

almost infinite : and it would be perfectly so if the contact were immediate, and, consequently, the distance between the two bodies void ; but there is nothing in nature entirely nil, and nothing truly infinite ; and all that I have observed of the *infinite* minuteness of the atoms which constitute light, of their *perfect* spring, and of the *nil* distance in the moment of contact, must be understood only relatively. If this metaphysical truth were doubted, a physical demonstration may be given. It is pretty generally known that light employs seven minutes and a half to come from the sun to the earth ; supposing, therefore, the sun at thirty-six millions of miles, light darts through this enormous distance in that short space, that is (supposing its motion uniform), 20,000 miles in one second. But this velocity, although prodigious, is yet far from being infinite, since it is determinable by numbers. It will even cease to appear so prodigious, when we reflect on the celerity of the motion of the comets to their perihelia, or even that of the planets, and by computing that, we shall find that the velocity of those immense masses may pretty nearly be compared to that of the atoms of light.

So, likewise, as all matter can be converted  
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