

too great to be supported. But the difference, as regards habitability, between a palace and a hovel is far less than that between a hovel and one of the air-holes in a brick or loaf, or any other cavity too small to act as a human habitation. The difference as regards habitability is then an infinite difference.

To take a less trivial instance ; a planet which is large enough to retain an atmosphere by its gravitative attraction differs utterly, in potentiality and importance, from the numerous lumps of matter scattered throughout space, which, though they may be as large as a haystack or a mountain or as the British Isles, or even Europe, are yet too small to hold any trace of air to their surface, and therefore cannot in any intelligible sense of the word be regarded as habitable. One of the lumps of matter in space can become a habitable planet only when it has attained a certain size, which conceivably it might do by falling together with others into a complex aggregate under