spond, and the material constitution of all these bodies be identical, without leaving a profound conviction upon our minds that they have had a common origin and a common history? Such queries were raised by Leibnitz and Kant upon slenderer data than we possess. Does not the hypothesis of Laplace rise almost to a demonstration?

But what, again, of our family of infant planets? Each sprang forth a globe of igneous vapor like their common mother. Each began to repeat the process of cooling, condensation, and accelerated rotation. In the cases of the larger, the cooling had not reached the point of liquefaction before the rotation had become sufficiently rapid to detach from one to six or seven rings, which, in turn, became satellites revolving about their planets. The larger planets have had time to detach the greater number of rings. Our earth threw off but one, and became too rigid to repeat the process. Mars, Venus, and Mercury—all smaller than the earth—attained the rigid condition before their acquired velocity had separated the periphery. Their nights are consequently unillumined by the presence of a moon. Saturn not only threw off seven rings which became satellites, but another also, which to this day hangs poised in a state of unstable equilibrium—as if the hand of Omnipotence had steadied it, and arrested it in its career, to hold it up to the gaze of intelligent creatures, to reveal to them the nature of events which transpired before their arrival upon the theatre of existence. And this ring is said to be a liquid—a discovery for which we are indebted to the analysis of an eminent American scholar, but one which lends still farther corroboration to our view of the genesis of worlds.*

We have then, preserved as if by the care of Providence,

* The only difficulty arises from the fact that the liquid ring is not self-luminous. But this difficulty is not insurmountable. It may be aqueous.