

In proceeding to account for the attraction of iron by the magnet, Lucretius first describes the well known experiment of a short chain of iron rings, the several links of which are held together merely by the force of magnetism ; the attractive power of which is communicated continuously from the first to the last in the series. He then claims the particular attention of his reader to his proposed explanation of so difficult a subject, by reminding him that, in facts of this kind, many points must be laboriously investigated and established, before a rational solution can be given. Thence, assuming that from all bodies minute particles are constantly radiating, of which, those from some bodies are disposed to affect one sense ; from others, another sense ; and that all bodies are porous to a greater or less extent, and are severally indued with their specific qualities, affecting or being affected by different bodies differently ; he argues that, from the magnet as from all other bodies, such minute and specific particles are constantly emanating ; that this emanation dissipates the air from the space intermediate to the magnet and iron ; and that, a partial vacuum being thus formed, the ring is immediately propelled, by the air on the other side of it, towards the magnet, to which it subsequently adheres by an invisible bond of union ; and so, in succession, all the other rings are impelled : the adhesion tak-