

supposed by some authors that light is capable of entering into all bodies, and that it is, in fact, a component part of them : and, whatever objections may be made to this statement, there can be no doubt that many substances have the property of emitting light in the dark, after exposure to the solar rays. Thus, sulphate of barytes, Baldwin's phosphorus, and other compounds, become phosphoric after exposure to light ; and it has been stated that a diamond, which, after being placed in the solar rays, was immediately covered with black wax, shone for several years after the wax was removed. But none of these substances emit light of the same colour as that which falls upon them, a circumstance that may be attributed to a partial absorption.

There are also some insects that seem to have the power of absorbing light, and its emission is in some measure under their own control. The glow-worm, which is the *Lampyrus noctiluca* of Linnæus, is common in some parts of England, and shines with a strong sulphur-coloured light. This property, however, seems to be only possessed by the female, which is a wingless insect, and resembles in form the larva of a beetle. There is, however, a species of *Elater*, a native of the West India islands, that is still more strongly endowed with this property. This insect is not more than an inch long ; but the light, which it emits from two transparent eye-like tubercles placed upon the thorax, is so intense, that the smallest print may be read by moving one of these insects over the page. It is said that the luminous insects derive their peculiar property from a liquor which they secrete, and that they lose their brilliancy if it be suffered to dry upon the hand. It is not therefore true that the luminous appearance is altogether voluntary, and this is still farther proved by its continuance for some time after the death of the insect.

Certain fishes also possess the same property. The *Pholas* and the *Lampyrus* have been long known to emit phosphorescent scintillations, and the Roman epicures were accustomed to darken their apartments when feasting on them, that they might gratify two senses at the same time.

There is another luminous appearance, commonly called Will-with-the-wisp, or Jack-with-the-lantern, which is supposed by the uninformed peasantry to be the visible representation of an evil spirit, that delights to delude the benighted traveller, conducting him by its light into bogs and morasses,