

gists assign to them a function wholly distinct from this, when they labour to demonstrate that by laws, and laws alone, the framework of our existing economy was put together. It is thus that they would exclude the agency of a God from the transition between one system, or one formation, and another; although it be precisely at such transition when this agency seems most palpably and peculiarly called for. We feel assured that the necessity for a divine intervention, and, of course, the evidence of it would have been more manifest, had the distinction between the laws of matter and its collocations been more formally announced, or more fully proceeded on by the writers on natural theism. And yet it is a distinction that must have been present to the mind of our great Newton, who expressly affirms that a mechanism of wonderful structure could not arise by the mere laws of nature. In his third printed letter to Bentley, he says, that "the growth of *new systems* out of *old ones*, without the mediation of a divine power, seems to me apparently absurd;" and that "the system of nature was *set in order* in the beginning, with respect to size, figure, proportions, and properties, by the counsels of God's own intelligence."*

* Towards the end of the third book of Newton's Optics, we have the following very distinct testimony upon this subject: "For it became Him who created them to set them in order. And if he did so, it is unphilosophical to seek for any other origin of the world; or to pretend that it might arise out of a chaos by the mere laws of nature; though being once formed, it may continue by those laws for many ages."

This disposition to resolve the collocations into the laws of nature proves, in the expressive language of Granville Penn.