

all the bodies of the universe. And we may therefore suppose, that the same ordinance which gave to the parts of our system that rule by which they fulfil the purposes of their creation, impressed the same rule on the other portions of matter which are scattered in the most remote parts of the universe; and thus gave to their movements the same grounds of simplicity and harmony which we find reason to admire, as far as we can acquire any knowledge of our own more immediate neighbourhood.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### *The Laws of Motion.*

WE shall now make a few remarks on the general Laws of Motion by which all mechanical effects take place. Are we to consider these as instituted laws? and if so, can we point out any of the reasons which we may suppose to have led to the selection of those laws which really exist?

The observations formerly made concerning the inevitable narrowness and imperfection of our conclusions on such subjects, apply here, even more strongly than in the case of the law of gravitation. We can hardly conceive matter divested of these laws; and we cannot perceive or trace a millionth part of the effects which they produce. We cannot, therefore, expect to go far in pointing out the advantages of these laws such as they now obtain.

It would be easy to show that the fundamental laws of motion, in whatever form we state them, possess a very preeminent simplicity, compared with almost all others, which we might imagine as existing. This simplicity has indeed produced an effect on men's minds which, though delusive, appears to