

at Halley's request, he returned to the subject; and in February, 1685, there was inserted in the Register of the Royal Society a paper of Newton's (*Isaaci Newtoni Propositiones de Motu*), which contained some of the principal propositions of the first two Books of the *Principia*. This paper, however, does not contain the proposition "Lunam gravitare in Terram," nor any of the propositions of the Third Book.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRINCIPIA.

Sect. 2.—Reception of the Principia.

LORD BROUGHAM has very recently (*Analytical View of Sir Isaac Newton's Principia*, 1855) shown a strong disposition still to maintain, what he says has frequently been alleged, that the reception of the work was not, even in this country, "such as might have been expected." He says, in explanation of the facts which I have adduced, showing the high estimation in which Newton was held immediately after the publication of the *Principia*, that Newton's previous fame was great by former discoveries. This is true; but the effect of this was precisely what was most honorable to Newton's countrymen, that they received with immediate acclamations this new and greater discovery. Lord Brougham adds, "after its appearance the *Principia* was more admired than studied;" which is probably true of the *Principia* still, and of all great works of like novelty and difficulty at all times. But, says Lord Brougham, "there is no getting over the inference on this head which arises from the dates of the two first editions. There elapsed an interval of no less than twenty-seven years between them; and although Cotes [in his Preface] speaks of the copies having become scarce and in very great demand when the second edition appeared in 1713, yet had this urgent demand been of many years' continuance, the reprinting could never have been so long delayed." But Lord Brougham might have learnt from Sir David Brewster's *Life of Newton* (vol. i. p. 312), which he extols so emphatically, that already in 1691 (only four years after the publication), a copy of the *Principia* could hardly be procured, and that even at that