

system, different from that of the ancients, obliged him always to give the preference to the least probable reasons, and to elude, as much as he could, the force of proofs, when they were contrary to his general principles of philosophy.

According to Aristotle the seminal liquor is secreted from the blood; and the menstua, in females, is a similar secretion, and the only one which serves for the purpose of generation. Females, he says, have no other prolific liquor; there is, therefore, no mixture of that of the male with that of the female. He pretends to prove this from some women conceiving without receiving the least pleasure, and because few women emit this liquor externally during copulation; that in general those who are brown, and have a masculine appearance, do not emit at all, yet engender equally with those who are more fair in complexion and feminine in appearance, and whose emissions are considerable. Thus he concludes woman furnishes nothing but the menstrual. This blood is the matter of generation; and the seminal fluid of the male does not contribute as matter but as form; it is the efficient cause, the principle of motion; it is to generation what