

straight line leading to the centre. He thus showed that he had entertained in his thoughts the hypothesis of the earth's rotation, and was employed in removing the difficulties which accompanied this supposition, by means of the consideration of the composition of motions.

In like manner we find the question stirred by other eminent men. Thus John Muller of Königsberg, a celebrated astronomer who died in 1476, better known by the name of Regiomontanus, wrote a dissertation on the subject "Whether the earth be in motion or at rest," in which he decides *ex professo*² against the motion. Yet such discussions must have made generally known the arguments for the heliocentric theory.

We have already seen the enthusiasm with which Rheticus, who was Copernicus's pupil in the latter years of his life, speaks of him. "Thus," says he, "God has given to my excellent preceptor a reign without end; which may He vouchsafe to guide, govern, and increase, to the restoration of astronomical truth. Amen."

Of the immediate converts of the Copernican system, who adopted it before the controversy on the subject had attracted attention, I shall only add Mastlin, and his pupil, Kepler. Mastlin published in 1588 an *Epitome Astronomiæ*, in which the immobility of the earth is asserted; but in 1596 he edited Kepler's *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, and the *Narratio* of Rheticus: and in an epistle of his own, which he inserts, he defends the Copernican system by those physical reasonings which we shall shortly have to mention, as the usual arguments in this dispute. Kepler himself, in the outset of the work just named, says, "When I was at Tübingen, attending to Michael Mæstlin, being disturbed by the manifold inconveniences of the usual opinion concerning the world, I was so delighted with Copernicus, of whom he made great mention in his lectures, that I not only defended his opinions in our disputations of the candidates, but wrote a thesis concerning the First Motion which is produced by the revolution of the earth." This must have been in 1590.

The differences of opinion respecting the Copernican system, of which we thus see traces, led to a controversy of some length and extent. This controversy turned principally upon physical considerations, which were much more distinctly dealt with by Kepler, and others of the followers of Copernicus, than they had been by the dis-

² Schoneri *Opera*, part ii. p. 129.