

that this coagulating power belongs to the stomach of every animal which he examined for that purpose, from the most perfect down to reptiles;* and Sir E. Home has prosecuted the inquiry with the same result, and ascertained that this property is possessed by the secretion from the gastric glands, which communicates it to the adjacent membranes.†

The gastric juice has also the remarkable property of correcting putrefaction. This is particularly exemplified in animals that feed on carrion, to whom this property is of great importance, as it enables them to derive wholesome nourishment from materials which would otherwise taint the whole system with their poison, and soon prove destructive to life.

It would appear that the first changes which constitute digestion take place principally at the cardiac end of the stomach, and that the mass of food is gradually transferred towards the pylorus, the process of digestion still continuing as it advances. In the *Rabbit* it has been ascertained that food newly taken into the stomach is always kept distinct from that which was before contained in it, and which has begun to undergo a change: for this purpose the new food is introduced into the centre of the mass already in the stomach; so that it may come in due time to be applied to the coats of that organ, and be in its turn digested, after the same change has been completed in the latter.‡

As the flesh of animals has to undergo a less considerable change than vegetable materials, so we find the stomachs of all the purely carnivorous tribes consisting only of a membranous bag, which is the simplest form assumed by this or-

large proportion of soups, on which the prisoners had subsisted for the preceding eight months. A very full and perspicuous account of that disease has been drawn up, with great ability, by my friend Dr. P. M. Latham, and published under the title of "An account of the disease lately prevalent in the General Penitentiary." London, 1825.

* Observations on the Animal Economy, p. 172.

† Phil. Trans. for 1813, p. 96.

‡ See Dr. Philip's Experimental Inquiry into the Laws of the Vital Functions, 3d edition, p. 122.