

contained in this sphere; and, by reducing each cubic line into a thousand millions of atoms, 54 cyphers are only required to express that number; consequently a human being will be greater, with relation to a spermatic worm of the sixth generation, than the sphere of the universe is with relation to the smallest atom which is possible to be perceived by the assistance of a microscope. What would it be if we were to carry it to ten generations? The minuteness would be so great as to leave us no mode of expressing it. The probability of this opinion, therefore, evidently disappears in proportion as the object diminishes. This calculation may be applied to eggs as well as spermatic worms, and the want of probability is general to both; it will, no doubt, be said, that matter being divisible, *ad infinitum*, there is no impossibility in this diminution of size; and although it is not probable, yet we must regard this division of matter as possible, since we can always, by thought, divide an atom into a number of parts. But I answer, that the same illusion is made use of on this infinite divisibility as on every other geometrical and arithmetical infinity; they are only abstractions of the mind, and have no existence in nature.

If