

flakes floating in the atmosphere in a time of calm, instead of appearing, as they often do, either in a state of rest, or moving with equal freedom in every direction, ought to be seen hurrying westwards, as if puffed by the breath of a tornado. Such an objection must for a time have appeared as just as it seems obvious, especially in one's study on a Saturday night, with much of one's lecture still to write, and the Sabbath too near to permit of verification or experiment. Fontenelle, however, though he could not get over the difficulty of conceiving how the same gravitation which made a stone fall also kept the moon in its place, fairly surmounted that which puzzled Turretine; and in his "Plurality of Worlds,"—a publication of the same age as the "Compendium Theologiæ,"—he makes his Marchioness surmount it too. "But I have a difficulty to solve," he represents the lady as saying, "and you must be serious. As the earth moves, the air changes every moment; so we breathe the air of another country. 'Not at all,' replied I; 'for the air which encompasses the earth follows with us, and turns with us. Have you not seen the labours of the silkworm? The shell or cocoon which it weaves around itself with so much art is of a down very loose and soft; and so the earth, which is solid, is covered, from the surface twenty leagues upwards, with a kind of down, which is the air, and, like the shell of the silkworm, turns along with it.'" Even Turretine, however, was as far in advance of some of our contemners of science in the present day, as Fontenelle was in advance of Turretine, or Newton in advance of Fontenelle. The old theologian could scarce have held, with a living ecclesiastic of the Romish Church in Ireland, Father Cullen, that the sun is *possibly* only a fathom in diameter; or have asserted with a most Protestant lecturer who addressed an audience in Edinburgh little more than three years ago, that, though God created all the wild animals, it was the devil who made