

formly, and forms a kind of solid operculum like plaster of Paris, about half a line in thickness, which accurately closes the mouth. When this is become hard, the animal separates the mantle from it. After a time, expelling a portion of the air it had inspired, and thus being reduced in bulk, it retreats a little further into the shell, and forms another leaf of mucus, and continues repeating this operation till there are sometimes five or six of these leaves forming cells filled with air between it and the operculum.

. The membranous partitions are more numerous at the end than at the beginning of winter, and in snails inhabiting the mountains, than in those on the plains. These animals hybernate at the proper period, at very different temperatures, varying from 37° to 77° Fahrenh. Respiration ceases during the period of hybernation.

The mode in which these animals escape from their winter confinement is singular: the air they had expired on retiring into their shell further and further, remains between the different partitions of mucous membrane above mentioned, which forms so many cells hermetically sealed; this they again inspire, and thus acquiring fresh vigour, each separate partition, as they proceed, is broken by the pressure of the foot, projected in part through the mantle; when arrived at the operculum they burst it by a strong effort, and finally detaching it, then emerge, begin to walk and to break their long fast.*

In all these proceedings the superintending care and wise provisions of a Father Being are evident. This creature can neither foresee the degree of cold to which it may be exposed in its state of hybernation, nor know by what means it may secure itself from the fatal effects it would produce upon it, if not provided against. But at a destined period, often when the range of the thermometer is high,

* Gaspard and Bell, Zool. Jour. i. 93.—ii. 174.