

agents: the reasons for these assertions will appear hereafter; at present it is our object to convey to the general reader some idea of the magnitude of these particles, with the view, principally, of showing how infinitely they surpass the limited powers, not only of our senses, but almost of our conception. The subject, however, has so much attracted the attention of philosophers, that most of our readers must be already familiar with it; we shall therefore content ourselves with merely selecting a single instance from each of the kingdoms of nature.

As an instance from the mineral kingdom, we may quote from Dr. Thomson, who has shown that an ultimate molecule of lead cannot weigh more than the  $1\text{-}310,000,000,000\text{th}$ , nor an ultimate molecule of sulphur, more than the  $1\text{-}2,015,000,000,000\text{th}$  of a grain, and probably a great deal less; and that the size of the molecule of lead cannot surpass, and is probably much smaller, than the  $1\text{-}888,492,000,000,000\text{th}$  of a cubic inch!\* The vegetable kingdom presents us with innumerable instances, not only of the extraordinary divisibility of matter, but of its activity, in the almost incredibly rapid developement of cellular structure in certain plants. Thus the *Bovista giganteum* (a species of fungus), has been known to acquire the size of a

\* System of Inorganic Chemistry, I. 7.