

knowledge and research by the co-operation of many was more thoroughly realised in the old French Academy than in the Royal Society of London: his desire to unite all knowledge in a collective work underlies the great productions of Bayle, and still more those of the Encyclopædists. The many problems contained in Newton's 'Principia' were first treated singly by Clairault and Maupertuis; a general knowledge of his view of the universe was introduced into popular literature by Voltaire,¹ who made use of it as a powerful weapon wherewith to combat error and superstition, or, as he termed it, "pour écraser l'infâme"; but for a full announcement of its scientific value and its hidden resources we are indebted to Laplace, whose 'Mécanique céleste' was the first comprehensive elaboration of Newton's ideas, and whose 'Système du Monde' became the scientific gospel of a whole generation of Continental thinkers.

8.
Bacon and
Newton
compared.

We may look upon Lord Bacon as one who inspects a large and newly discovered land,² laying plans for the

¹ I believe Voltaire was the author of the term *Newtonianisme*. The modesty and truly scientific spirit of Newton would not have allowed him to apply such a term to his work, and it is doubtful whether Voltaire did not extract from Newton's 'Philosophia Naturalis' a general philosophy which was not conceived in his spirit.

² Cowley in his Ode to the Royal Society:—

"Bacon at last, a mighty man, arose, . . .
And boldly undertook the injur'd pupil's
cause.

. . . led us forth at last,
The barren wilderness he past;
Did on the very border stand
Of the blest promis'd land;
And, from the mountain's top of his ex-
alted wit,
Saw it himself, and shew'd us it."

On this Mr Ellis remarks (Bacon's Works, vol. i. p. 63): "Bacon has been likened to the prophet who, from Mount Pisgah, surveyed the Promised Land, but left it for others to take possession of. Of this happy image, perhaps part of the felicity was not perceived by its author. For though Pisgah was a place of large prospect, yet still the Promised Land was a land of definite extent and known boundaries, and, moreover, it was certain that after no long time the chosen people would be in possession of it all. And this agrees with what Bacon promised to himself and to mankind from the instauration of the sciences. . . . In this respect, as in others, the hopes of Francis Bacon