

reckoned by centuries instead of single years, could accumulate experience and knowledge such as we never can in our fleeting threescore years and ten. May we not, too, imagine in these stellar worlds, beings who would no more allow themselves to be bound down to their island worlds by mere space than we permitted ourselves to be confined to land by the ocean; beings, who, as Columbus crossed the ocean to discover a new world beyond his own, would set out through the depths of space to communicate with other worlds around them? And, lastly, amid all these millions of worlds, may we not conceive of societies as superior to our own as ours is to the savage tribes about us—societies where culture of the mind, where sympathy and love, and all that is noblest in man's moral nature, have attained their highest development, and are given fullest play?

In many such ways as these, may we not imagine beings more perfect than ourselves to exist in the realms of light above? And, fanciful as these conjectures may seem, they are in no way beyond the bounds of possibility, and indulgence in such fancies is of deep practical use in making us realize more clearly what our true position in the vast universe really is. The simple nomads, whom from time to time I used to meet in the desert, looking up into the heavens with a keenness of sight such as is only granted to these dwellers in the wilderness, saw only a number of bright specks, which one by one disappeared below the horizon, and reappeared in apparently the same places on the following evening. Towards morning they would see a round of light appear, which would slowly pass across the sky and disappear, like the stars, below the western horizon. Day after day, night after night, the same process would be repeated, the stars by night and the sun by day, coursing over the heavens.

And what did these children of the desert think of these phenomena? Simply this, that what they *seemed* to see was really what they saw—that the small ball of fire by day