George Cheyne Encyclopedia Article

George Cheyne

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George Cheyne

1671-1743

English physician and vigorous proponent of Newtonianism. His *Fluxionum methodus inversa* (1703) attempted to provide a mathematical treatment of the human body possessing the same rigor that Isaac Newton applied to celestial mechanics. However, it was of dubious mathematical quality. Addressing the theological implications of Newton's work, Cheyne argued that gravitation was an immediate proof of God's existence since attraction was not an essential property of matter. He was one of England's most widely read medical writers.