

trace in their economy? Was man, with his thought and feeling, his powers and hopes, his will and conscience, also produced as an ultimate result of the condensation of the solar atmosphere? Except we allow a prior purpose and intelligence presiding over this material "primitive cause," how irreconcilable is it with the evidence which crowds in upon us from every side!

3. In the next place, we may observe concerning this hypothesis, that it carries us back to the beginning of the present system of things; but that it is impossible for our reason to stop at the point thus presented to it. The sun, the earth, the planets, the moons were brought into their present order out of a previous state, and, as is supposed in the theory, by the natural operation of laws. But how came that previous state to exist? We are compelled to suppose that it, in like manner, was educed from a still prior state of things; and this, again, must have been the result of a condition prior still. Nor is it possible for us to find, in the tenets of the nebular hypothesis, any resting place or satisfaction for the mind. The same reasoning faculty, which seeks for the origin of the present system of things, and is capable of assenting to, or dissenting from the hypothesis propounded by Laplace as an answer to this inquiry, is necessarily led to seek, in the same manner, for the origin of any previous system of things, out of which the present may appear to have grown: and must pursue this train of inquiries unremittingly, so long as the answer which it receives describes a mere assemblage of matter and motion; since it would be to contradict the laws of matter and the nature of motion, to suppose such an assemblage to be the *first* condition.

The reflection just stated, may be illustrated by the further consideration of the Nebular Hypothesis. This opinion refers us, for the origin of the solar system, to a sun surrounded with an atmosphere of enormously elevated temperature, revolving and cool-