

surfaces, we cannot penetrate the substance ; while, Nature, on the contrary, designs and enters into the depth of things ; she produces forms almost instantaneously ; she at once expands them in all their dimensions ; as soon as her movements reach the surface, the penetrating powers with which she is animated, operate internally. The smallest atom, when she chooses to make use of it, is obliged to obey her will. Her actions, therefore, extend over all ; she travels above, below, to the right and left, and consequently, she not only encompasses the surface, but every particle of the mass. What difference there consequently is in the result ? What comparison can be made between a statue and an organised body ? But also what inequality in their powers, and how disproportioned the instruments ! Man can only make use of the power he possesses. Confined to a small quantity of motion, which he can only communicate by impulsion, he can only exert himself upon surfaces ; since the power of impulsion in general is only transmitted by superficial contact. He only sees and touches, therefore, the surfaces of bodies, and when he attempts to proceed further, though he opens, divides, and separates, he still touches nothing more than surfaces.