

where they take up their residence, but when we discover the same or similar species, in sour paste or vinegar, they seem destined to consume substances that cease to be wholesome; and in fact, in all fluids, in which they usually so abound, they may be destined to fulfil a similar office; and it is a remarkable circumstance in their history confirmatory of this idea, that these animals, though animation in them is often suspended for a long time, when they swarm in infusions, having fulfilled their office, perish in a few days.

It is probable that in the waters of our globe an infinity of animal and vegetable molecules are suspended, that are too minute to form the food of even the lowest and most minute animals of the visible creation, and therefore an infinite host of invisibles was necessary to remove them as nuisances.

But the principal point, and that in which their utility most evidently appears, is their furnishing a principal portion of the food of innumerable animals of a higher order than themselves. Those infinite armies and forests of locomotive and fixed Polypes, that give to the ocean one of the features that distinguish earth, have their mouths surrounded with tentacles, when expanded assuming the appearance of so many blossoms, with these they collect their food, which, amongst the more minute ones, consists often of our Infusories. A single stem of these compound animals, having often innumerable oscula or mouths, requires a vast supply of food; others equally compound, as the Ascidians or Alcyons, by alternately absorbing and expelling the sea water, draw in with it a supply of animal food, consisting, in part, of the creatures in question, which abound in the oceanic waters; some of these have a common organ for this purpose, and in others each individual of the system is fitted with one; the Molluscans and an infinity of the smaller inhabitants of the ocean, doubtless also derive a