

CHAP. VIII.

Adaptation of Vegetables to the Physical Condition of Man.

SECT. I.

General Observations on the Vegetable Kingdom.

THE vegetable kingdom has this distinction with reference to the subject of the present treatise, that its productions are among the first objects that forcibly attract the attention of young children; becoming to them the source of gratifications, which are among the purest of which our nature is capable; and of which even the indistinct recollection imparts often a fleeting pleasure to the most cheerless moments of after-life.

Who does not look back with feelings, which he would in vain attempt to describe, to the delightful rambles which his native fields and meadows afforded to his earliest years? Who does not remember, or at least fancy that he remembers, the eager activity with which he was used to strip nature's carpet of its embroidery, nor ceased to cull the scattered blossoms till his infant hands were incapable of retaining the accumulated heap? Who, on even seeing the first violet of returning spring, much more on inhaling its sweetness; or in catching the breeze that has passed over the blossom of the bean or of the woodbine, does not again enjoy the very delights of his early childhood?