

and exactly equal throughout in their diameters, their reciprocal action would be very little varied from what it is at present, because the distances of all their parts from each other would be very little changed. But if these two globes were cylinders of great extent, and approached near to each other, the law of their reciprocal action would seem to be different, inasmuch as the distances of their parts would be greatly varied; and hence whenever figure becomes a principle in distance the law will appear to vary, although in fact it is always the same.

The human intellect guided by this principle, may advance one step further in penetrating into the operations of nature. The figure of the constituent particles of bodies still remains unknown; we cannot entertain the smallest doubt that water, air, earth, metals, and all homogeneous particles, are composed of elementary particles, which are perfectly similar, although we are still ignorant of their figure. By the aid of calculation this at present unknown field of knowledge may be disclosed by posterity, and the figure of the elementary bodies be ascertained with tolerable precision. They may take the principle we have established as the basis of their enquiry; namely,