

bustible matters. Light is therefore no more, and in this single instance, only the principle of fire and not the fire itself: even this principle is not immediate, for it supposes the intermediate one of heat, and which appears to appertain more than light to the essence of fire. Now heat exists as often without light as light exists without heat: these two principles might, therefore, appear not to bind them necessarily together; their effects are not contemporaneous, since in certain circumstances we feel heat long before light appears, and in others we see light long before we feel any heat. Hence is not heat a mode of being, a modification of matter, which, in fact, differs less than all the rest from that of light, but which can be considered apart, and still more easily conceived? It is, nevertheless, certain, that much fewer discoveries have been made on the nature of heat than on that of light; whether man better catches what he sees than what he feels; whether light, presenting itself generally as a distinct and different substance from all the rest, has appeared worthy of a particular consideration; whereas heat, the effect of which is the most obscure, and presents itself as a less detached and less simple object, has not been regarded as a distinct substance,