

tion of the planets, and the different changes through which it is possible they have passed before they arrived at the state we at present see them.

There have been so many systems and hypotheses framed upon the formation of the terrestrial globe, and the changes which it has undergone, that we may presume to add our conjectures to those who have written upon the subject, especially as we mean to support them with a greater degree of probability than has hitherto been done: and we are the more inclined to deliver our opinion upon this subject, from the hope that we shall enable the reader to pronounce on the difference between an hypothesis drawn from possibilities, and a theory founded on facts; between a system, such as we are here about to present, on the formation and original state of the earth, and a physical history of its real condition, which has been given in the preceding discourse.

Galileo having found the laws of falling bodies, and Kepler having observed that the area described by the principal planets in moving round the sun, and those of the satellites round the planets to which they belong, are proportionable to the time of their revolutions,
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