

tive to other plants, which absorb them, and with more facility adapt them to the purposes of their own systems. Here they receive a still higher degree of elaboration; and thus the same materials may pass through several successive series of modifications, till they become the food of animals, and are then made to undergo still farther changes. New elements, and in particular nitrogen, is added to the oxygen, hydrogen and carbon, which are the chief constituents of vegetable substances:\* and new properties are acquired, from the varied combinations into which their elements are made to enter by the more energetic powers of assimilation appertaining to the animal system. The products which result are still more removed from their original state of inorganic matter: and in this condition they serve as the appropriate food of carnivorous animals, which generally hold a higher rank in the scale of organization, than those that subsist only on vegetables.

Thus has each created being been formed with reference, not merely to its own welfare, but also to that of multitudes of others which are dependent on it for their support, their preservation,—nay, even for their existence. In contemplating this mutual relationship, this successive subordination of the different races to one another, and this continual tendency to increased refinement, we cannot shut our eyes to the magnificent unfolding of the great scheme of nature for the progressive attainment of higher objects; until, in the perfect system, and exalted endowments of man, we behold the last result which has been manifested to us of creative power.

\* Nitrogen, however, frequently enters into the composition of vegetables; though, in general, in a much smaller proportion than into the substance of animals, of which last it always appears to be an essential constituent.