

to suppose the luminiferous molecules of gross bodies to be identical with their ultimate chemical atoms. I should rather incline to consider them as minute groups, each composed of innumerable such atoms; and it may be that in what are called uncrystallized media, the axes or lines of symmetry of these groups may have no particular direction, or rather all possible directions, or the groups themselves may be unsymmetrical. Such a disposition of things would correspond with a uniform law of absorption, independent of the direction of the transmitted ray; while in crystallized media a uniformity of constitution and position of these elementary groups, or rather of the cells or other combinations which they may be regarded as forming with the interfused æther, may be readily supposed to draw with it differences in their mode of vibration, and even different disposals of their nodal lines and surfaces, according to the different directions in which undulations may traverse them: and which may not impossibly be found to render an account of the change of tint of such media according to the direction of the rays in their interior, as well as of the different tints and intensities of their oppositely polarized pencils; of which latter class of phænomena, however, I shall immediately have occasion to speak further.

(18.) But as my present object is merely to throw out, as a subject for examination, a hint of a possible explanation of the phænomena of absorption, on the undulatory theory, I shall not now pursue its application into any detail, nor attempt the further development of particular