

organic bodies have characters of a totally different nature ; they possess definite forms and structures, which are capable of resisting for a time the ordinary laws by which the changes of inorganic matter are regulated, while internally they are in constant mutation. From the first moment of the existence of the plant or animal to the period of its dissolution there is no repose ; youth follows infancy,—maturity precedes age ; it is thus with the moss and the oak,—the monad and the elephant,—life and death are common to them all. Animals and vegetables also require a supply of food and air, and a suitable temperature, for the continuance of their existence ; and they are nourished by particles prepared in appropriate organs, and transmitted by suitable vessels. In the germ of an animal or a vegetable, there is a vital principle in action, by which are developed in succession the ordained phenomena of its existence. By this power the germ is able to attract towards it particles of inanimate matter, and bestow on them an arrangement widely different from that which the laws of chemistry or mechanics could produce. The same power not only attracts these particles, and preserves them in their new situations, but is

had their internal structure completely altered, so that when broken open they were composed internally of octahedrons, with square bases. The original aggregation of the internal particles had been dissolved, and a disposition given to arrange themselves in a crystalline form.”—*Mrs. Somerville*, p. 171.