

simple fermentation, which, like combustion, has always need of air for its operation. Sulphurs and pyrites are not the only minerals which must be looked upon as combustible, there are many others which I shall not here enumerate, because it is sufficient to remark, their degree of combustion depends commonly on the quantity of sulphur which they contain. All combustible minerals originally derive this property either from the mixture of animal or vegetable parts which are incorporated with them, or from the particles of light, heat, and air, which, by the lapse of time, are fixed in their internal part. Nothing, according to my opinion, is combustible but that which has been formed by a gentle heat, that is, by these same elements combined in all the substances which the sun brightens and vivifies, or in that which the internal heat of the earth fomented and unites.

The internal heat of the globe of the earth must be regarded as the true elementary fire ; it is always subsisting and constant ; it enters, like an element, into all the combinations of the other elements, and is more than sufficient to produce the same effects on air as actual fire on animal heat ; consequently this internal heat of the earth will destroy the elasticity of the air, and render it fixed, which being divided  
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