

proceed to minerals, in the first class of which we reckon those mineral matters, which this action, continued for a long time, renders lighter, as iron; in the second, such as it renders heavier, as lead; and in the third class, are those matters on which, as gold, this action of fire does not appear to produce any sensible effect, since it does not at all alter their weight. All existing matters, that is, all substances simple and compounded, will necessarily be comprized under one of these three classes; and experiments on them by the three proceedings, which are not difficult to be made, and only require exactness and time, might develope many useful discoveries, and prove very necessary to build on real principles the theory of chemistry, which has hitherto been carried on by a precarious nomenclatura, and on words the more vague as they are the more general.

Fire is the lightest of all bodies, notwithstanding which it has weight, and it may be demonstrated, that even in a small volume it is really heavy, as it obeys, like all other matters, the general law of gravity, and consequently must have connections or affinities with other bodies. All matters it renders more weighty will be those with which it has the greatest affinity. One of the effects of this affinity in
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