

by this means the spring becomes weakened, and it is in this state that it can become fixed, and unite with other bodies.

Light, which falls on bodies, is not merely reflected, but remains in quantities on the small thickness of the surface which it strikes; consequently it loses its motion, extends, is fixed, and becomes a constituent part of all that it penetrates. Let us add this light, transformed and fixed in bodies, to the above air, and to both, the constant and actual heat of the terrestrial globe, whose sum is much greater than that which comes from the sun, and then it will appear to be not only one of the greatest springs of the mechanism of Nature, but an element with which the whole matter of the globe is penetrated.

If we consider more particularly the nature of combustible matters, we shall find, that they all proceed originally from vegetables and animals; in a word, from bodies placed on the surface of the globe, which the sun enlightens, heats, and vivifies. Wood, bitumen, resins, coals, fat and oil, by expression, wax, and suet, are substances proceeding immediately from animals and vegetables. Turf, fossil, coal, amber, liquid, or concrete bitumens, are the productions of their mixture, and their decom-