

tendants: the Earth has one. Mars, indeed, who is still farther removed, has none; nor have the minor planets, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, Pallas; so that the rule is only approximately verified. But Jupiter, who is at five times the earth's distance, has four satellites; and Saturn, who is again at a distance nearly twice as great, has seven, besides that most extraordinary phenomenon his ring, which, for purposes of illumination, is equivalent to many thousand satellites. Of Uranus it is difficult to speak, for his great distance renders it almost impossible to observe the smaller circumstances of his condition. It does not appear at all probable that he has a ring, like Saturn; but he has at least five satellites which are visible to us, at the enormous distance of nine hundred millions of miles; and we believe that the astronomer will hardly deny that he may possibly have thousands of smaller ones circulating about him.

But leaving conjecture, and taking only the ascertained cases of Venus, the Earth, Jupiter, and Saturn, we conceive that a person of common understanding will be strongly impressed with the persuasion that the satellites are placed in the system with a view to compensate for the diminished light of the sun at greater distances. The smaller planets, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, and Pallas, differ from the rest in so many ways, and suggest so many conjectures of reasons for such differences, that we should almost expect to find them exceptions to such a rule. Mars is a more obvious exception. Some persons might conjecture from his case, that the arrangement itself, like other useful arrangements, has been brought about by some wider law which we have not yet detected. But whether or not we entertain such a guess, (it can be nothing more,) we see in other parts of creation, so many examples of apparent exceptions to rules, which are afterwards found to be explained, or provided for by particular contrivances, that no one, familiar with such contemplations, will, by one ano-