

but it seems to have been rendered highly probable that those obscurely defined luminous masses, which sir William Herschel termed *nebulæ*, observable within the limits of individual constellations, are really the accumulated light of innumerable stars seen through the medium of a space hitherto immeasurable: and that the *milky way* itself is an extended accumulation of similar *nebulæ*; the collected light of which, at some inconceivable point of distance, may appear to the inhabitants of still more distant spheres, as a mere speck. Dare the mind attempt to penetrate beyond this general statement, and to speculate upon the characters of its detail? What if there be a resemblance, or even an analogy, between the structure and inhabitants of this earth and of the other planets of our system? What if every fixed star which we either see with the naked eye or by the aid of the telescope, or whose existence we can conceive on probable grounds by the mind's eye, be itself the centre of a system consisting, like our own, of numerous subordinate spheres, and every one of these inhabited by responsible agents, like ourselves; to whose uses both inorganic elements and animals and vegetables, analogous if not similar to our own, may be subservient? What if the moral history and state of the inhabitants of those numberless spheres be like that of man?—But the view, which the investigation of