

1. *God has an amazing empire.*

Until lately the universe was an exceedingly small thing as it appeared in the thought of the most advanced peoples. To the cultivated Greek and Roman writers, as well as to the popular mythology of their times, the whole *cosmos* was hardly more than the earth; and the earth itself was a small matter compared with what we now know it to be. The stars were mere spangles or gaseous tapers. When better views came, the heavens were still occupied with only about two thousand worlds. When the telescope of Galileo came, the universe became several times larger; and from that day to this, by successive enlargements of the instrument, the known heavens have gone on expanding until a hundred millions of suns are within view, implying several times that number of planets. Nor is this the end, though it carries us across a region which light itself could not cross in less than one hundred and twenty thousand years. It is now found that by adding a camera to the telescope an additional host of stars is revealed—especially after long exposure of the photographic plate to the same point in the heavens. This plate is more sensitive to faint light than is the sharpest eye, and, unlike the eye, can accumulate faint impressions until they come within reach of sight—can, as it were, stand on the shoulders of the telescope and command a wider horizon. It is estimated that when the photographic charts of the heavens already agreed upon and in process in several countries and by more than twenty telescopes are completed, we shall have within our observation full twenty times the number of stars now shown by our largest telescopes. This will bring the visible stellar host up to two thousand millions.

Is even this the complete total? No astronomer supposes that worlds end where happens to end the vision of our best present instruments. On the contrary, experience assures him that a given increase of space-penetrating power in his instrument is likely to reveal new worlds in as large numbers as ever. One familiar with astronomical history does not find it hard to believe that the unseen heavens are fully as mighty as the seen; he even feels that it would be a safe thing to defy all the researches of the future to reach a district in space where worlds are not. Where is the end? Is there any end to the peopled immensities? If one gathers courage and awe enough to pronounce that the stellar universe is coextensive with infinite space itself, is absolutely without limit in every direction, science has not a single word to say against it, and several words to say for it.

Such is the universe, the *peopled* universe, which God made, over which He reigns, and to every minute particular of which His providence extends. How an ancient theist, to whom this earth was the whole creation, or the more recent Tycho, to whom this earth was the ¹reponderating centre and metropolis of the sky, would have opened his eyes at such a demonstration as we have of the hugeness of the Divine empire! How trifling, beyond speech, seems the largest earthly kingdom in comparison with this