planets is but a fraction, a very small fraction, of a seemingly boundless universe, which is made up of other systems, *ad infinitum*,—then the opinion was mooted, and gradually gathered strength, that these various systems comprise *worlds*, tenanted by living inhabitants, rational and irrational; though it does not necessarily follow that they are just like the occupants of our own globe,—for who may presume to set limits to the diversities of Divine creative power?

The theory of a plurality of worlds, which has been maintained by the eminent astronomers and philosophic writers of modern times, was first exhibited in a popular form by Fontenelle, a French writer, in an ingenious book of dialogues published one hundred and seventy years ago; and this theory has been variously illustrated and sustained by such able writers as Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Lardner, Dr. Thomas Dick, &c., and more recently by Sir David Brewster.

Sir David has published a very interesting and satisfactory volume,* in reply to one† by an ingenious and talented author, who is anonymous, and who has endeavoured to make out, with much show of knowledge and plausibility of argument, but mixed with a great deal of bold sophistry and reckless statement, that there is only one

* "*More Worlds than one, the Creed of the Philosopher, and the Hope of the Christian.*"

† "*The Plurality of Worlds*," which title, however, is a misnomer, and a sort of artful decoy.