

ported, and it would be against all analogy, that salt should be composed only of these two elements, while all other substances are composed of four. Hence we must not receive literally what those great chemists Messrs. Stahl and Macquer have said on this subject; the experiments of Mr. Hales demonstrate, that vitriol and marine salt contain much fixed air; that nitre contains still more, even to the eighth of its weight; and that salt of tartar contains still more than these. It may, therefore, be asserted that air enters as a principle into the composition of all salts; but this does not support the idea that salt is the mediate substance between earth and water; these two elements enter in different proportions into the different salts or saline substances, whose variety and number are so great, as not to be enumerated; but which, generally presented under the denomination of acids and alkalis, shews us, that there is in general more earth than water in the last, and more water than earth in the first.

Nevertheless, water, although it may be intimately mixed with salts, is neither fixed nor united there by a sufficient force to transform it into a solid matter like calcareous stone; it resides in salt or acid under its primitive form, and the best concentrated acid,