

hood, which is almost equivalent to a certainty, being established, I seek to know what moving bodies could produce this effect, and I find nothing but comets capable of communicating a motion to such vast bodies.

By examining the course of comets, we shall be easily persuaded, that it is almost necessary for some of them occasionally to fall into the sun. That of 1680 approached so near, that at its perihelion, it was not more distant from the sun than a sixth part of its diameter, and if it returns, as there is every appearance it will, in the year 2255, it may then possibly fall into the sun; that must depend on the rencounters it will meet with in its road, and on the retardment it suffers in passing through the atmosphere of the sun*.

We may, therefore, presume with the great Newton, that comets sometimes fall into the sun; but this fall may be made in different directions. If they fall perpendicularly or in a direction not very oblique, they will remain in the sun, and serve for food to the fire which that luminary consumes, and the motion of impulsion which they will have communicated to the sun, will produce no other effect than that of removing it more or less, according as
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* Vide Newton, 3d edit. page 325.