

a year before, we must allow him to be the first who made this observation ; but between them a contest took place as to the discovery which has never been decided. Be this as it will, Leeuwenhoek was undoubtedly the first inventor of the microscope, whose focuses are balls of glass formed by the flame of a lamp. But to return to his observations.

I shall first remark, that what he says of the number and motion of these pretended animals is true ; but the figure of the body is not always the same as he describes it : sometimes the part which precedes the tail is round and at others long ; often flat, and frequently broader than it is long, &c. and with respect to the tail, it is often much larger and shorter than he asserts. The motion of vibrations which he gives to the tail, and by means of which he pretends that the animalcules advance progressively in this fluid, has never appeared to me as he has described it. I have seen these moving substances make eight or ten oscillations from the right to the left, or vice versa, without advancing the breadth of a hair ; and I have even seen many more which could not advance at all ; because this tail, instead of being of any assistance to
them,