

perfect resemblance in the developement of both, and therefore the organic molecules, which constitute the living substance of the horns of the stag, still retain the image of the vegetable, because they are arranged in the same manner as in vegetables. Here we see that matter has an influence over form. The stag, which lives in the forest, and feeds only on the leaves of trees, receives from them so strong an impression that he produces a sort of tree, of whose origin it is impossible to mistake. This effect, though surprising, is not singular, but depends on that general cause which we more than once have already had occasion to point out.

The most constant and invariable thing in Nature is the image or model allotted to each particular species, both in animals and vegetables; what is most variable is the substance of which they are composed. Matter, in general, seems to receive all forms with indifference, and to be capable of all configurations; the organic and living particles of this matter pass from vegetables into animals, without suffering dissolution or alteration, and equally form the living substance of herbs, trees, flesh, or bones. It may seem from this first glance that matter can never predominate over form,  
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