

ized body, all that concerns us, is the ability to distinguish one class of elements from another, without regard to the intervening spaces, or the divisibility of what are considered as atoms. These latter are debatable points, and fortunately, it happens, they are not comprehended in the researches of chemico-medicine. All that we have to do with, is the identity of the elements—the proof of their unchangeableness under every variety of circumstances. Whether each element of a compound has or has not a surrounding space, capable of contraction and expansion, and is capable or incapable of division, are questions altogether irrelevant to our subject. Therefore, we readily set aside the views of Democritus, Boscovitch and Dalton. With Anaxagoras, however, the case is different. His doctrine contains nothing which is not demonstrable, by the ordinary methods of proof; and, moreover, corresponds with the doctrine of identity as it is understood by the modern organic chemist. Accordingly, we find that Anaxagoras, reasoning from the premises that the primary elements, whether in the organism or out of the organism, are identical in shape and size, and are in no way whatever changed, inferred that all the parts of an organized being must have existed previously in its food.* He promulgated this inference; but, in that age, it did not admit of proof, for experimental science was then in its earliest infancy. Its verification was not possible, before that chemistry should have become so far advanced as to be applicable to the analysis of organized bodies. It is remarkable, notwithstanding, that in the long interval of two thousand two hundred years since his time, the important truth comprehended in this inference, should not only have borne no fruit, but should have lain concealed among the hidden treasures of the past, as the relic of a dead and obsolete philosophy.

ELEMENTS OF THE FOOD, OF THE ORGANS, AND OF THE EXCRETIONS.

What are meant by elements are the different classes of simple substances, which are respectively composed of homogenous parts. An element, in this sense, is different from an atom which denotes

* Plut. de Pl. Ph. 1, 3. Καὶ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς τροφῆς τρέφεται θοῖξ, Φλέψ, ἀρτηρία, νεῦρα, ὅσῳ, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ μέρη. τούτων οὖν γινομένων ὁμολογητέων ἐστίν. ὅτι ἐν τῇ τροφῇ τῇ προσφερομένῃ πάντα ἐστὶ τὰ ὄντα.—Arist. de Gen. Anim. I. 13.—Simpl. Phys. fol. 106 a.

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