

moving bodies are never larger than when they separate from the filaments, and begin to move. When they are entirely disengaged from the mucilage they become smaller, and continue decreasing as long as they remain in motion. With respect to the generation of these animals, which Leeuwenhoek speaks of as certain, I am persuaded no sign of generation has ever been discovered; all he says is advanced on mere suppositions, which it is easy to prove by his own observations; for example, he says that the milt of certain fish, as the cod, fills by degrees with seminal liquor, which after the fish has emitted, the milt dries up, leaving only a membrane destitute of any liquor. “Eo tempore, says he, quo ascellus major lactes suos emisit, rugæ illæ, seu tortiles lactium partes, usque adeo contrahuntur, ut nihil præter pelliculas seu membranæ esse videantur.” How then does he understand that this dry membrane, in which there is no longer either seminal liquor or animalcules, can reproduce animals of the same kind the succeeding year? if there was a regular generation in these animals, there could not be this interruption, which in most fishes lasts for a whole year. To draw himself out of this difficulty, he says, “Necessario statuendum erit, ut ascellus major
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