

and receiving the impressions of light, the heat of the sun and terrestrial globe, it converts into its substance all these different elements; works, combines, unites, and opposes them, till they have undergone the necessary form towards its support of life, and the growth of organization, the mold of which once given, models every matter it admits, and from inanimate renders it organized.

Water, which so readily coalesces and enters with air into organized bodies, unites also with some solid matters, such as salts; and it is often by their means that it enters into the composition of minerals. Salt at first appears to be only an earth soluble in water, and of a sharp flavour, but chemists have perfectly discovered, that it principally consists in the union of what they term the *earthly* and the *aqueous principle*. The experiment of the nitrous acid, which after combustion leaves only a small quantity of earth and water, has caused them to think, that salt was composed only of these two elements; yet I think it is easily to be demonstrated, that air and fire also enter their composition; since nitre produces a great quantity of air in combustion, and this fixed air supposes fixed fire which disengages at the same time: besides all the explanations given of the dissolution cannot be supported,