

in which equilibrium was sustained by centrifugal force and gravity. As the glowing mass became denser the centrifugal force increased, and peripheral rings of vapour similar to those of Saturn separated from the main body. The detached rings continued to move with the same rate and direction of motion as before. Not being of uniform density, they became rent, the different masses formed themselves into rotating spheres, the larger bodies absorbed a part of the smaller, and thus the planets and their satellites took origin.

The condensation of the vaporous material during the process of aggregation of the particles into spheroids set free a large amount of heat and the newly-formed bodies were raised to a very high temperature; they became radiant masses, radiating light and heat into surrounding space. Owing to the loss of heat by radiation, the surface cooled and shrivelled, and finally a superficial crust formed, at first glowing, afterwards darkening down to its present state.

According to Laplace, the zodiacal light represents certain volatile unconsolidated parts of the solar atmosphere that still surround the sun; while the comets are regarded by Laplace as foreign to the solar atmosphere, belonging probably to the infinite space beyond.

The nebular theory of Kant and Laplace was in far better agreement with the laws of mechanics and the observations of astronomy than any previous cosmogonic hypothesis. It also helped greatly to elucidate the earliest beginnings of the earth, and was welcomed by geologists. Clearly it brought confirmation to Volcanistic doctrines, and militated against the Neptunian teaching that the primitive crystalline rocks were of aqueous origin.

*Local Geognostic Descriptions and Stratigraphy.*—A. Germany.—The revolutionary tendency of the empirical methods taught by Werner in his system of geognosy is displayed in the numerous local monographs that began to appear in all parts of Europe. Both in mineralogy and in stratigraphy, the chief contingent of new work came from the Wernerian school.

Georg Lasius (1752-1833), who for a long time held the post of Director of the Survey Department in Oldenburg, was no Wernerian, but he contributed a work on the Harz district that ranks among the best and most careful local descriptions of his time. While Lasius was an officer in the Hanoverian