

It therefore appears certain that the body of an animal or vegetable is an internal mould of a constant form, but where their masses may augment proportionably, by the extension of this mould in all its external and internal dimensions. That this extension also is made by the intus-susception of any accessory or foreign matter which penetrates the internal part, and becomes similar to the form and identical substance with the matter of the moulds themselves.

But of what nature is this matter which the animal or vegetable assimilates with its own substance? what can be the nature of that power which gives it the activity and necessary motion to penetrate the internal mould? and if such a power does exist, must it not be similar to that by which the internal mould itself would be produced?

These three questions include all that can be desired on this subject, and seem to depend on each other so much, that I am persuaded the reproduction of an animal or vegetable cannot be explained in a satisfactory manner, if a clear idea of the mode of the operation of nutrition is not obtained; we must, therefore, examine these three questions separately, in
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