

harder. When you have read ye first 60 pages pass to ye Third Book, and when you see the design of that you may turn back to such propositions as you shall have a desire to know, or peruse the whole in order if you think fit "

Newton had no satisfactory theory as to the genesis of the solar system or astral systems. So far as I can understand from his letters to Dr. Bentley, he thought the orbs were completed and propelled by some extraneous force, possibly the Almighty hand, and by the attracting centre were wheeled into ellipses. The later hypotheses such as the Nebular or Planetesimal or Meteoritic or any modification or adaptation of these had not occurred to his wonderful intellect. It was not until 1796, sixty-nine years after Newton's death, that Laplace, who was called the "Newton of France" advanced his celebrated and much debated theory. Sir David Brewster, Newton's distinguished biographer, speaking of these letters, remarks,— "They show that the Nebular Hypothesis, the dull and dangerous heresy of of the age, is incompatible with the established laws of the material universe, and that an omnipotent arm was required to give the planets their positions and motions in space, and a presiding intelligence to assign to them the different functions they had to perform." With profound respect to this justly celebrated biographer I venture a *caveat* on his conclusions. I am not now prepared to spend time on any proof of the Nebular Theory, but I dare affirm that it is not incompatible with divine omnipotence or divine intelligence—nay, rather it illustrates them. If gravitation is a law of the Creator, and that is admitted, the laws of the same Creator may work out the moulding and construction of worlds quite harmoniously with a well ordered and divinely created universe. A wisdom that can construct a huge machine, which, by natural processes, can construct from itself smaller machines with their own revolutions and orbits, is, I venture to think, at least equal to a power that drastically and dramatically hurls great orbs into space ready made to find their own orbits and revolutions. Cohesion and gravitation are not only great natural laws, they are even more