

members of the Royal Society, appear to have embraced the system immediately and zealously. Men whose pursuits had lain rather in literature than in science, and who had not the knowledge and habits of mind which the strict study of the system required, adopted, on the credit of their mathematical friends, the highest estimation of the *Principia*, and a strong regard for its author, as Evelyn, Locke, and Pepys. Only five years after the publication, the principles of the work were referred to from the pulpit, as so incontestably proved that they might be made the basis of a theological argument. This was done by Dr. Bentley, when he preached the Boyle's Lectures in London, in 1692. Newton himself, from the time when his work appeared, is never mentioned except in terms of profound admiration; as, for instance, when he is called by Dr. Bentley, in his sermon,¹ "That very excellent and divine theorist, Mr. Isaac Newton." It appears to have been soon suggested, that the Government ought to provide in some way for a person who was so great an honor to the nation. Some delay took place with regard to this; but, in 1695, his friend Mr. Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, at that time Chancellor of the Exchequer, made him Warden of the Mint; and in 1699, he succeeded to the higher office of Master of the Mint, a situation worth £1200 or £1500 a year, which he filled to the end of his life. In 1703, he became President of the Royal Society, and was annually re-elected to this office during the remaining twenty-five years of his life. In 1705, he was knighted in the Master's Lodge, at Trinity College, by Queen Anne, then on a visit to the University of Cambridge. After the accession of George the First, Newton's conversation was frequently sought by the Princess, afterwards Queen Caroline, who had a taste for speculative studies, and was often heard to declare in public, that she thought herself fortunate in living at a time which enabled her to enjoy the society of so great a genius. His fame, and the respect paid him, went on increasing to the end of his life; and when, in 1727, full of years and glory, his earthly career was ended, his death was mourned as a national calamity, with the forms usually confined to royalty. His body lay in state in the Jerusalem chamber; his pall was borne by the first nobles of the land; and his earthly remains were deposited in the centre of Westminster Abbey, in the midst of the memorials of the greatest and wisest men whom England has produced.

It cannot be superfluous to say a word or two on the reception of

¹ Serm. vii. 221.