Though many of the views contained in this treatise were really the same as those embraced by a large school of Continental mathematicians till far into this century,

whole treatise is really more of a philosophical than a mathematical or experimental investigation. A large portion is taken up in defending his view against possible objections, and in showing how it agrees with or differs from the philosophies of Leibniz and Newton. Whilst this treatise represents in general a view largely held by Continental philosophers of nature, it does not contain any new mathematical methods such as the 'Principia' contained before and Laplace's 'Mécanique céleste' later, nor does it contribute any experiments such as those works likewise contained and suggested to others. In fact, it is more a metaphysical than an exact treatise, and as such has exerted no lasting beneficial influence on the progress of science. "The eighteenth century made a school of science for itself, in which for the not unnatural dogma of the earlier schoolmen, 'matter cannot act where it is not,' was substituted the most fantastic of paradoxes, *contact does not exist.* Boscovich's theory was the consummation of the eighteenth-century school of physical science. This strange idea took deep root, and from it grew up a barren tree, exhausting the soil and overshadowing the whole field of molecular investigation, on which so much unavailing labour was spent by the great mathematicians of the early part of our nineteenth century. If Boscovich's theory no longer cumbers the ground, it is because one true philosopher required more light for tracing lines of electric force" (Sir William Thomson's Lecture before the Royal Institution, May 1860. Reprinted in 'Papers on Electrostatics and Magnetism,' 2nd ed., 1884, p. 224). Nevertheless it is extraordinary to note that Boscovich's theory was more popular among British than among Continental physicists. In France the book seems to have been little appreciated, although Boscovich was well known through his optical and astronomical researches (see Montucla's 'Histoire des Mathématiques,' vol. iii. p. 490, vol. iv. p. 188); and his differences with d'Alembert were notorious. But French science was then occupied less with metaphysical theories than with mathematical analysis and experimental research. In Germany the book remained unknown, probably because Euler's authority favoured an opposite theory. In this country, however, the theory is often referred to from the time of Priestley ('History of Optics') to Faraday ("On the Nature of Matter," 'Phil. Mag.,' 1844, vol. 24), and more recently Thomson (Lord Kelvin). The last has probably more than any other living writer of similar eminence referred to Boscovich, whose theory he considers suggestive, and we are indebted to him for the first serious attempt to establish by actual calculation the real capabilities of the Boscovich atoms in explaining the properties of chemical molecules, their stability and degree of saturation (see the Report of the British Association at Liverpool, 1896). In Scotland Boscovich's theory was fully discussed in a posthumous article on "Corpuscular Forces" by John Robison, Professor of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh, and published by Brewster in the 1st volume of Robison's 'System of Mechanical Philosophy' (Edinburgh,