

has no influence on the universe, the motions of the heavenly bodies, nor the revolutions of the globe which he inhabits ; over animals, vegetables, or minerals, he has no general dominion ; he can do nothing with species, his power only extends to individuals ; for species in general, and matter in the gross, belong to, or rather constitute nature. All things pass away, follow, succeed, decay, or are renewed, by an irresistible power. Man, dragged on by the torrent of time, cannot prolong his existence ; his body being linked to matter, he is forced to submit to the universal law ; he obeys the same power, and, like the rest, comes into the world, grows to maturity, and dies.

*But the divine ray with which man is animated ennobles and raises him above all other material beings. This spiritual substance, far from being subject to matter, has the power of making it obey ; and though it cannot command all Nature, it presides over particular beings ; God, the sole source of all light and understanding, rules the universe and the species with infinite power ; man, who possesses only a ray of this spiritual substance, has a power limited to small portions of matter and individuals.*