

stomach. On the left side, the colon descends again, and at the same time, forms what is called the *sigmoid* flexure. The colon and the alimentary canal at length terminate in what is named the *rectum*. The texture of the colon is much thicker than that of any other portion of the canal. Its organization also is peculiar; and, like the whole arrangement, wonderfully adapted for the purposes which this portion of the canal is supposed to fulfil in the animal economy.

Such is a short account of the alimentary canal in man. We shall now state some of the more remarkable diversities that are observed in the lower animals.

One of the most striking circumstances relative to the alimentary canal in animals, is its various lengths in the different classes. The length of the alimentary canal in man, and in other omnivorous animals, is intermediate to that of carnivorous animals on the one hand, and of herbivorous animals on the other. In man, the whole length of the canal is about six or seven times the length of his body; while in carnivorous animals it is only from about three to five times the length of their bodies; and in graminivorous animals, as in the sheep, the length of the canal is twenty-seven times that length. In other herbivorous animals, the length of the canal varies from twelve or sixteen times the length of their bodies. In most birds the alimentary canal is much shorter than in quad-