

universe, for, like the planets, they are subject to the attraction of the sun. But in their projectile and impelled motions they have nothing in common either with each other or with the planets. Every one of them circulates in a different plane, and they each describe orbits in different periods of time; for some perform their revolutions in a few years, while others require several centuries. The sun, simply moving round his own centre, remains, as it were at rest in the midst, and, at the same time, serves as a torch, a focus, and an axis, to all and every part of this wonderful machine.

That the sun continues immoveable, and regulates the motions of the other globes, is to be ascribed to his magnitude alone. The force of attraction being in proportion to the mass of matter; as the sun is so considerably larger than any of the comets, and contains above a thousand times more matter than the most extensive planet, they can neither derange him nor diminish his influence, which extending to immense distances keeps the whole within the bounds of his power; and thus at particular periods recalls those which have stretched furthest into the regions of space. Some of these on being brought back, approach so near the
sun,