

part of their great Contriver, which we see among his works. Several of the most important of these contrivances, we shall have occasion to notice hereafter; but there is one of so curious and interesting a character, that it may be mentioned here, as an illustration of the above remarks. The nature and mechanism of the function of respiration will be explained elsewhere; it is sufficient for our present purpose to state, that, by means of a complicated apparatus, the blood is made to circulate through the lungs; where it is exposed to the influence of the oxygen of the atmosphere. For purposes beyond our comprehension, but probably, in part at least, with a view to the future creation of organized beings, the great Architect of the universe had willed that this principle should exist upon the surface of our globe in a gaseous state: when He created animals, He chose also to render them dependent upon oxygen for their existence; and He effects his object, not by bending this principle to his purpose, by altering its physical or other properties; not by obtaining it from water, or any of the innumerable compounds into which it enters, which according to our imperfect notions He might have more easily done; but, as if on purpose to display his power and design, He rigidly adheres to the properties, both mechanical and chemical, imparted to oxygen; and to these