

Besides these, there are other substances which have been produced by the second action of fire upon original matter; these are but few in number, and consist of such as pumice-stones, sulphur, the scoria of iron, asbestos, and lava. To one or other of these three great combinations may be referred all the relations of brute matter, and all the substances of the mineral kingdom.

The laws of affinity, by which the various particles of these different substances separate from each other, in order to unite among themselves and form homogeneous masses, are perfectly similar to that general law by which the celestial bodies act upon each other; in both cases their exertions are the same. Globules of water, of sand, or of metal, have the same influence, and act upon each other as the earth acts upon the moon; and if the laws of affinity have hitherto been deemed different from those of gravity, it is because the subject has been considered in a very confined point of view. The mutual action of celestial bodies is very little influenced by figure; their distance from each other is so very great, that this is necessarily the case; but when they are not far asunder, then the effect of figure is considerable. For instance, if the earth and moon, instead of spherical figures, were both short cylinders, and